

Gryphon Men's Varsity go to 11-0 for the season with a win Friday against James River Homeschool.



THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

QUID NOVI

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ON CHOOSING A SCHOOL

By John Heaton, Headmaster

New Covenant operates on what we call the Continuous Enrollment Contract. This means that your child's seat is protected and your child is automatically advanced to the next grade each year unless you opt out by the deadline (see today's Et Cetera). This practice saves headaches for parents and streamlines the process, which reduces the time and attention you need to give to it.

This article is intended to call attention to several factors that all parents should consider

at this time. We know that every family must evaluate their child's progress each year, and the continuous enrollment contract doesn't mean we take your family for granted. We have to earn your commitment every day.

First, we know that no school should assume that its K-12 program is a perfect fit at every grade and every level. There may be very compelling reasons to make a change at any given point. My staff and I welcome conversations when a student's

continued on p.4

WHAT'S NEW?

Alumni Back on Campus

Homecoming 2024 brought back many New Covenant alumni to campus this weekend. Graduates spanning the years from as far back as 2010 were welcomed at an afternoon reception and then joined us for the men's and women's basketball games on Friday evening. Our students have transitioned into their college settings and work life. They are even in the early stages of raising their own children. Each one has taken the New Covenant experience and community with them along the way and returned to share their current life with us. It was a pleasure to visit for a short time and hear their stories.



Alumni (L-R): Anna Gray (Owens) Vaught (2015); Laura Williamson (2013); Rebecca Pickard (2016) and her fiancée; Hattie Eshleman (2013); Leena (Eshleman, 2015) and Jonathan Hart (2014)



Michael Minnick (2020) and Mr. Heaton.



Thad Heaton (2021) and Chris Matney (2021) with Mrs. Spiva.

ART FAIR

PAINTING | MIXED MEDIA | SCULPTURE | PHOTOGRAPHY | FILM



Monday,
March 11

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR ART FAIR SUBMISSIONS:

- Students in K-12th grade may submit TWO PIECES of art in each of the five named categories.
- Student work grades 4-12 will be in the JUDGED art show.
- All submissions should be given directly to Miss Eshleman or Mr. Dunaway.
- Flat (2D) submissions should NOT be folded or on lined paper.
- Submissions MUST be unframed.
- All photography should be printed on photo quality paper (preferably 8 ½ x 11 or larger).
- Sculpture (3D) submissions should stand upright OR student should provide a base on which to stand the piece.
- Lego submissions will NOT be accepted.
- ALL pieces should be the CREATION of the student(s).
- Multiple students may collaborate on a single submission.

William Marotta (4th Grade), 2023 Submission

ALL submissions due Wednesday, February 14th

Parents who would like to volunteer to mat/hang work, please contact Hattie Eshleman at heshleman@newcovenantschools.org or Michael Dunaway at mdunaway@newcovenantschools.org.

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) – DEADLINE JANUARY 15

This is your last week to apply for tuition assistance for the 2024-25 school year! Please refer to an email sent out on October 31, 2023 for instructions.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT CONTRACT

New Covenant uses a Continuous Enrollment Contract for students, allowing them to automatically be enrolled each year until graduation without having to sign a new contract. PARENTS WILL NOT BE ASKED TO REENROLL FOR NEXT YEAR. The opt-out deadline for the 2024-25 school year is February 1, 2024. The Continuous Enrollment Fee of \$150 will be charged to your account on that date if you do not opt out. Please contact Linda Hackenbracht at lhackenbracht@newcovenantschools.org if your plans for next school year have changed.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

There will be no school Monday, January 15 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

ACADEMIC TESTING

Students in grades 2-8 will sit for CTP-5 testing Tuesday, January 16 through Friday, January 19 and ninth grade

will test from Wednesday, January 17 through Friday, January 19. Please help your students have the best experience by bringing them to school on time, and by avoiding unnecessary appointments and absences.

ART FAIR

New Covenant's annual Art Fair will be held on Monday, March 11. See page 2 for details.

LUNCH ORDERING

Lunch ordering for February is now open and runs through Friday, January 19. Featured menu items in February include Mini Corn Dogs, Honey BBQ Chicken Bites, and Pancakes with Sausage, in addition to Chick-fil-A, Jersey Mike's, and Turkey Taco Salads. For those who subscribe to the school milk plan, your lunch account will be charged \$35 for the third quarter in mid-January. Please direct any questions to Debbie Williamson at dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org.

CUSTODIAL POSITION

NCS has a custodial position immediately available for three hours in the evening Monday through Friday. If you or someone you know would be interested, please contact Darren Johnson at djohnson@newcovenantschools.org or 434-665-9574.

MIDDLE & GRAMMAR

END OF QUARTER

The end of Quarter Two for the Grammar and Middle Schools is Friday, January 12. Report cards will be emailed on Friday, January 19.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

SPELLING BEE

Parents are invited to attend the Middle School Spelling Bee on Friday, January 12 at 8:15am in the Moomaw Center where 40 finalists from grades 5-8 will compete for the honor of becoming our School Bee Champion and going on to represent New Covenant in the district bee!

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

NO SCHOOL FOR SOR

The SOR will not have school on Tuesday, January 16.

SPORTS SCORES

Friday, January 5

JV BOYS' BASKETBALL

James River Homeschool 36
New Covenant..... 50

VARSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

James River Homeschool 21
New Covenant..... 51

VARSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL

James River Homeschool 48
New Covenant..... 55



FUNDRAISING REPORT

| | GOAL | RECEIVED |
|------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| Annual Fund/Permanent Things | \$100,000 | \$62,564 |
| General Scholarship | \$10,000 | \$54,836 |
| Scholarship Foundation | \$300,000 | <i>Pledged</i> \$424,600 |
| | | <i>Received</i> \$401,051 |

Thank you for considering New Covenant Schools in your giving. All gifts are tax-deductible to the extent that the law provides. Donations may be given through cash, check, stock transfers, or IRA distributions. Contact Dayna Renalds in the Development Office for more information.

best interest is in question, and where another option might make the child more successful. Families who move away, of course, must make a change no matter what, and “move-aways” account for about a third to half of New Covenant’s attrition.

Second, we know from our educational consultants that, nationwide in all private schools, students on average have more input into the decision than children of other generations. Today, students pressure their parents starting in the 5th grade, and many are given nearly complete control of the decision before the end of middle school. This represents a serious abdication of parental guidance. While all students have definite opinions about the school of their family’s choice, no ten or twelve year-old should be permitted to make that choice. School opportunities are not equal and they simply do not have the understanding, wisdom or maturity to evaluate a school and its opportunities, or to measure its long-term impact on their lives.

Part of the pressure parents may feel are the all-too-natural complaints of a middle school child about anything they perceive as negative in their daily school experience. Your teachers know the other side, however, and you owe it to yourself to check in with them. In the overwhelming number of cases, their students are happy, well-adjusted, and enjoy the company of their friends at school. Takeaway: Filter that talk with your “mom” and “dad” skepticism.

Third, when and if you find yourself engaging with a child who is asking to go elsewhere, consider the following:

- Why did you choose New Covenant in the first place? Likely because you perceived value in the school’s clear curricular distinctives that are unavailable at any other school in our area. Your youngster is likely unable

to grasp this fact.

- In considering another school which will be notably different in curriculum, content, and culture, ask yourself what has changed in your thinking such that you would now choose an option that represents something far different from your first choice. I am not suggesting that New Covenant is better (I think it is!) or that others are inferior. My point is that the choices before you are so different that the decision represents a major shift in thinking. Does a young student understand this?
- Is your child able to articulate exactly what he or she is expecting to find in another context? Is it a wider friend group, athletic opportunities, better academics, STEM programs, etc.?
- Does your child know the unique opportunities he or she will forgo by leaving New Covenant’s unique program? It is likely that young students are unaware of the opportunities ahead, especially in the School of Rhetoric, which include a “great ideas” curriculum, foreign study, repeated travel opportunities in our nation’s capital, smaller classes, discussion models, J-Term options, athletics, the arts, and vastly more freedom and responsibility than is found in schools elsewhere.

Fourth and finally, the community in which your children are placed during their formative school years is of the highest importance. Your relationship to us, therefore, is much more than a continuous enrollment contract. It is a participation in a distinct community of shared faith and values, a complex of intangible benefits which are the result of long commitments made by the leadership, faculty and staff of the school. We come to know and love your children almost as much as you do, and

we and hold your confidence in us as a sacred trust.

If ever you find yourself considering your options, I would look forward to being a part of that conversation. Should you have interest, I would direct you to my further thoughts, “10 Things You Should Consider When Choosing a Private School,” which I have linked below.

<https://www.newcovenantschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/GladYouAsked-10-Things-You-Should-Consider.pdf>

THE TIME OF OUR LIVES: REFLECTIONS ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR

This year Headmaster Heaton is journaling notes on his blog about the Church’s calendar year. Regularly from now through the spring, our Headmaster will post his reflections on the calendar, which you can read at the link here: [newcovenantschools.org/my-ncs/blog/](https://www.newcovenantschools.org/my-ncs/blog/)

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OUR MISSION

New Covenant Schools is an educational community serving families of Central Virginia, providing an exceptional education in a classical curriculum within the framework of historic Christianity, furnishing the student with the tools of education and the inspiration to be a lifelong learner.

NEW COVENANT schools