

## Philosophy and Policy Statements Affecting Education

The following statements identify the stand of the BCSO on issues of significance to the work and ministry of that association. Agreement with these positions is required of those who desire membership in the BCSO.

- We encourage and promote scriptural standards of excellence and outstanding quality in the operation of Christian schools and other religious ministries.
- We oppose the state control of Christian schools and other ministries of the local church through a chartering or licensure process.
- We believe that the leaders of local churches are directly responsible to God and that they will be held accountable according to the commandments, principles, and penalties imposed by the Scriptures.
- We believe that parents have a primary responsibility in the approval of education ministries and that this responsibility is vested in them by the Scriptures.
- We believe that, as non-chartered schools in the present legal setting, we should not seek governmental aid such as general funding, services, equipment, or vouchers.

*“In Whom are hid all  
the treasures of wisdom  
and knowledge.”*

Col. 2:3



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## Organizational Overview

The Buckeye Christian School Organization (BCSO) is a merger (Dec. 2016) of two once-unified associations of non-chartered, non-tax supported schools - the Buckeye Christian School Association (established in 1982) and the Christian Schools of Ohio (established in 1975). BCSO continues to:

- annually sponsor quality programs for member schools including athletic tournaments, fine arts festivals, and continuing education opportunities.
- participate in national standardized testing programs.
- serve on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee for Nonpublic Educational Options.
- maintain an active presence in the legislative scene in Columbus (meet with legislators, attend committee meetings, etc.).



## Current Nonpublic School Options in Ohio

1. Chartered nonpublic schools
2. Non-chartered, non-tax supported (NCNT) schools
3. Home education

## Overview of NCNT Schools (OAC 3301-35-08)

These schools are not chartered or seeking a charter from the state board of education because of truly held religious beliefs. As a result, an NCNT school annually certifies in a report to the parents of its pupils that the school meets Ohio minimum standards for NCNT schools. The standards include:

- Being open for instruction for a minimum number of hours on the school year
- Ensuring the reporting of pupil attendance
- Having qualified teachers and administrators
- Providing courses of study in a variety of subjects
- Following regular procedures for grade promotion
- Complying with state and local health, fire, and safety laws

## History of the "08" Document

A study of the history of what today are called the "08" schools reveals that this "08" provision of the Ohio Administrative Code came out of the 1976 Ohio Supreme Court Decision, *Ohio v. Whisner*, 47 Ohio St. 2d 181 (1976), which states in its opening paragraph,

*"The Supreme Court, Celebrezze, Jr., held that the State Board of Education's minimum standards relating to the operation of schools infringed upon the right to the free exercise of religion of parents of students attending a nonpublic religious school, where the religious beliefs of the parents are truly held..."*

The defendant (Levi Whisner) was pastor of a church-operated school and was seeking judicial protection from the state's intrusive demands, in which children were being declared truant. (A Darke County prosecutor had actually begun legal proceedings to take away these children from their parents.) The Ohio Supreme Court decision ordered the state to write "minimum standards" consistent with its ruling, and OAC 3301-35-08 resulted. The "08" section was an amicable arrangement between both parties and has been the standard of cooperation since 1983.

## "Truly Held Religious Beliefs"

### Primary institutions

- The **home** (specifically parents) has been assigned the task of training and educating its children (Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:4-7).
- The **church**, as a second teaching institution, is to assist the parents (I Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 4:11-16).
- The **state** has been given the role of protection, that the home and the church may perform their God-assigned tasks (Romans 13:1-4).

### Necessary distinctions

- NCNT schools **DO NOT** license (seek approval or permission from the state to operate).
- NCNT schools **DO** notify (work together or share information with the state as a co-equal institution).

While emphasizing the distinction between "notifying" and "licensing," church-operated schools in BCSO have consistently obeyed the laws and will continue to do so unless a man-made law contradicts a God-made mandate (Acts 5:29).

