



Vision for Education
Covenant Christian School
Updated January 15, 2016

Covenant Christian School is a Christian elementary school in the Reformed tradition, committed to providing a *Christ-Centered, Grace-Filled* and *Academically Excellent* education to our children.

Christ-Centered

Biblical Worldview

We believe that all people live out of whatever worldview they embrace; there is no such thing as a neutral worldview. As a school, we are grounded in the belief that we must analyze all things of this world through the lens of Scripture. According to Scripture, we affirm that the world has meaning because it is the intentional and good creation of a loving and just God, but that good creation has been caught up in the brokenness of man's fall into sin. However, God did not leave his good world to the destructive forces of sin, but lovingly and intentionally instituted a program of redemption whereby he will reverse the effects of the fall and restore creation to glory and wholeness (shalom). Moreover, God graciously invites us to participate in this program of redemption.

The Bible teaches that reality can be viewed through the paradigm of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. At Covenant Christian School, we desire that our children ask the following questions of whatever they are studying:

- What did God originally intend? (Creation)
- How has sin marred it? (Fall)
- Where do we see evidence of its redemption? (Redemption)
- How has God called us to participate in that redemption?

We are also grounded in the belief that Christ reigns over all aspects of creation. As the theologian Abraham Kuyper has written, "There is not one inch of the creation over which Christ does not declare, 'It is mine!'" Recognizing Christ as the Lord of the universe frees us to confidently explore all the realms of His creation. We gain humility as we recognize Jesus' kingly reign and the grace, power and imagination of the God who conceived and sustains us.

As our community develops the discipline of "taking every thought captive to the word of God," we strive to equip students to grapple with difficult issues and ideas without fear, even when they are contrary to Scripture. We seek to cultivate in them discernment--the ability to see assumptions that underlie any idea or perspective, and to compare and contrast those with the biblical perspective on reality. In doing so, minds are transformed, and students are equipped to live their whole lives as an act of worship to God.

Grace-Filled

Grace-filled atmosphere

The central affirmation of Christianity is the grace of God. Although we do not and cannot deserve it, God provides complete salvation from our sins, through the work of Jesus Christ. In response to this grace, parents, teachers and students ought to model the grace of God in their interactions with each other. Living in community with each other means demonstrating patience and forgiveness out of humility and true, Christ-like love for one another.

Motivated by gratitude, we obey God not to earn his love, but because in Christ, we know he already loves us. Therefore, grace does not mean the absence of behavioral expectations. On the contrary, in response to God's grace we ought to strive for obedience and holiness. Our goal in nurturing children is obedience motivated by a heart captured by grace, not the application of a strict set of rules.

Parental Involvement

Grace is exhibited in community, not in isolation. Therefore, at Covenant, parents are active participants in the education of their children and the life of the school. Parents can serve the Covenant community in a variety of ways. First, parents can model for their children the idea of lifelong learning by reading and exploring God's world alongside their children. Second, they can enhance the school by giving of their own giftedness. For some this might mean helping to organize games at recess or joining the prayer group; for others, this might be sharing a passion for a topic in a particular unit, or playing an instrument for the children, or coordinating a school event. Third, parents can serve the community by contributing their time to the life of the school.

Academically Excellent

Distinctive Educational Philosophy

Covenant draws from the best aspects of the Classical education tradition to equip children with the educational tools they need to fulfill their calling in God's Kingdom. Our core curriculum follows a rigorous and incremental approach to help students in this process. As our students mature, they are challenged to use the tools they have mastered to wrestle with the complexity of the created world.

Flowing out of our commitment to God's written Word, we also place great importance on exploring and dialoguing with texts. At Covenant, we seek to place before our students a feast of rich, meaningful and creative works, the best that our culture has to offer. As our children learn to enter the imaginative worlds of great authors, they gain sensitivity to language and character. This grows in them an understanding and empathy for others. Through books they begin to see the ramifications of moral choices. As their understanding develops, they tackle primary sources and begin to participate in the great dialogue of western culture.

Integral Curriculum

Because all truth is God's truth, we believe that students learn best when moral imagination is cultivated and their affections are trained through studies that minimize the artificial divisions between traditional subjects. Thus at Covenant, history, art, and music travel comfortably together through studies woven into thematic units organized around the "spine" of the historical timeline. Wonder, awe, and curiosity are stimulated through the reading of worthy thematic literature and through hands-on exploration. Thematic units are also woven into the core

subjects of language and mathematics, so that students come to see that all of life is religious—that all studies are under the design and purpose of the Creator.

Nurturing the Uniqueness of Every Child

At Covenant, we are committed to helping children grow and mature in all the ways God has gifted them. We delight in the range of gifts God has blessed us with: creativity, verbal expressiveness, mathematical aptitude, empathy, physical gifts, musicianship, imagination, and inquisitiveness, to name a few. We cultivate a climate where children recognize and affirm one another's strengths and encourage each other in areas that may require more perseverance. Ultimately, we challenge our students to view their gifts with humility, praising God for the unique way He has made each one.