



December 2018

Strategic Planning: Scripturally Based Discipleship

Dear Parents and Friends:

Last month I wrote to you about the important reasons for engaging in the strategic planning process and how critical it is for schools like ours to *identify God's agenda and to make His agenda our agenda*. Many Christian school leadership teams from yesteryear failed to strategically plan, thus allowing secular, pluralistic forces to chart new courses for their schools; the result has been destinations their founding members could have never imagined.



Our strategic plan is built upon the most stable of foundations – God's word. We acknowledge He exists eternally in three persons, that salvation is by grace through faith apart from works and secured by the finished work of our Savior, Jesus Christ. As a faculty and staff, we strive to be the hands and feet of Christ as we work, daily, to develop deeper interpersonal relationships with our students. Such relationships are forged within programs, some of which we have documented in our strategic plan as “nonnegotiable” since they help define who we are as a Christian covenant school. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: daily, school wide corporate reading of scripture and corporate school wide prayer; formal Bible classes and spiraling Bible curriculum; weekly chapel programs that include corporate worship and Bible based teaching; small discussion groups divided by grade and gender to address specific topics challenging to tweens and teens; participation in off site, day long spiritual retreats and multiday/night spiritual retreats for grades 11 and 12; the distinguished speaker

program for grades 6-12 that allows Christian leaders to educate students on the important role biblical principles play in decision making processes; support of local and international missions through community service and participation in the capstone international senior missions trip, and more.

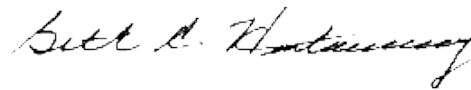


Functioning in a ministerial capacity, the faculty and staff are engaged in participating and leading these student programs, but as leaders more is expected and required of them. Therefore, our strategic plan includes maintaining most existing standards and achieving new ones: a clear oral and written testimony they are a follower of Jesus Christ and proof they are active in a local Bible based church; agreeing to and signing the school's Statement of Belief, Christian Life Commitment Statement, and Biblical Morality Statement; and to achieve and maintain teaching certification with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). In addition to worshipping corporately with their home church on Sundays and with students on Wednesdays, faculty and staff are also required to attend morning faculty devotions two times a week to hear God's word, pray for our students, and to lift up, encourage, and pray for one another.

While scholastic vision is the topic for next month's head's letter, I would be remiss if I did not mention Bible curriculum here. Traditionally, lower and middle school Bible curriculum is purchased from publishers whose content aligns with the fundamental beliefs defined by the school's leadership, as it is at PACS. But in an effort to strengthen our high school Bible curriculum, we have taken the initial steps required to create a stronger spiraling curriculum with interdependencies built on *Learning Standards*. We have more work ahead of us in this area, and we will strive to make this a real center of excellence within our school. It is also appropriate to mention here that PACS requires all teachers to be certified by ACSI or temporarily certified and working towards standard certification. Since ACSI is the premier international Christian school accrediting agency, *we feel it is important to ensure our teachers are trained and equipped to be Christian educators and not merely educators in a Christian school.* Not all Christian schools in the greater Athens area require this Christian education certification of their faculty, but we do because it provides specific instruction on biblical integration and better equips our teachers to minister to our students.

One of the advantages of being a head of school is the opportunity to visit many schools and serve on several accreditation teams to evaluate other programs. As I approach my seventh year at PACS, fourth as head, it is clearer than ever before that our biblically based strategic planning, vision, and mission statements provide the most stable of foundations for our talented faculty and staff to work from as they educate and minister to our students. There is great deal of energy, excitement, and unified vision with the work being done at PACS. I really feel we are on the cusp of something great happening, and to Him be the glory!

Warm regards and in His service,



Seth Hathaway
Head of School

Reference:

Mohler, R.A. (2008). *Culture Shift*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah

Other Head of School Letters to Parents

[It's Not What You Know It's Who You Know](#)

[Embracing Change While Remaining Christ Centered: Covenant Christian School Leadership In a Post Modern World](#)

