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Mission and Vision Statements: Anchors Against Drift

Mission and vision statements today are legion, and their prominent display in many organizations speaks to an awareness of their importance. I recently spoke to the faculty and staff about the importance of remaining mission focused, and the carelessness by some of yesteryear's great Christian organizations which allowed "mission drift" to chart new courses, resulting in destinations the founding members could have never imagined. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in our schools, undergraduate institutions in particular, many of which drift anchorless, promoting

scientific naturalism and the belief that empirical knowledge is acquired solely through the mastery of content. Too often they discard the important role that non-cognitive core ethics and religion play in shaping the moral character of tomorrow's leaders.

"Fixating our focus on Christ - the master teacher - is critical for our future success."

In a deliberate effort to ensure we remain mission focused, two working groups comprised of select

members of the board of trustees and the faculty and staff worked in tandem to revise the school's mission statement. The new, shorter mission statement captures our nonnegotiable core principles of biblical discipleship, pursuit of scholastic excellence, and recognition of the supporting role the arts and athletics play in the cognitive and social development of our students. The new mission statement reads as follows:

Mission Statement

“To partner with Christian families to provide scripturally based discipleship while pursuing excellence in academics, fine arts, and athletics from a biblical worldview.”

The periodic review of our mission statement is an important exercise; omitting this undertaking increases the risk of setting off on a journey with no clear destination or arrival date. So, if our purpose of making disciples and preparing them for college answers the why question: “Why do we exist?” and our mission statement answers the what question: “What must we do to fulfill that purpose?” then what is the vision for the school?

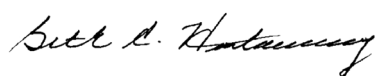
Seasoned leaders are replete with advice on the perils of confusing mission and vision statements; emphasizing the latter should contain guidance and inspiration concerning what the organization wants to achieve in the future. With no vision statement to date, we set about the task of creating one that defined the foundation of our beliefs, our objective, and the method to achieve that objective. It is my pleasure to introduce you to our new vision statement, which reads as follows:

Vision Statement

“Guided by God’s Word as our foundation, we aspire to be the preferred choice for Christian families in the greater Athens area by providing a premier college preparatory education while discipling students to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.”

As a Christian faculty and staff working in a distinctly Christian school, we understand the critical importance of remaining on a steady, fixed course guided by the biblical principles that govern our personal and professional conduct to ensure we provide a safe harbor for exploratory learning and heart training. Fixating our focus on Christ - the master teacher - is critical to our future success and pursuit of excellence. I am thankful for the hard work of the board of trustees and the faculty and staff working groups who helped complete this important work. And as your new head of school, I am also thankful for the privilege to serve the families, faculty, and staff here at Prince Avenue and excited about the journey ahead of us in making tomorrow’s leaders for Christ!

With warm regards and in His service,



Col Seth Hathaway
Head of School