



THE PRINCIPAL'S PAMPHLET

by Melodie McKenzie



PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

**exists to assist parents in the covenantal education
of their children. We instruct students from a
Biblical perspective, within a confessionally
Reformed and classical framework, teaching them to
exalt Christ by pursuing truth, beauty, and goodness.**



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Cultivating Our Ethos

Two years ago, the Board and I read together *Wisdom and Eloquence* by Littlejohn and Evans. While this book's goal is to give a "Christian paradigm for classical learning," we see that many of the thoughts proposed are attained by being purposeful in the choices we make in education.

As I read chapter 4 on "The Community of Faith and Learning," I was filled with gratitude for how our school already values so many excellent qualities and works to incorporate them into the day-to-day lives of students. In response to that chapter, I wrote an informal assessment of our school based on the principles set forth by the authors and submitted it to the Board for reflection. Below is an adapted version of what I wrote.

Ethos: What does our school value?

- **Relationships:** We place a high emphasis on reminding the students that we are each made in God's image. We respect one another in word, deed, and attitude. Students are taught the difference between tattling with the purpose of getting someone in trouble or of correcting or preventing an actual wrong. Discipline (training) is *just* for all and individualized

when needed. The teachers and parents partner together for the good of the children. We follow the Biblical pattern of confession, repentance, forgiveness, restoration, and reconciliation. Our school handbook has an articulate communication policy patterned after Matthew 18.

- **Traditions:** Some of our traditions include all-school morning devotions involving Scripture, prayer, singing of Psalms and hymns, a verse of the week, and a once-a-week pledge to the American flag. Our chapels are once a month with our local ministers. Our all-school events of Evening of Thanksgiving, Recitation Night, and Graduation all include the recitation of Scripture and the singing of an all-school hymn or Psalm. Each year, the students participate in a service project.
- **Co-curricular activities:** Nearly every year, we take field trips to hear an orchestra, to see a play, to a locale that relates to the current history, to one that includes the current science and occasionally to a locale that relates to literature. We also do a service project that typically involves going somewhere to serve. We have gone to Village Woods to bless the folks there, to promote interaction between ages, and to remember our small beginnings. We also have various extra-curricular events like Geography Bee, Spelling Bee, Math Triathlon, and Young Authors.

- **Student Department:** We faithfully teach, memorize, read, and live the Scriptures. Students are constantly directed to examine their choices in the light of what the Bible teaches. The fruits of the Spirit are celebrated and modeled. We have a dress code to bring a degree of consistency to what the students wear and to point toward scholarliness. Manners are taught and modeled during all-school lunch. Respect for all is demonstrated and expected.
- **Professional Comportment:** The faculty as well model this respect in dress and in behavior. We are cautious in how we speak to and about students. We treat all aspects of our job with professionalism and a desire to keep learning and growing.
- **Classroom Management:** We aim to have our classrooms be purposeful and constructive. There should be joy and busyness. The expectations should be clearly set and upheld. The students know that there is a time for everything and everything must be done in the proper time.
- **Physical Imagery:** Our current image of the generous building God gave us and the hard work our parents have done to bring it to life communicates professionalism, stability, and cleanliness. As we grow to embody truth, beauty, and goodness, our school has formed an Aesthetics Committee

to interpret how best to demonstrate these qualities in our building.

- **Planning:** Since reading this book, the Board has instituted an annual strategic planning session. In 2019, we used this time to write the school's mission statement and also outlined some long-term goals. In 2020, we moved forward with the various categories of goals, the most notable being the formation of a steering committee to form a high school.

It is our hope and prayer that Providence will continue along the path that we've begun. We long to grow year by year in shaping the covenantal education of our children by valuing what will last through the many changing decades.

“Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”

~ Colossians 3:12 – 15

Sights and Sounds at Providence

- ❖ Chapel: On the 20th, we were very grateful to have Rev. Svendsen from First CRC with us for chapel. He continued on with our Colossians 3 passage. He encouraged us to show patience with others and not write them off even when they wrong you. God calls us to “put on” these virtues since we were not born with them already. The image of a compassionate heart with kindness, humility, meekness, and patience is a picture of Jesus. We are stamped in His image and must be who He made us to be. Above all these, we put on love which is not self-seeking. We are truly thankful for our ministers coming to share the Word with us.
- ❖ Science Fair: On March 11 & 12, the 6th – 8th graders presented their Science Fair projects to the school. It was exciting to hear the various categories of biology that were examined. We heard about teeth stains, mold & cheese, plants growing under colored lights, the effectiveness of hand sanitizer, and many other topics. The displays were eye-catching and informative. A big thank you to the hard-working 6th – 8th graders.
- ❖ Field Trip: Sadly, there was excessive rain on the planned day of the field trip, but they were able to reschedule for the next day. The Kindergarten were not officially at school, but several of them were able to attend with the 1st – 4th graders on Friday. They went over to Deep River County Parks for their Maple Syrup Time interactive day. The students had a wonderful time, and the afternoon was beautiful weather.

- ❖ Standardized Tests: Our week of Iowa Basic Tests for the 2nd – 8th grades went very well. We had good attendance, and all went as planned. There was one surprising interruption when the Kindergarteners and 1st graders were trumpeting (as quietly as they could) for the walls of Jericho to fall. It all worked out just fine and gave us a good laugh. Note for future: Try not to conquer Jericho during testing week! =-)
- ❖ Recitation Night: We hope you had a great time at our annual Recitation Night. The students and teachers worked hard to present a snapshot of what we do here. We are grateful to Peace PRC for hosting us as it was an ideal location. In case someone in your family missed it, [here is the link](#) for the video. God has gifted our children with such wonderful brains, and it's a delight to hear them use their gifts to give Him honor and praise.
- ❖ Service Project: On the morning after Recitation Night, the students are quite worn out from their week of testing followed by a late night out. We usually do something low-key and enjoyable. This year, we combined this with our service project. Sarah Boer collected addresses of some shut-ins who our families know, and Louise Wright collected addresses of missionary kids. The students practiced their letter writing skills to send friendly notes. We've already received some thank you cards from some folks who were much encouraged. We are so thankful for our students having servants' hearts to spread love to others.

"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

1 Peter 4:8-11

Announcements

- ❖ Field Trip: This year has been quite unusual with so few field trips. Since the trip to the Gabis Arboretum in the fall was such a hit, we've decided to go back on Tuesday, May 25! We plan to take an Illiana bus again, but if any parent or grandparent would like to join us you are most welcome. This will allow the students to experience the plants and nature in a different season and close out our year of biology.
- ❖ Graduation: This year, Graduation will be held at Cottage Grove CRC in South Holland, IL. We are very pleased to have Rev. Gephart deliver an address to the graduates. The K – 8th grade will all sing a hymn and quote their theme verses of the year, and the 5th – 8th grade choir will sing. We look forward to this joyous time to celebrate with our graduates. More details about this event will follow closer to the date.
- ❖ Quarantine: We praise the Lord that no one in our school family has needed to quarantine for COVID in the past month and a half. Thank you all for taking care to stay home when you are sick.

