

Philosophy of Education

Owatonna Christian School (OCS) has a two-fold purpose. First, we seek to assist parents in complying with the biblical directive in Deuteronomy 6:6-10 and in Proverbs 22:6 which states: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Secondly, as a ministry of Grace Baptist Church and knowing as stated in Ephesians 4:11-12 that God has uniquely prepared each person, we strive to fully prepare God's people for the work of the ministry.

This two-fold purpose of OCS is linked directly with our goal of equipping students with God's truth and enabling them to know and fulfill God's purpose in and through their lives. Knowing God's truth brings about a transformation in character and the ability to discern and apply truth in the real world (Romans 12:1-2). Because all truth is based upon God's revealed Truth, the academic curriculum must be infused with biblical principles to produce real knowledge. Knowledge of the natural world, such as the study of language, mathematics, science, history, and other disciplines, should be approached with due diligence so as to produce excellence and effectiveness in living out God's design and purpose in this present world.

At OCS, we desire to build a solid working relationship between teacher, parent, and child to provide the best Christian education experience possible. We seek to assist parents in helping their children to be successful students at all levels of their educational experience. This desire is predicated on the fact that parents support what is happening in the school setting by reinforcing the importance of all curricular areas at home. It is also dependent on parents assisting in the educational process by providing structures at home that create an environment that allows students ample time to focus on their academic needs, as well as their spiritual, social, and emotional needs.

In Christian education, we also recognize the importance of the role of the teachers. They are the living curriculum, serving as models of faith and victorious Christian living. Teachers must be gifted and trained to teach, serve as passionate authorities in their subject area, understand the nature of the learner (including developmentally appropriate teaching strategies for different learning styles), have effective classroom management skills, and must be committed to lifelong learning, demonstrating a desire to continually grow personally and professionally. Additionally, teachers are one avenue by which God's love and grace are demonstrated on a daily basis to each student. It is the desire of each and every person working at OCS to be a demonstration of the love of God. Not only do we want to serve as models of faith, we also want to be models of Christ to our students. We also recognize that God expects the responsibility of stewardship to be demonstrated in the ministry that He allows us to have at OCS.

The students of OCS are the heart of the school. We recognize that without the students, we do not have a ministry. Students are expected to know and follow the expectations set forth in the student handbook and by each individual teacher. As students progress through their educational experience, they should be seeking to grow as Christians and as individuals. The expectations placed on them will increase from year to year, and they need to be willing to accept this challenge. While things will increase in intensity, our expectations will be realistic and reasonable. As with any Christian, their relationship with the Lord should be their first priority. Family should follow closely behind. School work should also be one of their top priorities. The

students of OCS need to strive to achieve their highest potential as Christians and as students.

School work and homework are both vital parts of what we are doing at OCS. Students will be expected to be responsible for their input into their educational experience by focusing on their academic studies both in school and out of school. At the elementary level, some homework should be expected. As a student gets older, the extent of their homework load will be greater. However, our desire is to not have homework interfere with spiritual growth.

It is our goal to prepare each student for whatever path the Lord leads them to pursue, whether they choose a career after graduation or choose to go on for higher education. This goal drives us to make sure that our curriculum adequately prepares those who are college bound and yet offers a good practical education for those who choose a career upon graduation.

The goals of an education at OCS are that individuals will be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ, will be equipped to live victorious Christian lives, and will be able to articulate the good news of the Gospel to others. These young Christians will be academically equipped to do whatever God has prepared for them to do in their lives (Ephesians 2:10).

OCS has the great privilege of instilling the truths of God into our students. We are seeking to give our students the ability to shine as lights in the darkness around them (Philippians 2:15). In doing this, we must faithfully demonstrate how to live in the world while not promoting the things the world values (1 John 2:15). The answer is the Truth of God in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The joy of Christian education is that we have the Truth, the Word of God, and are free to teach it.