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Perspective | Fall 2021



# DISCERNMENT & TRUTH



Discernment is one of the most important tools we can equip our students with, but can be a challenging concept to teach. In 6th grade Bible, Mr. Schutte and Mrs. Kiekintveld recently partnered with their students through a project and reflection focused on discernment and truth.

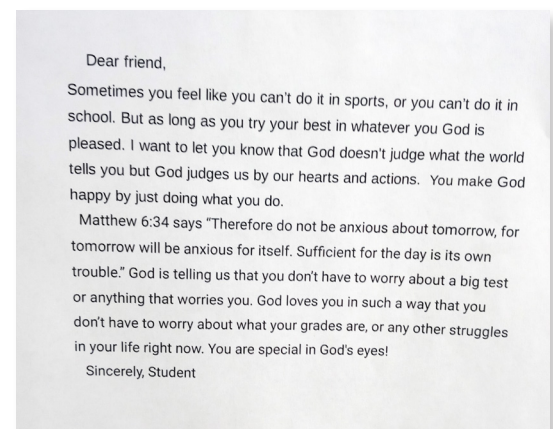
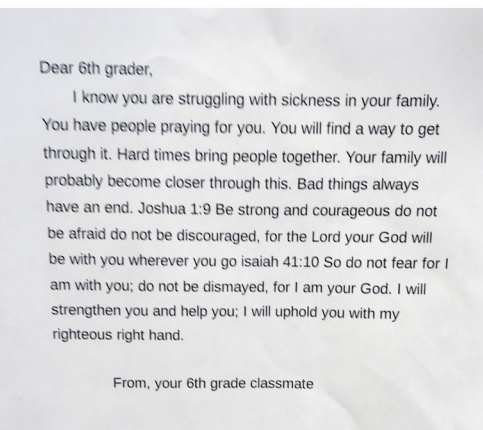
Classes started by examining the messages in our world (“you need more,” “you’re not perfect,” “bigger is better,” “you need to look this way,” etc.). Examples were plentiful including things students see including in advertising, movies, video games, and more.

Next, classes looked at the truths the Bible gives about grace, Christ’s love for us, and His call to love others. Clearly, there is a stark contrast between the two types of messages. This led to a reflection about how the world’s messages affect us. Many times the worldly messages leave us feeling unworthy. Students were clearly able to identify this problem, so they developed an acronym with their teachers. When listening to messages, do they pass the following TEST:

- T** - Is it true, trustworthy?
- E** - Is it edifying to others (does it build them up)?
- S** - Is it seen in God’s Word?
- T** - Is it a trap?

However, learning does not stop at seeing problems and practicing discernment, but continues in prompting students to share. In this case, we can help those who do not feel worthy. Students wrote anonymous letters that used the truth of Scripture to encourage each other and hung them in the middle school hallways. Each letter called for the reader to stay fixed on Christ and His truth.

Middle school can be challenging and students can experience real hurt, but our teachers work to equip our students with skills to discern by pointing them to Biblical truth. This will ensure they stay rooted in God’s Word and are prepared for service to others!







## SCHOOL BOARD UPDATE

Greetings on behalf of the BCCS School Board! We are a few months into the school year and witnessing God's blessings and handiwork in so many ways at BCCS. The storyline this year is "Fixed on Christ, Living His Story," and it has been a joy to watch how God's story is unfolding at BCCS.

We are thankful that God has blessed BCCS with 622 students this year, and we are humbled to partner with each family here. Our community is expanding, and due to this growth, we are diligently exploring different options for expanding our campuses. The Board commissioned an ad hoc committee to explore the West Campus in greater detail as we consider how to continue the legacy of that building. We are also forming a Philanthropy Committee (as well as hiring a new Development Director) to ensure we are able to provide access to talent for the Board to carry out its duties. It will also support the work of the school, both operationally and strategically, from a financial perspective.

Our work continues on improving the language of the proposed governance change which is designed so the board can be more visionary, rather than

focused on school operations. We will have another town hall meeting to review any proposed changes in the coming months.

We are moving forward with the construction of the outdoor learning pavilion that has been generously funded by last year's "Fund the Need" at the auction and the BCCS Parent's Club. A preliminary example is included here.



*A preliminary drawing of the Outdoor Learning Pavilion*

We are also working on long term planning with school leadership in order to ensure greater missional fulfillment in the years to come. The Board, administration, and staff are creating strategic plans that will serve as a guide for operational, facility, marketing, financial,

and academic outcomes. We look forward to ensuring we are continually improving the learning experience for all of our students.

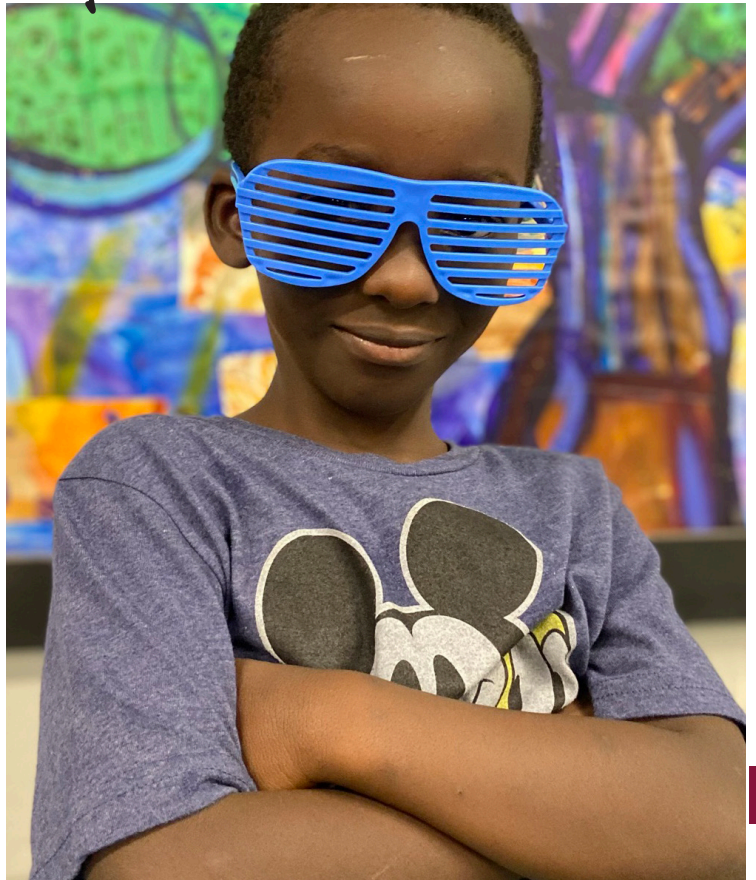
Would you like to learn more about what is happening at BCCS? Feel free to contact our school office to set up a time to hear more.

Thank you to each parent, staff member, and supporter of BCCS for an excellent start to the school year!





**WORTHWHILE, IMPORTANT, &**  
*Essential*





In the art of education, teachers structure lessons to accomplish specific student learning, otherwise known as standards. Students should know a standard as a result of a lesson or unit. While standards can help provide a framework for teachers and an overview of the academic concepts students should learn, there are far too many standards (school/district developed, state, and national) to focus on in one year. Imagine the classroom as a boat in the middle of the sea, trying to decide which way to go in a sea of endless standards. Without a clear focus, the classroom becomes a lost ship at sea, or it is pulled in too many directions and never reaches its destination.

In order to establish a direction and ensure an excellent education that is rooted in God's Word, BCCS teachers take a unique approach to ensure all students are learning. When deciding what to teach, teachers take the 60/60/60 approach to determine which standards are most beneficial for Christian learning.

A skill is **worthwhile** if students need to remember it for 60 minutes. If the concept needs to be remembered for 60 days, then it is **important**. Learning is **essential** if students should remember it for 60 years! This approach helps determine what to teach and how to best use classroom time. BCCS teachers define worthwhile, important, and essential goals in order to provide an excellent and rooted education that is fixed on Christ.

*Essential*  
**"I CAN REFLECT ON MY OWN  
LIFE AND UNDERSTAND MY  
PART IN GOD'S STORY."**



**For example, from 5th grade:**

**WORTHWHILE:** I can brainstorm and identify important things from my life that would make a good story.

**IMPORTANT:** I can retell a story from my own life using proper conventions and detail.

**ESSENTIAL:** I can reflect on my own life and understand my part in God's story.

**Or from 8th grade:**

**WORTHWHILE:** I can understand our bones and skeletal system, and understand the purpose of the skeletal system.

**IMPORTANT:** I can understand the purposes for which God designed the skeletal system and how to keep it healthy.

**ESSENTIAL:** I can understand how life in a fallen world can affect the skeletal system, and I can understand how walking alongside a person (and with God) in difficult times can help heal them physically, mentally, and spiritually.

While there is a lot to learn, we are blessed with a staff focused on ensuring that students have essential faith development and learning on a daily basis!





# Spreading GOD'S LOVE



First grade always begins the year with an important Bible memory verse from 1 John 3:1, which reads, “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”

In order to illustrate the word “lavish” and ensure learning at a deeper level, teachers bring in some homemade strawberry jam. Mrs. Wilson shares:

*It is so delicious that I lavish it onto a piece of bread and continue to take bites in front of the kids, talking about how yummy it is, and letting it drip onto my plate. Of course, they want to try some too, and it is so good that I can't keep it just for myself. Everyone gets to try a piece of bread lavished with homemade jam.*

The essential lesson is that God lavishes His love on His children. He doesn't hold back! His love overflows and He spreads it out generously. Once we receive this love, what can we do in response? We spread it to others because it is too good to keep just for ourselves!

Teachers brainstorm with students ways to spread God's love in day-to-day living: holding the door open for others, praying for each other, hugging our moms, making cards for friends who are sick, and making short video greetings for those who have been sick. As the year continues, they will connect more learning with the actions of spreading love to others. The hope is that students are inspired to do things on their own. Ultimately, students find that spreading God's love creates joy for both the giver and the receiver!

Mrs. Wilson's deep hope is that the children will always remember Jesus' lavish love for them, and that they will spread His love as they learn and grow. Teachers pray that this messy, yummy treat will “stick” with each child, reminding them of God's sweet and lavish love.





# Early EDUCATION

Preschool is a joy-filled, wonderful place. Each day students come to learn, play, and spend time together. At the ages of three and four, our students are engaged in centers, large group activities, small group work, one-on-one instruction, read aloud time, playing outside, and so much more. Teachers are working to foster whole child growth in order to prepare students for kindergarten. In order to ensure each preschool student is rooted in truth, teachers begin the year by sharing the message “Jesus loves you!”

The phrase “Jesus loves you” is so simple, yet so foundational. This is also arguably the most important thing preschool students will learn all year. Teachers share it daily in their lessons and discussions, and they have this phrase displayed in their classrooms and hallways. During the year, teachers will walk through the story of Jesus and what that means for us today. If our preschool students learn nothing else, they will know that Jesus loves them!

Our preschoolers are called to be like Jesus and bring beauty into our world. We want our students to know that they can be beauty creators. In each class, students take time to paint a unique picture that they then describe to their teachers. This exercise helps develop curious thinking and courageous designing, skills we desire all students to have. The pictures included here show some of their work that adorns the hallways of the preschool campus as a visual reminder that God made them to create beautifully.

Even at age three and four, our preschool students are learning who God created them to be!

**OUR PRESCHOOLERS  
ARE CALLED TO BE  
LIKE JESUS AND  
BRING BEAUTY INTO  
OUR WORLD.**







# FIXED ON CHRIST

## Living His Story

Hebrews 12:1-2

We are very excited to share our school verse and school storyline (formerly known as theme) for this year. Teachers, staff, and students partner to select the verse, storyline, and a visual representation that will provide an important focus for the school year. The verse is Hebrews 12:1-2 and the storyline is “Fixed On Christ, Living His Story.”



Hebrews reads “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

The verse serves as a Biblical call to focus on God’s Word. “Fixed on Christ” promotes a rhythm of looking to scripture and standing firm in truth. We were also intentional about using the word “story.” Each student, family member, and staff member is living a personal journey within God’s redemptive story. While we each discover our individual abilities and passions, we seek to engage in God’s story, for His glory. Our deep desire is to invite our students into that journey of discovery and engagement. Their learning should lead to a deeper understanding of God’s story and also inspire action and service. Christ was the ultimate example of how to live, and we want our students to also be empowered to live like Him.

The storyline will guide school chapels and middle school small groups, but will also connect well with each individual classroom. Teachers will display storyboards so students can visually connect everyday learning to God’s larger story.

Let the excitement ensue! Consider how BCCS’s 2021-2022 storyline might also encourage your family and children to fix your minds on Biblical teachings and find ways to engage in God’s story!



# WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR WORRIES?

To begin the year, our fourth grade students were presented with a unique challenge by their teachers. Classes were divided into small groups and given a board with one nail pounded in and seven additional nails. The task was to figure out how to get all seven extra nails on the board without letting the nails touch the board. Kasen (4th grade student) explained, "We had a block of wood and had to balance all the nails on one nail." Reid clarified that they "needed to be careful because only one nail could be touching the block."

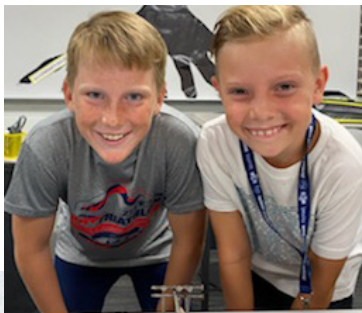
Miss Oetman (4th grader teacher) shares, "We gave them hints along the way and eventually the teams figured out how one nail could hold all seven additional nails. Students shared their specific worries that they need to bring to Christ. These real worries included COVID, sins, new friends, not being good enough, losing a game, family, and more. The classes then reflected on how Jesus can bear all of our worries for us. We want our students to come to the conclusion that Jesus is the one true tall nail that can hold all our worries and concerns for us."

Ben added, "Jesus is our nail and he carries our worries, our pain, and all the bad stuff. He puts it all on the cross. We have to ask Him and give our problems to Him."

Max shared that "sometimes you get frustrated and you should continue to try and ask for help."

Reid explained, "It also reminded us that we need to keep working and keep trying to not give up." Finally, another student concluded, "God made everyone different, and that is all right. God can help us in those situations and He is the most powerful. We are not failures and nobody is because of Christ. If you do not think you can fit in, then you can stand out!"

With one simple activity, students explored real problems that we each experience, and also discovered the real solution we all have in Christ!





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# New STAFF



Kate Bruinsma  
*Art*



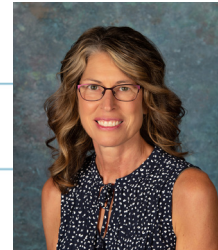
Katie DeVries  
*Choir*



Kris Grimm  
*Student Aide*



Jennifer Hackbarth  
*5th Grade*



Jan Reidsma  
*Preschool Aide*



Chad Rozema  
*Band*



Andrea Sal  
*Student Aide*



Becky Vos  
*Preschool Aide*



Elizabeth Workman  
*Student Aide*



Deb Zondervan  
*Before and After  
School Care*

Anna Konyonenbelt, Katie Peterson, Emily Steenwyk, Lisa Kooyer, Deanne Wilson all took on increased teaching roles as well!

## BCCS FOUNDATION

If you would like to partner with BCCS to help support current students and to ensure future generations receive an excellent Christian education, please consider a donation to our Foundation. This fund supports the operation of the school and reduces the cost of tuition for every BCCS family. Call the office at 616-878-3347 for information and giving opportunities. Thank you in advance for partnering with us to impact the world for Christ!

Josh Hover      Brandon Dykstra

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