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SCHOOL

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Prepared.



Perspective | FALL 2022

BOARD NOTE



Greetings on behalf of the Byron Center Christian School School Board and staff! We are a few months into the school year and witnessing God's blessings and handiwork in so many ways at BCCS again this year. The storyline this year is "See the Story, Live the Story," and it has been a joy to watch how God's story is unfolding at BCCS through the work of our teachers and staff.

Having a thriving and growing community is a blessing from God – 650 students and their families have been entrusted to our care! It has been wonderful to see many new families and students contributing to our thriving community, both in and out of the classroom. Our teachers have done a great job welcoming and inviting students into their individual learning communities and the community at large. We continue to be intentional about creating Christ-centered communities, with a multitude of activities for students that include middle school mixers, retreats, small groups, back-to-school celebrations, and get-to-know-you activities in the elementary grades. Our teachers are intentional about welcoming students into their deep hopes and storylines in order to share their love for both God and learning in their Christ-centered classrooms.

As our community continues to grow and expand, we will continue to be relationship focused and mission centered. We will continue to explore and implement opportunities for all our students, teachers, and staff to grow as we strive for excellence, remain rooted in the Word, and prepare our students to serve God in His Kingdom. That is an important and high calling for our community, and we will continually work to embrace those who have chosen to be a part of it, whether new to BCCS or generational families.

Through consistent growth in the surrounding community and focused energies in promoting the school's preschool and kindergarten programs, our enrollment has increased significantly over the last three years. Therefore, we are at the early stages of the next capital campaign, titled "With Faith," to welcome new families to the West Campus, which is the gateway of our community.

We are calling our campaign "With Faith" because we feel the slogan epitomizes our unwavering belief that God has called us to embark on this journey to expand and renovate the West Campus. "With Faith," all things are possible. "With Faith," we have hope. "With Faith," God will provide the funds necessary for the Byron Center Christian community to continue to carry out our mission. More information will be coming soon, but we are excited to let you know that our need for space is a blessing, and the added space is essential for building God's Kingdom for generations to come through BCCS.

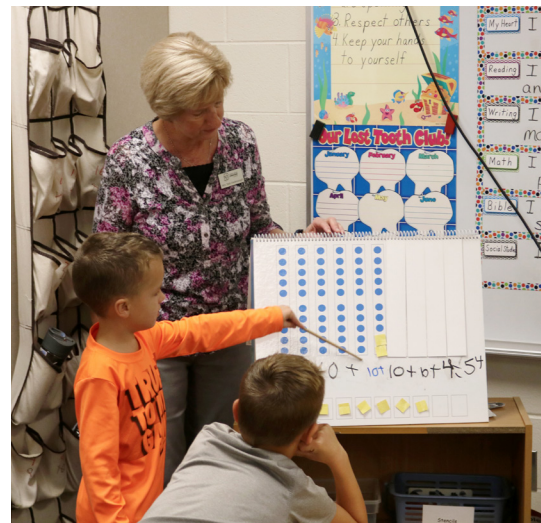
Do you want to learn more about what is happening at BCCS? Feel free to contact our school office to set up a time to hear more.

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

Blessings,

Mike Wolf | *School Board President*

James Onderlinde | *Administrator*



TEACHING FOR TRANSFORMATION

Since 1917, BCCS has worked to provide an authentic, Christ-centered education. Six years ago, we began the implementation of a framework called Teaching for Transformation (TfT) that allows us to be even more intentional about the integration of faith and learning.

TfT helps us provide an excellent Christian education and incorporates two important principles. First, TfT ensures that our school uses best practices in the classroom. Rather than simply delivering content, teachers create learning experiences to engage students inside and outside their classrooms. Students can be found collaborating on a project, role playing in a simulation, or participating in a formational learning experience. The deeper we engage our students, the more they will grow! Learners may be harvesting and selling honey in science, running a Greek court in social studies, walking the community in prayer, performing in orchestra, partnering with a local food bank, or designing a house in geometry. Whatever the lesson, we want our students to be able to practice the things they learn.

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Second, TfT helps us foster the connection between faith and learning. While Bible, prayer, and chapel serve as obvious times for faith formation, we want students to connect all subjects to God's story. Curriculum is structured so that we have student-focused learning targets. Some are academic

specific, while others are long-term targets for the most essential learning. We ask ourselves what type of people we want our students to become. In this way, in all subjects, students see why their learning is important and also see who they can become. Every school shapes the values and worldviews of its students, but at BCCS, we are intentional about using curriculum to shape

disciples. We are passionate about our students using their gifts to play their role in God's much bigger story.

We celebrate the awesome work of our teachers and staff on the TfT journey, and we look forward to years of continued growth and learning!

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"WE ARE CALLED TO USE
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STORYTELLERS

To begin their year, third grade welcomed a storyteller. Sue is a community member who writes and tells stories. She shared a compelling story about a boat captain who gave instructions for passengers about the importance of staying in the life rings that were attached to the boat. Gradually, the passengers played and swam farther and farther from the boat. This led one passenger to get lost at sea. As the missing passenger was sinking for what she thought was the last time, she heard the captain calling, "Swim toward my voice. I will not leave until I find you." The passenger knew that the only way to be saved was to swim to the captain. When the swimmer thought she couldn't possibly go any farther, she felt the captain's strong arms reach down and pull her to safety. Students were captivated by the guest storyteller and the symbolic story she delivered.

This learning experience was an invitation to the third grade storyline, *Be a Storyteller, Tell Your Story*. We are called to use our lives and stories to point to God. He will use the stories of our lives to bring His love and hope into the world.

The students later learned that Sue's friend was very sick with cancer so they made cards to encourage her. When Sue came to class to thank them for the cards, she told them that the cards had been a light in a dark place for her friend, and had even brought her smiles and laughs. Sue also shared with her friend a video of the class singing a worship song. This was a blessing to her friend as well. One small act to share God's love on the part of the class was a bright light for someone else.

Be a Storyteller, Tell Your Story. This storyline presents our third graders with a beautiful challenge. Take your knowledge, your discoveries, and your personal stories, and share them with the world. Bring Jesus to a world that is craving true love and hope.

THE END.



PRE-K

Preschool is such a joyful place! As school begins each fall, we welcome a new group of young learners to our classrooms. In order to ensure each one of these children has a great first school experience, teachers use an inquiry-based curriculum with a learning through fun philosophy. Students participate in a large range of activities including discovery stations, writing activities, math foundations, sensory activities, life stations (restaurants, home living, etc.), arts, crafts, and small group work. Students spend time outdoors daily, interact in large groups, participate in show and tell, and so much more. In this way, rather than teaching to a group, teachers are able to meet the needs of each child and help them grow. Teachers strive to ensure growth of the whole child through various learning objectives, ranging from early mathematics to social and emotional skills.

Teachers also build relationships with each individual student. In preschool, they are loved, cared for, known, accepted, and prayed for as they begin to make BCCS their school home. Most importantly, teachers help students understand how much God loves them. Young learners are introduced to His story (creation, fall, redemption, restoration) and are challenged to show love in their own lives just as God shows His love for us. At the ages of three and four, they will pray and read great Bible stories, but we also want them to discover the connections between their faith and their learning.

If you are interested in either learning more or joining our early childhood programs, check this out!



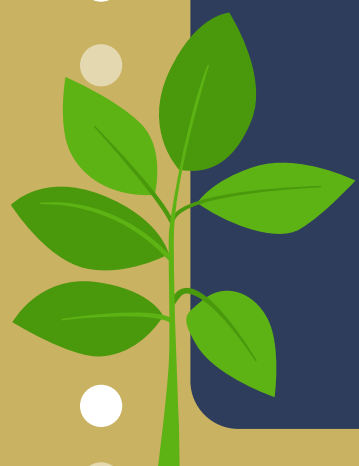
SAVE THE DATE

PRIORITY REGISTRATION

DECEMBER 6

OPEN REGISTRATION

JANUARY 10



Many of our classes will fill, so we highly recommend registering in a timely manner to ensure you reserve a space in one of our exceptional programs. We also offer personal tours of our preschool campus year-round, which is the best way to learn more about our program. God has a path for your child and we want to help you discover that. Contact us to schedule your visit!



Tassels

Why is a tassel so important? In Biblical history, priests wore tassels as a visual representation of putting God on display in everything they said or did. It was their job to reflect God to the people around them, and tassels served as a reminder of that important role. Today, God calls us to be a reflection of Him as we live our lives. We are to put Him on display with our actions and words. We are to do God's will, meet the needs of others, and be bearers of His presence. In the context of our school year, we are to see God's story and also live that story as image bearers. Unfortunately, we fail more often than we would like, but we should always remember our role. Thankfully, God extends His sovereignty and uses broken people!

At BCCS, we help students understand that Kingdom call, no matter their age. Recently, our first grade teachers shared with their students the duty of priests and the reminder role of the tassels. Each child was then given a tassel to place on their backpack.

There is nothing special about a tassel itself, but our hope is that it is a visible reminder to our students of who they are called to be. Specifically in first grade, they are children of the King, invited to spread God's love. Teachers connect learning in all subjects to God's story and provide learning experiences in which students have the opportunity to practice living His story. Just like the priests of old, we are to recognize our call to bring God into the world. We are to live in such a way that others catch a glimpse of Him!



ACCESSIBLE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian education is one of the best investments parents make in the lives of their children. In a world full of competing worldviews and values, a Christian education is arguably more important now than ever before. Mission fulfillment produces the formation of a Christian worldview to provide students a lasting, lifelong impact. However, a question we are commonly asked is: How can this education become accessible for more people who desire it for their family? At BCCS, our goal is to ensure each family can make this investment in their child and have access to Christian education. As we equip students for lifelong service in God's Kingdom, we desire to partner with each family. Due to generous support from our donors, the BCCS Foundation, Parents' Club, and the New Life Thrift Store, we can ensure excellence for each student and accessibility for all families.

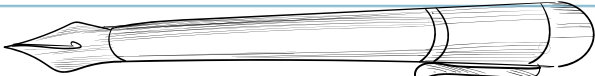
“AT BCCS, OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE EACH FAMILY CAN MAKE THIS INVESTMENT IN THEIR CHILD AND HAVE ACCESS TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.”



BCCS offers a range of tuition rates, called Variable Tuition. In essence, this allows families to apply for a tuition rate that is based on their unique financial situation. While every family is expected to contribute to the cost of tuition and to support BCCS, the Variable Tuition program offers families an appropriate tuition level, making a quality Christian school education accessible for more families within our community.

If you thought a Christian education was not possible from a financial perspective, think again! To learn more, you can visit bcs.org/tuitionanaccessibility or contact us anytime.

6 important reasons to have *a will*



A will is a legal document that lets you decide what happens to your assets (called your estate) when you pass away. According to a recent survey by Caring.com, nearly two thirds of Americans do not have a will or estate plan, and 40% cited procrastination as a reason they do not have a plan. Here are six important reasons you should have a will:

You decide who gets your assets and who does not. The most common and simple reason to make a will is to decide who will (or who will not) get your property when you die. Without a will (or other plan, like a trust), your state laws determine how your property will be distributed—usually to your closest relatives, like your spouse, children, or parents. If you want someone other than a spouse, child, or parent to inherit from you (perhaps a grandchild or close friend), then you need a will to make those wishes known.

You decide who gets your personal property. Again, most people recognize that their estate plan will determine who gets what. But your will can be specific about the personal property you want to give away. Often it is the personal items—the antiques, heirlooms, and pictures—that cause a lot of arguments because they are sentimental. Bonus: You can also specify who gets your pets!

You determine who is responsible for carrying out your instructions. Choosing the right executor is one of the most important elements of creating an estate plan and should not be overlooked. If you choose the wrong executor, you jeopardize efficient execution of your plans. You should also designate a second choice in case the first executor is not willing or able to carry out your wishes.

Your will can name charitable organizations as a beneficiary. According to data collected by Giving USA 2022, only 9% of all charitable gifts made in 2021 were bequests from an estate plan. Without a will, you are not able to preserve a legacy that could benefit your favorite charities for decades to come.

You decide who takes care of your minor children. An estate plan is the only place to nominate a guardian to care for your children. If you think you don't need a will for any other reason, but you have minor children, you should make a will just to name a guardian. If you die without a will, a court will decide who should care for your kids.

Having a will saves time, money, and stress for your loved ones. A clear estate plan leaves no ambiguities in regard to your wishes. Without a clear plan, you create opportunities for costly arguments and contests which often fracture a family.

BCCS partners with The Barnabas Foundation, which provides free estate plan services to member partners. To find out more, please call Ron Fles at BCCS at 616.878.3347 or email Ron at fles@bccs.org.



Storyline

The staff at BCCS has the privilege of working with one of God's most precious gifts to us – children. Students here are loved, respected, cared for, challenged, and supported so they might grow closer to God and into the person He has created them to be. Ephesians 2:10 reminds us that “We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” We all fall short on our own, but because of God’s grace, forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit, we can do good works.

Our storyline or theme for this year is *See the Story, Live the Story*. Seeing the story is important. At BCCS, that means studying God’s Word, committing Bible passages to memory, doing science experiments, practicing math equations, learning about different countries and cultures, and exploring new ways of learning. We use a Biblical lens to see God’s story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration in the world and people around us.

See the Story, Live the Story. What a calling! God desires us to see His story, but also to live it. We are called to engage with people, learn creation’s patterns, understand formulas, study the details of nature, identify rights and wrongs, and help our community flourish. As such, we design learning experiences that allow our students to

practice and use what they have studied. We work with real people, discover real needs, and do real work. We want to go beyond the walls of our building to do good works which God has prepared in advance.

We desire to offer an excellent education, equipping our students to be agents of change, faithfully serving a world and people that need restoration.

May this school year be a great one where we focus not on ourselves or even our students, but on helping each other see and live God’s story.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING BCCS!



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Lauren Miller
*Preschool Teacher and
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Emily Deleeuw
*Preschool Assistant
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Heather Dykhous
*West Campus
Paraprofessional*

BCCS Foundation

If you would like to partner with BCCS to help support current students and to ensure that future generations of students receive an excellent education rooted in Christ, please consider a donation to our Foundation. When you support the Foundation you help reduce the cost of tuition for every BCCS family!

Please call the office at 616.878.3347 or set up an appointment with Ron Fles for more information and giving opportunities. Thank you for partnering with us to impact the world for Christ!



The logo for West Michigan Wellness Group, featuring a stylized mountain range and the text 'WEST MICHIGAN WELLNESS GROUP'.

Kevin DeKam
MA, LPC
616-600-1187

The team at WMWG is committed to serving you, providing counseling services in the West Michigan area.





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The mission of Byron Center Christian School is to provide for children of the Christian community
AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION, ROOTED IN GOD'S WORD, preparing them FOR LIFELONG SERVICE in God's Kingdom.

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