



BYRON CENTER  
**CHRISTIAN**  
SCHOOL

**EXCELLENT.  
ROOTED.  
PREPARED.**



**PERSPECTIVE** SPRING 2023



# CAMPUS PLANNING

It is with great excitement that we embark on the next phase of the BCCS Capital Campaign titled "With Faith." This slogan embraces our unwavering belief that God is leading us to embark on a journey to expand and renovate our West Campus to accommodate our growing enrollment and to upgrade learning spaces for our children.



This year, our West Campus celebrates 75 years of serving the Christian school community in Byron Center. In 1948, the day the school building opened its doors for the first time, students carried their books two blocks from the old school to the new school, which then consisted of 220 students in kindergarten through 10th grade.

Currently, the West Campus serves 240 students in preschool, junior kindergarten, and kindergarten alone, with kindergarten projected to be our largest grade next year. With better utilized spaces and flexible programming to meet the needs of our families, we are seeing our growth align with that of the Byron Center area over the last decade. The beautiful building and campus is the gateway to our school, and it is in



need of investment to better serve our children and families as well as fulfill our mission of providing an excellent, Christ-centered education. We look forward to preserving the legacy of this building for generations to come.

Since BCCS has experienced consistent growth over the last 5 years and has implemented the necessary programming to transition from two homerooms to three homerooms moving forward, additional space and balance between the two campuses is much needed. To accomplish this task and prepare for needed classroom space in a few short years, we plan to add four new preschool classrooms, three additional classrooms, a dedicated media center, and a secure main entry to the existing facility. This will double the size of the current building, allowing us to balance both campuses with 350-400 students each by bringing 1st and 2nd grades back to the West Campus upon the project's completion.

More detailed information will be shared soon, along with a public launch event, as we continue to work with CarbonSix Construction, The Architectural Group (TAG), and the many contractors that support our school and mission in the coming months.

As we prayerfully move forward "With Faith," the generous support from our Christian school community is necessary. If you would like to see a more detailed plan of the project and how you could significantly bless what God is doing at BCCS, please contact Ron Fles, Director of Development, at [fles@bccs.org](mailto:fles@bccs.org) or James Onderlinde, Administrator, at [onderlinde@bccs.org](mailto:onderlinde@bccs.org) for additional information.

As we stated in our last Perspective article, "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.

## BLESSINGS,

James Onderlinde, Administrator  
Mike Wolf, BCCS Board President



## Authors and

Learning abounds in our preschool classrooms, where our teachers design play-based environments to promote learning which focuses on the whole child. Throughout their day, students participate in a variety of activities including centers and small groups where they receive targeted instruction. Teachers continually track progress and modify instruction to nurture learning for each child. Our curriculum integrates 36 learning objectives ranging from academic skills such as early literacy, mathematics, and science, to emotional awareness and social skills. We offer a wide variety of preschool programs, but all options use the researched-based *The Creative Curriculum*.

In addition, the Teaching for Transformation framework ensures that students engage with real people and do real work within the context of God's story. Children are invited to be part of God's redemptive work. Recent examples of this include authors and masons!

During their unit on trees, our preschoolers created a book full of information and pictures and published it on Amazon so others could enjoy trees as part of

## MASONS



**Proceeds from the book sales will be used to purchase more trees for our West Campus.**

God's creation. Proceeds from the book sales will be used to purchase more trees for our West Campus.

In another classroom, preschoolers were learning about buildings. To deepen learning, teachers invited a local mason to demonstrate his work. Students learned all about masonry, helped him mix and lay mortar, and even built a wall with their own bricks!

The development and learning that occurs at the ages of three, four, and five is foundational, and the joy found in our preschool rooms as children count, read, play, and sing is fantastic. Most importantly, we invite our students into God's story by connecting their learning to His plan as soon as they begin their journey at BCCS.





4TH GRADE

# BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE

**HOW DO OUR FOURTH GRADE TEACHERS TAKE GEOGRAPHY LESSONS AND BRING THEM TO LIFE?** They design lessons that include experienced people, a challenging simulation, and a thoughtful reflection. Our 4th grade teachers explain:

*In our learning about human geography, our students discover why and how people come into the United States and the effect that has on culture. We are excited to teach our students the importance of this topic through the lens of Christian Kingdom building. We know that it is highly influential to hear from someone who experienced this journey first hand, so we invited a Byron Center couple who immigrated from the Netherlands to speak with us. They shared their experiences, including their reasons for wanting to move and the challenges they faced. Students examined their visa paperwork and green card, and asked them all sorts of thought-filled questions. We then invited the students to research and present an immigrant or an immigrant group in history. The intent was for students to put themselves into the shoes of an immigrant to learn more about God's people. Our long-term target for students was: I can recognize how I am to respond as a Christian to the beauty in diversity and challenges that may occur.*



**We are excited our 4th grade teachers and students found ways to develop genuine empathy for God's people.**

*school day. They ended the day saying, "That was a lot harder than I thought!"*

This immigration experience allowed our students to wonder, explore, and discern. We are excited our 4th grade teachers and students found ways to develop genuine empathy for God's people.

*As we thought about immigration throughout the history of the United States, students recognized that being an immigrant has many challenges. One of those challenges is packing essential belongings to permanently move to a new country.*

*To gain empathy for this particular challenge, students engaged in a suitcase simulation. During this simulation, students practiced empathy by living out of a suitcase for a day. They pondered what it would be like to put what they have in such a small case. What would they pack? What would get left behind? Students carried their carefully packed suitcases for a full*

## COMMUNITY BUILDING IN FIRST GRADE



Recently, our first grade teachers read *The Girl in the Yellow Dress* to their students to go along with their devotion theme of kindness. This book is about a child who fills her dress pockets with food in order to feed her family. Students were quite bothered by this story and the concept of hungry children. After talking with their teachers, they were eager to take action and help hungry kids right in our own community. Teachers invited a representative from Hand2Hand to share about their ministry of feeding hungry kids in Byron Center. The first graders were inspired to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

To deepen learning, our first grade teachers paired this opportunity with curricular standards. They reframed their informational writing lessons and had their students compose a letter

to their parents explaining the ministry, sharing their desire to help, and requesting specific food items. These writing lessons hit the learning target of clearly communicating using writing. Families read the letter and were excited to respond with mac and cheese, cracker packs, meat sticks, and Ziploc bags. After the items were collected, students further practiced writing skills by adding jokes to be placed in the goodie bags. (Our first graders love to tell silly jokes!) Next, the first graders visited Hand2Hand, learned more details about the ministry, determined what food needed to go in each bag, and packed the items themselves.

The teachers later commented, "We found purpose in writing, rather than just learning isolated skills. This experience will also be helpful to reflect on when we study needs and wants in social studies soon." Thinking about the children who would receive the food packs, the students reflected, "They will feel God in their hearts!" "They'll think people care about them." "The kids are going to smile."

The long-term goal was to empower young learners to make a difference in God's world. Students were community builders by meeting the needs of hungry children and by using their words to encourage those around them. To connect learning to that goal, they used their new writing skills to make it happen!



1ST GRADE

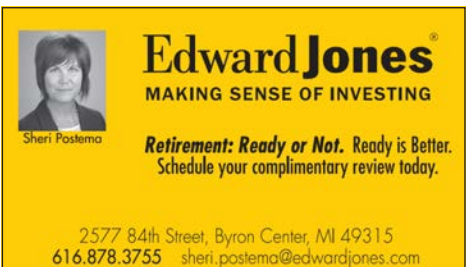
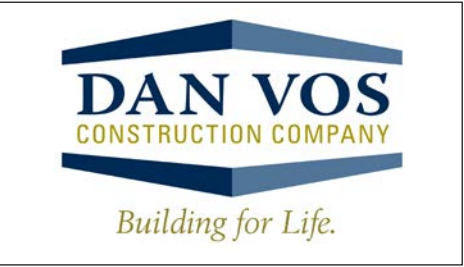


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THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING BCCS!



# 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!*





BYRON CENTER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL  
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BYRON CENTER, MI 49315

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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.

## IMPORTANT DATES

**NOW  
OPEN**

Preschool &  
Kindergarten  
Registration

**ON  
GO  
ING**

Personal  
Tours

APRIL  
**21**

Annual  
Auction



BYRON CENTER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL  
**Spring** into  
**Auction**  
RAILSIDE GOLF CLUB



APRIL  
**27**

Grand  
Friends'  
Day

**KEEP UP WITH BCCS!**



[BCCS.org](http://BCCS.org)