

ACS BOARD NEWSLETTER

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Learning and Teaching Decorum

Mr. Ron Schipper
Chairman, Education Committee

Every teacher at our school must teach every assigned subject from a Godly, spiritual and confessional viewpoint. Every classroom teacher at our school must teach Bible and lead in devotions. After those two “musts,” regarding what is taught at our school, the responsibilities of teachers tend to diverge based on grade level and specialties.

There is another field of study which must be taught and learned by every parent, teacher, staff member and student. I am speaking of decorum; propriety and good taste in conduct and appearance according to Merriam Webster.

There is a real academic and secular need for our school to insist that decorum is taught here. If our school teaches every subject splendidly, but our students leave without decorum, we are failing them. Their capability in further learning, the work world and society in general would be significantly limited.

Undoubtedly, there is a more pressing spiritual need for our school to insist that decorum is taught here. Decency and good order are commanded by God. Matthew 7:12 and Titus 2:7-8 are just two of the many passages exhorting us to be civil and orderly. Decorum shows others evidence of God’s love in our hearts. Christian deportment is our everyday witness to the whole world that we belong to an orderly Savior.

In order to be successful as institute of Christian learning, our school must insist on decorum. Uncivil treatment of anyone by anyone in our school is unacceptable to God. Strife is an enemy of learning, Peaceful encouragement and cooperation is the only way to be prosperous in our task of training up covenant children in the fear of our God.

The teaching and learning of decorum is not only for teachers. It is the responsibility of everyone involved with the school. Let’s learn from our forefathers and by paying real attention to the Godly examples which God has placed in our lives. Let’s teach by example. Please pray that our school is given by God all that we need to impart all of the subject matter, including decorum, for His Name’s honor and Glory.

“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;” (Romans 12:10)

What is Precious?

Mr. Joe Kuiper
Chairman, Finance Committee

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.” (Matthew 13:44)

The first question and answer in the Essentials of Reformed Doctrine catechism instruction reads as follows: *Q. What is above all things precious? A. The knowledge of the true God through Jesus Christ Whom He has sent.*

Above **ALL THINGS** precious. My recent reading of this question and answer caused me a lot of thought on this matter. The question and answer are straight forward and clear. This question and answer also caused me to take the thought much further. After the thing that is **above all things** precious, what else is very precious? What else is very precious to me?

And then the thought caused me to think about Adams Christian School. Things that have been said about ACS in recent months have caused most of us to think of ACS often. We wonder what the future will hold. Maybe we appreciate what God has given to us with ACS more than we did before. I know I do. I know many others do. They’ve told me.

Is Adams Christian School precious to us? Are our children precious to us? Is *“the knowledge of the true God through Jesus Christ Whom he has sent”* above ALL things precious to us? I’m confident that the answer for us to all of these questions is yes.

Close your eyes and think about your children. Take some time to do so. Maybe a few minutes. Just think about your children. Nothing else. Think of how you love them. Think of how much you love them. Think of how you can hardly believe that God would give you something so precious. Think about how much joy you have in your life because of them (in spite of the crazy you have developed because of them). That’s quite a feeling isn’t it. Your mind can hardly (if at all) comprehend how precious these children are. And how precious they are to you. And all because God made them that way, and chose them to be His children, as completely undeserving as they are. And that God chose us to be the parents of such precious children of God, as completely undeserving as we are. It’s almost unbelievable! It really is.

But now remember what is *“above all things precious”*. The answer isn’t our children. The answer isn’t our spouse. The answer isn’t Adams Christian School. The answer isn’t any earthly possession. The answer is *“The knowledge of the true God through Jesus Christ Whom He has sent”*.

What does this have to do with Adams Christian School? Adams Christian School infuses into all of its teaching *"The knowledge of the true God through Jesus Christ Whom He has sent."* This is clear from our Basis of Belief which begins *"The supreme standard of Adams Protestant Reformed Christian School shall be the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, herein confessed to be the infallibly inspired written Word of God, the doctrine of which is contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dordrecht, and the Netherlands or Belgic Confession. These form the basis for administration, instruction, and discipline in the school."*

Is that precious to us? How precious? That which is *"above all things precious"* is taught to our children at this good Christian school. So that which is above all things precious is taught to our children, who are incredibly precious, by their teachers, who are amazingly precious, and reinforced to our precious children by their classmates, who are also the precious children of God. Think about this all for a minute.

What a gift we have from God in Adams Christian School. Let us never forget it.

So now the question may be, well what does this all have to do with a newsletter article from the Finance Committee? School finance is a necessary part of running a school. And sometimes school finance gets a bit tougher. It becomes more of a financial burden. And when that happens, it is important to remember what is precious.

Such is the current case at ACS. We have some financial challenges ahead of us that have arisen quickly. A decline in enrollment and shrinking of the donor base has caused some financial challenges and will continue to in the near future. Currently, ACS finds itself with expected tuition revenue \$120,000 under the budgeted amount. It also finds itself slightly behind prior years in the support drive. It also finds itself in a situation where, if nothing else on the budget changed at all for next year, tuition would have to increase roughly 9.5% for 2022-2023. This is not to paint a gloomy picture. It is just reality.

I know God will provide for ACS. He always has. I also have utmost confidence that you, the supporters of ACS, will be eager to make this year's budget, next year's budget, and budgets beyond, a reality, through the giving of God's good gifts.

When we consider the additional needs of the current year support drive, when we consider the possibility of a tuition increase, when we consider volunteering at the school, when we consider sending a kind note to our child's teacher, when we prepare our child for another day of covenant instruction at Adams Christian School....let's remember what is precious. And let us give all thanks and praise to God alone, who in his grace gives all of these things to us, undeserving sinners.

"My heart doth overflow, a goodly theme is mine; my eager tongue with joyful song, doth praise the King Divine" (Psalter 124:1)

The Handshake

**Mr. Scott Mingerink
Athletic Director**

April 28, 1946, opening day for the Montreal Royals. Jackie Robinson in his first regular season game in a formerly all-white minor league system, hits a 3-run home run. Before he can even cross home plate, the outreached hand of George Shuba is there to congratulate him. It marks the first time that a black player and a white player shake hands on a professional baseball field.

For centuries the handshake has been a positive part of sports. It has been a way of demonstrating good sportsmanship toward the opponent. In hockey, men literally pound each other with their hands for 60-minutes and when the final horn sounds, the gloves will come off again, and they shake hands in the middle. After a back-and-forth tennis match, players meet at the net to shake hands and congratulate each other. In golf, after battling each other for 18 holes, there is a removal of the cap and shaking of hands to congratulate the victor. In basketball, players will shake hands before the first tip and at the completion of the game. These practices demonstrate a respect for the opponent, and in post-game handshakes, graciousness in victory or defeat. In September, I sat through my first Athletic Directors meeting and the decision had to be made about whether we were going to go away from the "handshake" again this year. I was delighted to see that it was agreed upon unanimously to bring back the handshake. As someone who has played sports their entire life, I believe it is important that our students get back to shaking hands. It's how we show respect for the game, our opponents, the rules, the officials, teammates, and it's how we show respect for ourselves and Who we represent as Christian athletes of Adams Christian School. It is important to remember as young Christian athletes it is how you can, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Boosters Update

**Mr. Nate Bodbyl
President, Boosters Club**

After a year off, this past August, we were able to hold the Father Daughter canoe trip down the Rouge River. We had fathers and daughters of all ages and great weather. Paddling down the river presents a wonderful opportunity to talk to our children about creation and the amazing power of our God! Please sign up to come next year when a date is announced!

The annual auction requires planning early in the year. This year the Boosters passed a motion to again hold an online auction on November 12. The details for the auction will be similar to last year's event with early registering and the auction being hosted through Miedema Auctioneering's website under the Charity section. <https://bid.miedemacharity.com/auctions> A big thank you in advance to the Miedema team for helping us out! The auction will be 8AM – 8PM with item pick up the next day on Saturday the 13th from 11AM – 1PM at Adams. Items continue to be uploaded to the auction site so keep an eye

out every week for what is new! We all miss having the in-person fellowship the night of the auction so this year the Boosters approved having a cookout on Saturday during the pickup. We look forward to seeing you by the barn where Boosters will help load any items in your vehicle! Donations are still being accepted for the auction as well so please contact Tedd VanSolkema (616-366-2371) (teddvansolkema@gmail.com) or any of the Boosters.

If you would like to serve in the work of the Booster's please reach out to any of the Boosters or myself (natebodbyl@gmail.com) for our next meeting date.

ACS Foundation News

Mr. Joel Dykstra
President, ACS Foundation

Just fresh into my first year on the Adams Foundation, I can see that since my last time serving, this vehicle for supporting our school is really rolling. Our supporters are increasingly becoming more aware of the foundation and its long-term goals. Over the last few years, we have received many gifts and bequests from supporters that will be experienced by our school for years to come.

In addition, the golf outing was a great success. We thank those who golfed and the sponsors! - This year, we were able to raise another \$20,000 for the school. This event assists us in our goal to bring the foundation in front of our constituents each year. This year we are able to raise our amount given to the school from \$15,000 to \$25,000.

We give thanks to God for His faithfulness to our beloved school. We ask for your continued prayers and support and that you will remember Adams Christian School in your financial planning. If you would like to know more about how the foundation functions, please reach out to any of the foundation members: Andy Baas (treasurer), Ted VanSolkema (secretary), Derrick Kuiper, Jared Langerak, Tim Kortering, and Joel Dykstra (president).

In closing, we extend thanks to Justin Kamps and Tim VanTil for their three years of faithful service to the foundation and labors for the school.

"They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this."
Ps. 22:31

Technology Oversight

Mr. Tyler Pipe
Chairman, Technology Committee

Technology is all around us in our everyday lives. Self-driving cars, watches that tell us when to take a walk, phones demanding our attention, ovens that can turn on remotely, refrigerators that tell us what to shop for. As Christians, we must always be on guard with technology use. Does it rule over my life? Can I live without it? Does it help me love the neighbor and God or does it just serve my self-interests? To many of us, technology can be intimidating and viewed as a gateway to abounding sin.

When dealing with technology we must remember Romans 14:14, *"I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself."* God does not make something sinful, but we do. Like anything in life, we can use technology as an instrument of good or evil.

Just like in the world around us, technology use is on the rise at Adams. We now have a chromebook for each student from 3rd to 8th grade at Adams. These chromebooks are wonderful tools for both the teachers and students. Chromebooks are used for Google documents, Quizlet (game quiz), Google Classroom (assignments), Typing Club, Kahoot (game quiz), Reflex (math) and even Iowa Basics. Yes, that's right, no more filling in small circles with a #2 pencil. With all these computers being used it begs the question, 'how are we protecting our children from using these gifts for good and not for evil'. Thankfully Adams began using a classroom management tool called GoGuardian about 5 years ago. GoGuardian provides our school three vital protective services:

1. It allows teachers to see real time what is on each student's chromebook screen. For example, if twenty-five students are on their chromebooks then the teacher can monitor all twenty-five students' screens from the teacher's computer. .
2. GoGuardian gives Adams the ability to manage both an approved website list and a blocked website list. If a teacher would like to use a certain website in their classroom, they simply email Dave Harbauch who then adds it to the approved list. On the other hand, if a student is on a non-instructional website that can be blocked. A social media platform like Youtube is one of many that is on the blocked list.
3. GoGuardian also monitors what our children are searching while on a chromebook. There is a list of 'hot' words that GoGuardian has identified. The 'hot' word list includes such words as gun, bomb, kill, canon, etc. GoGuardian provides Adams with a complete list of all the websites that students searched that included 'hot' words. Dave Harbach then reviews to determine if that student's teacher should be notified of questionable activity. Most of the time these searches are classroom related but may have included an advertisement popup that had the word 'gun' in it.

As a school, we are thankful for the opportunity to use computers and for the protective measures we have in place. We bear the ultimate responsibility in safeguarding God's children from the world, their flesh and the devil.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)