

FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

Revised September 16, 2015

MISSION

The mission of Veritas Academy is to assist parents in the education of their children by cultivating truth, goodness, and beauty in students through a distinctly Christ-centered, classical, and covenantal education.

FOUNDATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The foundational commitments of a classical, Christian, and covenantal school (or any other school) distinguish it as an institution and are the standards against which all new ideas and practices are tested. They are the core values to which the school (board, administration, faculty, and families) is committed and for which it is responsible to safeguard and promote for future generations.

1. Christian Worldview: We believe that every aspect of our children's education must be intentionally founded upon biblical truth.

We believe the focal point of all that is, has been, and ever will be is the person of Jesus Christ. We believe that the education of our children begins with this reality. God reveals Himself not only specially in His Word, but also generally in every facet of His creation. All knowledge is therefore interrelated and teaches us about God's character, wisdom, and power. Ultimate reality exists only in Him, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and therefore truth can be understood only as it relates to Him, the God of Truth and Sovereign Lord over all. The Scriptures teach that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. We believe therefore that every aspect of our children's education must be intentionally grounded in and integrated with biblical truth.

At Veritas Academy biblical truth is understood and applied from the perspective of historic orthodox Protestantism in general, and Westminster Presbyterianism in particular.

2. Classical Liberal Arts: We are committed to the traditional and long established, exemplary forms and standards in education handed down from ancient and medieval educators.

We are committed to a classical liberal arts education; the traditional and long established, exemplary forms and standards in education handed down from ancient (Greek, Roman) and medieval educators. Our methods and curriculum are modeled on the medieval Trivium. The Trivium is understood as an approach to instruction in which the tools of learning are imparted to students in stages that correspond with their natural pattern of cognitive development

(grammar –the tool of knowledge, logic –the tool of reasoning, and rhetoric –the tool of communication). The goal of the Trivium is to educate students not in what to think primarily; but in how to think thoroughly, maturely and biblically. We understand that the liberal arts of antiquity denoted the education “worthy of a free man” (Latin liber, “free”) –an education intent upon cultivating wisdom, virtue, and eloquence through the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty. We emphasize and seek to preserve and pass on to successive generations the richness of our Christian and Western cultural heritage.

3. Covenantal Family Based School: We seek to assist parents in their God-given task of educating their children in the Lord.

We believe that God's covenant is family-based, embraces believers and their children in God's redemptive purposes, and provides the key for understanding the status and duties of parents and children in the home, the church and school. We believe God has granted to parents the responsibility and authority for raising their children, including the responsibility of educating them. We seek to assist parents in this God-given responsibility. We also believe that God's work in the life of children occurs primarily in the home and through the ministry of local churches. We purpose to be an extension of the home and churches --educators who function as agents and servants of parents and churches. We endeavor to provide a model of educating children in which parental involvement is encouraged, indeed, even required. We are committed to fostering a covenantal community of like-minded families, who, with our faculty and staff, encourage one another in their calling to bring up their children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

4. Wisdom and Virtue: We believe that true education culminates in wise and virtuous students who are being conformed to the image of Christ.

We believe each child is a living and eternal soul to be nourished, not a product to be manufactured. The purpose of education is not instilling knowledge alone, nor is it merely providing vocational skills. The purpose is inculcating wisdom and virtue in the life of each student. We seek true wisdom that begins with the fear of the Lord, is rooted in the Scriptures, and encompasses all of human experience. We aspire to virtue that reflects the moral excellence of Christ, expresses itself in faithful obedience to God, and demonstrates love to others. Wise and virtuous students will become understanding, thoughtful, and courageous leaders in our homes, churches, and communities.

5. God-Honoring Excellence: We are dedicated to teaching and learning with excellence as unto the Lord.

We believe that all instruction must encourage students to love and honor God through their academic endeavors. God commands us to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Students must be challenged at all levels to do quality academic work "heartily, as unto the Lord" because God is worthy of their best. We employ gifted teachers who possess a passion for learning, a passion for teaching, and a passion for Christ. We want our students to possess a love of learning and be well equipped for their future callings.

6. Appropriate Forms and Habits: We believe that true education recognizes that hearts and minds are shaped not only by ideas and knowledge, but also by practices, habits, routines, and liturgies.

We seek to deliberately develop a culture in the school in which every idea, truth, and concept has its fitting visible expression. We seek not the artificial formality of the arrogant, nor formality for formality's sake, but rather a wise attention to form that continually favors appropriateness over casual and comfortable complacency. We believe that true education recognizes that hearts and minds are shaped not by ideas and knowledge only, but also by practices, habits, routines, and liturgies.

APPROACH

Our approach to classical, Christian, and covenantal education then flows from our foundational commitments.

1. Condensed Day Format

Veritas provides academic instruction in a condensed day format in which lessons and instruction in core academic subjects (e.g. reading, penmanship, grammar, math, science, history, literature, and Latin) are provided during a shortened school day. The condensed day format efficiently uses classroom time during school hours, enables parental involvement in the student's education, and maximizes the family's role in shaping the child's faith and character.

Mornings are taken up with academic classroom work, which is pursued with the utmost diligence. This includes mathematics, language arts, Latin, history, and science.

Afternoons are devoted to home-based academic work, requiring involvement of parents. While Veritas provides the bulk of academic instruction in the classroom and does not expect parents to teach formal lessons at home, Veritas does desire parents to be involved in their child's education. Parental engagement in the afternoons will vary depending on the age of the student (more for younger and less for older students), ability of the student, and nature of the assignment. Veritas provides a significant list of books that are to be

read at home. It is our intention that every family set aside a daily "quiet" hour devoted exclusively to reading. Our expectation is that since students are not spending a full day sitting in a classroom, more time may be committed to reading, homework, and other educational activities. Elective courses in art, music, drama, and physical fitness are also made available in the afternoons at Veritas Academy.

Late afternoons and evenings are free for family-based activities and enrichment pursuits. Music lessons, athletics, ballet, civic clubs, and other such activities may be enjoyed more than might otherwise be possible.

Thus we combine the substantive academics of classical education with the family-engagement emphasized by home-educators.

2. Trivium Based Instruction

Grammar – Grades K-6: During the Grammar phase, when children are particularly adept at memorization, we challenge them by providing substantial subject matter for them to memorize. Each subject has its own grammar. In science, children memorize facts about nature. In math, children memorize times tables. In Latin, teachers emphasize vocabulary. Throughout each year in Grammar School, Veritas students learn the factual foundation of each subject. We use songs, chants, and rhymes to help children enjoy the learning experience.

Logic – Grades 7-8: The Logic phase involves ordering facts into organized statements and arguments. During these middle school years, when students are beginning to think independently and often develop a propensity for argument, Veritas teaches students to argue well and reason clearly. The study of formal logic helps students understand the fundamentals of a good argument. Practice in making written and oral arguments in all subjects helps to further develop these skills. Again, each subject has its own logic. In science, we use the development and testing of hypothesis. In math, we develop a student's ability to logically orient numbers through the more abstract concepts of algebra and geometry.

Rhetoric – Grades 9-12: Rhetoric is the art of communicating well. Once a Veritas student has obtained a knowledge of the facts (grammar) and developed the skills necessary to arrange those facts into arguments (logic), he develops the skill of communicating those arguments to others (rhetoric). During the high school years, students become concerned with expression, articulation, and creativity. Classical education helps students develop their minds to think and articulate concepts to others. Writing papers, researching, and orating ideas are skills required in all subjects. Veritas leverages these skills through the final requirement of the defense of a senior thesis.

While each component has a primary focus during a particular phase, all skills are developed during all levels. A second grader will develop certain skills in logic and rhetoric. A high school student will still acquire extensive grammar level knowledge in specific subjects (e.g. chemistry). Emphasis is simply placed on different phases during different ages.

GOALS

Our aim, in conjunction with the family and church, is to graduate young men and women who:

- Love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength;
- Evaluate all human knowledge and experience in the light of the Scriptures;
- Are equipped to engage and shape the culture with the Truth of Scripture;
- Listen carefully, reason soundly, articulate precisely, and speak persuasively;
- Have mastered a core body of knowledge and are capable of discussing great ideas;
- Possess a life-long passion for learning and know how to apply the tools of learning;
- Lead and serve their family, church, community, and nation with humility, gratitude, and grace.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The mission, commitments, approach, and goals described above flow from the faith commitments of Veritas Academy. The program at Veritas is the direct consequence of its theological convictions.

Our statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as defined by the 66 canonical books of the Old and New Testament, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For the purposes of Veritas Academy's faith, doctrine, practice, behavioral standards, policy, and discipline, our board of directors is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, with its Larger and Shorter Catechisms, is the doctrinal foundation upon which the Veritas Academy is built. We believe it is a faithful, comprehensive, and reliable exposition of Biblical teaching. The theology of the Confession is the bedrock of our Christian worldview and gives shape and substance to the entire curriculum. The following may serve as a convenient summary.

Statement of Faith Summary

- We believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, free from error, and our only infallible rule of faith and practice.
- We believe that there is one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who are of the same substance, equal in power and glory.
- We believe that this Triune God created all things and governs all things, decreeing and determining "whatsoever comes to pass."
- We believe that man is created in the image of God, and yet is fallen in Adam. As a consequence, he is under the power of sin, spiritually dead, cursed of God, and unable and unwilling to save himself.
- We believe in the dual nature of Christ. Jesus Christ, eternal Son of God, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is truly God and truly man. He lived a sinless life, was crucified, died, and was buried. On the third day He rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God.
- We believe that on the cross Jesus Christ bore the sins of His people, accomplishing the salvation of a multitude which no one can number, and that salvation may be found nowhere but in Him.
- We believe that justification is a gift of God's free and unmerited grace received by faith alone apart from good works.
- We believe that the theme of "covenant" provides the framework for understanding the Scripture; that there is one basic covenant of grace; that Old Testament and New Testament believers are saved by faith in the mediator of the Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ; that the moral law, summarized in the Ten Commandments, is the law of the Covenant, and normative for believers in both eras.
- We believe that the three primary means by which God's grace in Christ comes to us are the Word (especially the preached word), the sacraments, and prayer. Furthermore, these means have been entrusted to the visible church, the house and family of God, outside of which (the church) there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.
- We believe that God's covenant is family-based, embraces believers and their children in God's redemptive purposes, and provides the key for understanding the status and duties of parents and children in the home, the church and school.
- We believe that Jesus Christ now rules over all creation from the right hand of God, and will one day return in glory to judge the living and the dead, and consummate His eternal kingdom.

STATEMENT ON THE SANCTITY OF LIFE, MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

- We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically and mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life.
- We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complimentary genders and sexes together reflect the image of God (Gen 1:26-17). Rejection on one's biological sex is the rejection of the image of God within that person.
- We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (I Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). We believe that God commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.
- We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual; behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is contrary to the Bible's teaching, is sinful, and offensive to God (Matt 5:18-20; I Cor 6:9-10).
- We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Veritas Academy as a Christian school under the authority of the Scriptures, and to provide a biblical role model to our students and school community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Veritas Academy in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers in any capacity, agree to and abide by this Statement on the Sanctity of Life, Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16, Phil 2:14-16, I Thes 5:22).
- We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are not allowed, are to be repudiated, and are not in accord with Scripture and the beliefs of Veritas Academy.