

2015-2017 Aberdeen Christian



School Improvement Plan

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Aberdeen Christian School

Mission, Purpose, & Philosophy

Mission Statement

Equipping students to glorify God and to fulfill the will of God for their lives.

Statement of Purpose

A basic responsibility of Christian parents is to “train up a child in the way he should go” (Proverbs 22:6). The goal is that each child “increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” (Luke 2:52).

Aberdeen Christian School is an extension of the home and church, and is established to train each student in the knowledge of God, the scriptural way of life, and the exercise of servant leadership. By providing highest standards for intellectual and spiritual learning, our goal is to equip each student to fulfill the will of God for their life.

Our desire is that our students be used of God to spread the Gospel to our community, our nation, and the world.

Philosophy

The concepts of Aberdeen Christian School’s philosophy of education are derived from the Bible and include the following:

1. The triune God is Creator, Sustainer, and Source of all truth, knowledge and wisdom.
2. The Living God is sovereign, loving, and personal.
3. All things were created for His glory.
4. Jesus Christ is God the Son, Savior, and Mediator, who died for our sins, was buried and rose again on the third day, ascended into Heaven and is coming again.
5. Jesus Christ's sinless life is the perfect example after which believers are to pattern their lives.
6. The Holy Spirit magnifies Jesus Christ, teaches the truth, convicts of sins, indwells and enables believers to do God's will.

7. The Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God and is the authority and guide in the development of the whole person spiritually, mentally, physically and socially.
8. Man is the direct creation of God, created in the image and likeness of God.
9. Man is a sinner by nature and choice and is redeemable only through Jesus Christ.
10. With differing abilities and spiritual capacities, each person is equal in God's sight. Each person is responsible to God. His purpose is to glorify God, to grow in fellowship with Him, and to delight in Him forever.
11. We believe that sex is a gift given by God for a man and a woman only within the confines of a marriage. A marriage is sanctioned by God only between a man and a woman. Homosexual/bi-sexual/transgender identification are not compatible with our statement of faith (Romans 1:24-28; I Cor. 6:9; Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; Genesis 1:27; and Genesis 2:24; Duet. 22:5).
12. Education is a tool used to develop each student's unique potential and abilities and to equip him to effectively pursue the vocation to which the Lord leads.
13. Christian education is to be God centered, Christ glorifying, Spirit controlled, and Bible based; equipping the student for fulfilling God's will.

Aberdeen Christian School

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In an effort to facilitate and enhance student achievement at Aberdeen Christian School, our school counselor and administrator have joined to form a School Improvement Planning Team. The team's findings are found in this document, which is a tool that will enable us to focus on school improvement at Aberdeen Christian. This plan should drive subsequent decision-making, interactions, activities, and planning processes to further the goal of student achievement and to ensure compliance with federal and state guidelines and standards.

Aberdeen Christian School Profile

Aberdeen is located in northeastern South Dakota, a primarily rural state. It is the third largest city in the state with a population of 26,000. Aberdeen has two post-secondary institutions, Northern State University and Presentation College. Its main employers are the schools, the hospitals, Wells Fargo, public school system and 3M. Agriculture is still the community's predominant industry. Grain terminals, livestock sale barns, a grain inspection service, and related agribusiness help support the area.

Aberdeen Christian School is a Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 institution. Unique characteristics of the staffing patterns and student population of Aberdeen Christian School are listed below:

Staff FTE	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	School Improvement Planning Team	
General Education Teachers	16.0	16.0	16.0	Eric Kline Sunny Martin	Administrator
Special Education Teachers	1.00	1.00	1.00		Guidance Counselor
Physical Education	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Vocal Music	0.85	0.50	0.50		
Band	0.50	0.50	0.50		
Drama	0.15	0.00	0.00		
Art	0.00	0.20	0.20		
Counselor	1.00	1.00	1.00		

Breakdown of Tested Students

Aberdeen Christian School				Aberdeen Christian School			
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Total, Grades 3-6	8	24	32	Total, Gr 7-12	26	25	44
Grade 3	X	12	21	Grade 7	X	9	14
Grade 4	X	X	x	Grade 8	14	X	x
Grade 5	8	12	11	Grade 9	x	16	20
Grade 6	13	X	x	Grade 11	12	X	x

ACT Aspire Results

Description of Data #1 (% of students demonstrating readiness or close to readiness)

With the transition from NCLB to the Smarter Balanced testing using the Common Core Standards, Aberdeen Christian needed to find an alternative assessment to track progress. Many private schools around the country have chosen the ACT Aspire to track academic progress. The spring of 2015 was the first year providing these exams to our 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th grade students. (first # 2015, second # 2016)

Grade 3: English 92/100, Math 83/95, Reading 83/76, Science 83/81, Writing 92/95

Grade 5: English 100/100, Math 100/100, Reading 67/82, Science 83/91, Writing 75/100

Grade 7: English 100/100, Math 90/86, Reading 90/93, Science 50/93, Writing 80/79

Grade 9: English 94/95, Math 88/100, Reading 69/95, Science 50/85, Writing 93/70

Description of Data #2 (National Percentile for 2016)

Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 7	Grade 9
English 82%	English 84%	English 73%	English 62%
Math 59%	Math 70%	Math 62%	Math 76%
Reading 73%	Reading 71%	Reading 76%	Reading 64%
Science 64%	Science 85%	Science 63%	Science 67%
Writing 69%	Writing 70%	Writing 69%	Writing 43%

Analysis of Data

ACS students fared well on the exams. Our strongest school-wide area was English with 98% showing readiness or close to readiness. Followed by Math at 95%, Reading 86%, Science at 86%, and Writing 84%. School-wide readiness improved in all areas from 2015, with the exception of Writing, where it dropped by only 2% points. It is important to note that in Writing 27% of students demonstrated 'readiness,' but 58% were close. In Science, 55% demonstrated readiness and 14% did not demonstrate readiness, which was much improved from the 37% that did not demonstrate readiness in 2015. It was encouraging to see that our students exceeded national readiness in 90% of the tested areas, up from 85% in 2015. Note the significant increase in science readiness in 7th (50% to 93%) and 9th (50% to 85%).

Implications of Data

Aberdeen Christian School staff will continue to provide support for students lacking proficiency in subject areas through the use of small group help when possible, repeated review and drill, directions given in a variety of ways, recommended home practice, and teacher-directed accommodations as necessary (differentiation). Staff will continue to monitor progress after assessments to ensure all students are improving their academic skills. We will continue to emphasize the importance of developing partnerships with parents. Technology will be used when appropriate to enhance teaching/learning. We are emphasizing the importance of maximizing academic learning time for reading/writing by focusing on the 5 core elements of good reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), as well as, writing across the curriculum. Repeated readings will be also be used to build fluency. Having consistency in our science program with a returning certified instructor will prove to be helpful to the continued progress shown test results. The use of ABEKA and ACSI Math in the elementary, as well as, Holt McDougal math curriculum in 7th – 12th grades will help our students be better math thinkers and problem solvers.

ACT Results

Description of Data

Aberdeen Christian students voluntarily participate in the ACT in preparation for college and career. Here are the results from the past three years:

2014: English - 17.4 Mathematics - 20.3 Reading - 19.1 Science - 19.6 Composite - 19.4

2015: English – 20.0 Mathematics – 22.2 Reading – 21.3 Science – 19.4 Composite –20.8

2016: English – 26.9 Mathematics – 27.1 Reading – 27.9 Science – 27.4 Composite – 27.4

Analysis of Data

We had seven students take the ACT in 2014, not all of which were college bound. ACS has seen a downward trend in ACT results, with composite scores dropping over the last five years from 23 in 2010 to 19.4 in 2014. We had ten students take the exam in 2015, with increases in scores seen in 4 of 5 areas, with our composite raising to 20.8, closer to the state average of 21.9. In 2016 we had 7 students take the exam and our composite raising to 27.4, significantly higher than the state average of 21.9. The past 3 years have seen nice increases in scores.

Implications of Data

The trends in these scores are cause for reflection. These scores are based on a total of 41 students taking the exam over the past 5 years. With such a low number of students testing and not all of them being college bound, the probability of lower marks increases. This year; however, we had several college-bound students who demonstrated scholastic excellence,

which was evidenced by the increases in scores. Nevertheless, it is important to reflect on our curriculum and the delivery of it to ensure students are gaining the appropriate skills to meet state-wide averages and college-entrance requirements. ACT recommends scores of 18 in English, 22 in Math, 22 in Reading, and 23 in Science to indicate college readiness. ACS will continue to reflect and deliver quality core content instruction to its students. It is important to note the school has gone through many transitions over the past five years. These challenging times resulted in a 'survival' mode versus a 'thriving' mode. We are looking forward to more stability as we've moved to a permanent location and divided administrative and teaching duties to maximize efficiency and productivity. It is also pertinent to note that during the past five years, there was an increase in transfer students who did not get to benefit from the continuity of curriculum offered through the grades. As Robert Marzano's research has shown, that a 'Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum,' is essential for academic success. Finally, the math/science department will provide students an opportunity to analyze and interpret more graphs in problem solving. This will also be the 2nd year of the Holt McDougal math curriculum in the secondary grades.

Climate Survey Results

Description of Data

In the winter of 2015, school climate surveys were administered to all students in grades 3-12, staff, and parents. The purpose of the survey was to collect information to be used along with other data to improve our educational programs and for school accreditation purposes. The surveys will be completed again in the winter of 2017.

3-6 Survey Results – January 2015 – Aberdeen Christian School

1. I feel safe at school:	98%
2. Rules and policies enforced:	96%
3. Discipline program is helpful:	95%
4. I feel like I belong at school:	88%
5. The overall atmosphere is positive:	100%
6. Technology:	72%
7. Administration cares:	100%
8. My teachers make an effort to know me:	98%
9. I am growing closer to God:	98%
10. My teachers believe I can learn:	100%
11. My teachers are available to assist:	98%
12. Class work is challenging:	91%
13. All are treated with respect:	81%
14. Material is presented so I can understand:	95%
15. School is preparing me for my future:	95%

7-12 Survey Results – January 2015 – Aberdeen Christian School

1. I feel safe at school:	100%
2. Rules and policies enforced:	82%
3. Discipline program is helpful:	83%
4. I feel like I belong at school:	86%
5. The overall atmosphere is positive:	85%
6. Technology:	79%
7. Administration cares:	99%
8. My teachers make an effort to know me:	94%
9. I am growing closer to God:	91%
10. My teachers believe I can learn:	97%
11. My teachers are available to assist:	97%
12. Class work is challenging:	97%
13. All are treated with respect:	79%
14. Material is presented so I can understand:	94%
15. School is preparing me for my future:	94%

Staff Survey Results – January 2015 – Aberdeen Christian School

1. Students feel safe at school:	100%
2. Rules and policies enforced:	85%
3. Discipline program is helpful:	95%
4. Students feel like they belong:	100%
5. The overall atmosphere is positive:	100%
6. Technology:	55%
7. Administration cares:	100%
8. Making effort to know students:	100%
9. Students growing closer to God:	95%
10. Believing students can learn:	100%
11. Available to assist students:	100%
12. Class work is challenging:	90%
13. All are treated with respect:	100%
14. Present material so students understand:	100%
15. Preparing students for future:	95%

Parent Survey Results – January 2015 – Aberdeen Christian School

1. School house well maintained:	100%
2. I feel welcome:	97%
3. Parking Lot Safety:	97%
4. Playground Safety:	76%
5. Communication:	97%
6. Educational programs:	94%
7. Staff care about students:	97%
8. Students enjoy school:	90%
9. Lunch program:	94%

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|------------------------------------|-----|
| 10. Growing closer to God: | 94% |
| 11. Technology: | 61% |
| 12. Discipline plan effectiveness: | 88% |
| 13. Administration: | 97% |
| 14. Overall climate positive: | 94% |

Analysis of Data

ACS was proud of our climate survey results – a priority is to meet student, staff, and patron needs by: 1. Emphasis on safety/orderliness 2. Shepherding Hearts – emphasis on maturing in Christ-like character 3. Sharpening Minds – emphasis in building a solid foundation in reading, writing, and math. Nearly 90-100% of students, parents and staff strongly agreed or agreed with the fifteen feedback areas; however, we did see a lower percentages in students having enough access to technology, all students being treated with respect, and playground safety.

Implications from Data

Aberdeen Christian must not grow complacent with recent successes – we must continue to strive for excellence in meeting the needs of our patrons. The students and families of are our customers and we will continue to earn the trust of our patrons through transparent communication and a priority placed on building positive relationships. Making sure parents stay involved in the lives of their child’s education is a critical component to our success. We are thankful to see strong parent, staff, and student support for the overall climate of our school.

In response to the survey results, we added an additional computer lab for our secondary students on the third floor. In addition, we hired CompQuest Technology to provide tech support that included implementation and monitoring of software, hardware, and installation of projectors in each classroom. As a result of a generous gift from a friend of the school we were able to make these technology improvements.

In response to a lower percentage of students not being treated with dignity and respect we consistently reinforce playground expectations, have two faculty supervising recesses, have our guidance counselor teaching appropriate social skills through regular classrooms visits, and take a proactive approach in working through student conflicts.

2016-17 Goals, Objectives, and Intervention Strategies

Goal 1: All children will improve their ability to read, write, and comprehend a variety of literary texts in all curricular areas.

Objective: Increase the percent of all students reading/writing at the readiness or close to readiness levels to a minimum of 88%. Spring 2016 = 86%.

Activities/Strategies: 1. Continue auditing Common Core Standards and matching them to curriculum (Common Core awareness/course outlines). 2. Implement effective teaching strategies to engage learners using reading and writing across the curriculum. 3. Identification of basic and below basic students – teacher directed accommodations to help them experience success, for example, flexible reading groups (differentiation). 4. Tutoring. 5. Integration of technology.

Assessments: 1. ACT Testing 10th-12th grades & ACT Aspire annual testing for 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th grades. 2. Review individual progress based on mid-term & quarterly report cards. 3. Identify mini-assessments to do progress monitoring of performance for immediate feedback (chapter quizzes/review).

Goal 2: All students will use mathematical and scientific concepts, procedures, and computation skills to solve problems.

Objective: Increase the percent of all students performing math/science at the readiness or close to readiness levels to a minimum of 97% for all students. Spring 2016 = 95%.

Activities/Strategies: 1. Continue auditing Common Core Standards and matching them to curriculum (Common Core awareness/course outlines). 2. Implement effective teaching strategies to engage learners using ABEKA, ACSI, Science and Holt McDougal curriculum. 3. Identification of basic and below basic students – teacher directed accommodations to help them experience success (differentiation). 5. Tutoring. 6. Integration of technology.

Assessments: 1. ACT Testing 10th-12th grades & ACT Aspire annual testing for 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th grades. 2. Review individual progress based on mid-term & quarterly report cards. 3. Identify mini-assessments to do progress monitoring of performance for immediate feedback (chapter quizzes/review).

Other Goals:

School Board and superintendent review school's strategic plan at each monthly board meeting.

Highly Qualified Staff

Our goal is to have all teachers and paraprofessionals at Aberdeen Christian School who meet the definition of highly qualified. We strive to staff our school with teachers and paraprofessionals that meet that definition. Many educators are attracted to the community of Aberdeen because of the advanced degree opportunities offered at Northern State University.

Parent Involvement in Education

Aberdeen Christian School parents will be provided written notice of the school's improvement needs in the October patron update. In addition, the school improvement plan will be discussed at School Board meetings. Our school improvement plan will also be posted on the website. Finally, quarterly report cards and mid-term grades are shared with parents, and parents will have an opportunity to sign up for JMC Parent Portal.

Transition Processes

The registration process for incoming kindergarten students begins in January. During the 1st quarter mid-term conferences, the assistant administrator and school counselor have an orientation for our 8th-12th graders to provide information about the transition to junior/senior high, as well as, graduation requirements/college-career information. During the 3rd qt. mid-term conferences the assistant administrator and registrar provide an orientation for 6th grade parents and their students about the transitions to junior high. A student services link is also available on the web site. Parents are encouraged to provide the school with the child's information, birth certificate and immunization records to complete the registration process. During the enrollment process, families and students learn more about the school through a meet and greet/tour. After school begins, families are invited to attend an open house.

Monitoring and Support

The superintendent and special education teacher will meet bi-monthly to discuss student concerns that would arise either academically or socially as part of the Student Assistance Team (SAT) process. Teachers are encouraged to attempt accommodations/behavior plans in their classrooms from the 'tools' they've learned over the years to help students experience success. After attempted interventions and lack of success, a referral is made to SAT where further brainstorming is done. If these interventions are not successful, the team will decide whether or not special education testing is warranted. We cooperate with the Aberdeen School District to do testing – if the student(s) qualify, we write a 'service plan,' outlining areas of strengths, weaknesses, and goals to help them experience success. The service plan is reviewed annually and children are re-tested every three years. The Aberdeen School District also provides speech therapy to our students who qualify.

Ongoing Program Development

The school improvement plan is part of a systematic process with periodic evaluation needed to assess progress towards meeting goals. The school improvement plan is a two-year document requiring periodic evaluation to assess progress. It will be evaluated annually and revised as needed. Future revisions in the plan will be made according to data obtained from assessment results, surveys, state mandates, and student needs.

The improvement plan will be presented to the Aberdeen Christian School Board for review. The school improvement plan will be shared with the staff, parents, and the public through the Aberdeen Christian School website.