



Educating and Developing the Whole Person for the Glory of God.

Dear RCS Family,

February 2019

For many reasons, February is a wonderful month. My wife and I met on Valentine's Day, 1986. While that sounds romantic, our first encounter occurred at a teacher's convention hosted by the Principals' Association of Christian Schools. In February, our country salutes President's Day and honors Black History Month. February's quirkier days draw attention to Bubble Gum, Ground Hogs, and Toothaches.

February's letter is devoted to thanking you for choosing to send your child or children to our Christian school. For most parents, the choice is a blessing and a sacrifice. The financial commitment is significant. Staff members feel the squeeze too. For all who elect to send or serve here, a heartfelt thank you is due. Thank you for choosing Rainier Christian Schools.

Your collective commitment gusted into a tail wind of personal gratitude. In response, revisiting what is a distinctively Christian education seemed fitting.

Unsurprisingly, the literature swirling around the topic of Christian education is complex. A simpler way forward leans into the adjective phrase, Whole Person, from our mission statement. The phrase is intentional. Students are much more than containers in which we pour the right Christian ideas, facts, and doctrines into to ensure proper behavior. The agency of Christian education runs wider and deeper than cognitive development. It is about formation, including character, desires and affections. One valuable reference on this topic is James K. A. Smith's book, [Desiring the Kingdom, Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation](#). He adeptly summarizes the purpose of Christian education across the axis of the whole person.

Smith writes, "We are desiring creatures, who are, every day being formed by impulses surrounding us. What defines us is what we love. Thinking, arguments, and beliefs are crucial as a means of moving the heart, but ultimately, we are what we adore. Being the kind of person who loves rightly, who loves God and neighbor, and is oriented to the world by the primacy of that love speaks to the formation of our desires."

Shaping the mind, heart, affections, and desires is central to Christian education. At RCS, integrating faith and learning, nurturing desires, and influencing affections reshape the whole person. Jesus inspired our mission statement's essence in the great commandment, "*That you love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength,*" Mk.12:30. RCS aims toward that purpose through academics, athletics. and extra-curricular activities for the Glory of God. Thank you again for choosing Rainier Christian Schools.

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RCS is thrilled to begin open enrollment. Our website statistic's page shows the number one downloaded page in January is the 2018-19 Tuition Schedule. Where is the 2019-2020 Tuition Schedule? Possibly, a more important question is, "How are tuition and fees determined?"

Setting tuition prices is a complex endeavor. Working backwards, it is finalized by a Board vote. Our administrative team prays, analyzes current fiscal data, reviews the CPI for the Western Region, and calculates adjustments for the minimum wage hike. We also compare other local Christian School tuition prices. (In that comparison matrix, RCS remains a tremendous value in Christian education.) The new tuition numbers are provided to the Board. The Board's inquiry offers a chance for revision and further clarification behind each price point. Part of our conversation centered around next January's minimum-wage increase from \$12 to \$13.50/hour. Financially, a \$.50/hour increase translates into a \$58K payroll impact. A \$1.50/hour approaches \$180K. The upward wage pressure affects our certificated employees too. Lastly, the smaller CPI increase of 3.1% trickles down into services for water, power, garbage, paper towels, and other fees. In our January executive session, the Board approved the 2019-2020 Tuition Schedule.

Against the escalating costs, families with K-12 students will see an increase over last year's tuition prices between \$28 to \$31/month—on a ten-month payment plan. Preschool families will notice a larger increase due to the 12.5% bump in minimum wage. Transparency about the process and explaining why tuition rates rise model best practices. I am happy to answer additional questions. As of today, the new tuition schedule is available under the website Admission's tab.

Consider one final note related to tuition. A 529 account may make sense for some families. What is a 529 account? It is an investment vehicle to save for the account beneficiary's qualified higher-education expenses or tuition for elementary or secondary public, private, or religious schools. Each account can apply up to \$10,000 per annum per beneficiary.

With the business side of the ministry explained, let's return to a regular feature—prayer requests.

Current requests and updates—

- Grow RCS ministry to 440 students this year—New students joined our learning community during January.
- A community grant partner to supplement the Norcliffe Foundation grant application—*continue to pray.*

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- Invitation to submit a full grant application to the Murdoch Charitable Trust.
Answer: *We received a pleasant reply from their Senior Program Director. He directed us to come back after securing 40% of the grant request. Typically, MCT does not fund outside of the six-county region of Vancouver, WA.*
- New Principal hire for RCHS. Parents, staff, and students have the opportunity to participate in the screening and interview process. Within this first week of posting the position, three applications were received. Please contact me if interested.

Lastly, a newly designed promotional flyer directs prospective families to our website. Copies of the 8.5" x 11" glossy materials become available next week. If you know someone looking for information about RCS, consider hand delivering a copy. Capturing the QR (quick response) code sends users to our website.

My best,

Bruce Kelly

Bruce Kelly
President, Rainier Christian Schools

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