



KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Undeniably Christian. Academically Excellent.

“Support Beyond Academics”

Kalamazoo Christian School considers student growth through many perspectives - academic, spiritual, physical, emotional, social. The teachers at each grade and in each content area consider which skills and knowledge are essential to their growth, and how to support students in those areas of learning. One of the areas that we recognize can be a challenge for students is in the area of social skills and emotional regulation. Students have opportunities in the school setting to engage with different people, people who have had different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, and students often need to develop the next level of skills in order to interact with others in successful ways. In addition, the challenges of the pandemic time period and technology/social media, pressures of achievement, and stresses of family & friend relationships can all lead to our students needing guidance and support in how to deal with each of these areas appropriately.

KCS is committed to training teachers and students in how to use appropriate skills in dealing with relational, emotional, and social challenges. We do this by considering how our Christian faith can inform our learning, what the Bible has to say about our emotions and our interactions with others, and how we can treat each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. One of the three main areas that we look at in hiring new teachers (in addition to being knowledgeable of their teaching field and skilled in working with children) is having a Christian faith that informs their choices and willingness to imbed that faith into their daily teaching and interactions with students. As at school, teachers, support staff, and principals are committed to looking for every opportunity to guide students in their spiritual development, and using times in the classroom, on the playground, in the hallways, in small group project, in a disagreement between two students, in a discussion about a student's future career to help students to think about their interactions with each other and their choices as ways to serve God.

In light of those high goals, the school provides resources for teachers and students to train them and support them. Here are some of those resources:

- Desert Streams and local pastors as student counselors to meet with students in K-12th grade during the school day
- Pine Rest Counseling services for teachers and training through Pine Rest on recognizing mental health needs and using their services
- Mental health training to recognize when students are having concerning behaviors and how to support and connect students with the tools and resources needed

- Imbedding faithlines and other Christian resources into our curriculum content areas that help students to consider how their faith can inform their spiritual learning and their practices (social -how they interact with others; emotional -how they handle their thoughts and emotions)

Though we may use similar terms to public schools (such as SEL), how we interpret and apply our work with students' social and emotional learning are focused on their spiritual and Godly development. We consistently consider how we can be Undeniably Christian, in guiding students and in our resources that we use to train and support students and teachers. In this way, we are pursuing our mission of equipping, inspiring, and challenging our students to love and serve Christ in the world.

- **Meghan VanLente, Curriculum Coordinator & Instructional Coach**

