

The School

Working Name: HIS Way Christian Academy.

The Objectives:

To partner with parents in offering a quality educational program that integrates Christian principles and teaching in all areas of curriculum for the whole child: mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual.

To focus on offering art, music, drama, physical activities, student-centered learning preparing children to succeed in higher grades, technology as a tool for learning, and infusing Christ-centered values and enjoyment in everyday learning activities.

The Concept:

The Academy will be a pre-kindergarten through grade five elementary school.

The pre-kindergarten will be a half-day program focusing on preparing students for success in kindergarten. Parents will have the option of picking up their pre-K child or we will transport their child to one of the two day-care facilities in the area. For curricular and administration effectiveness, the faculty will be divided into pre-K through grade two and grades three through five. Each team will have a lead teacher that reports directly to the principal.

In order to offer students and parents a place where values are anchored in Christian teachings, the school will be a place where children are happy and healthy in mind, body, and spirit. Too often, students (and their parents) are too stressed by existing school situations to be able to focus on learning. The pressure to achieve and the stress of the state mandated testing sometimes cause mental health issues for both students and teachers.

Our statement of philosophy and mission must be clear and must motivate everything in the school. The school will be nondenominational, with an open door policy to all students, regardless of race, socioeconomic background or religious affiliation. The parents will sign an agreement that clearly states that this a Christian school with weekly chapel, a curriculum that strives to integrate faith and learning, and high behavioral standards. The school will be very careful in determining what special needs children are accepted as the facilities and curriculum will have limited capacity to deal with severe learning differences and physical limitations.

The Facility:

The maximum class size will be 20 students in pre-K through grade five. The school will need seven classrooms. Each of these rooms should allow 49 square feet per student or 1029 square feet per classroom (Tanner, 2000). Each classroom will have a permanent teaching station, an installed screen, appropriate audio and video playback with adequate light control. Grade 3-5 will have permanently installed “SmartBoards.” Due to space available on the land, we suggest that pre-K through grade two classrooms, the art room and administrative offices be on the first floor, grades three through five and the music room be on the second floor, the PQ Outreach Coalition offices, other school administrative offices and a 600 square foot conference room be on the third floor. The preferred arrangement would be everything on two floors if the site area allows.

Factors impacting space needs in the classrooms would be the following:

- Separate, locking storage cabinets for materials (school and church use)
- A counter (minimum 6 feet), sink and drinking fountain in each room
- Storage for students to put coats, hats, sack lunches, personal items

Grades three through five will have storage for 20-laptops with power available throughout the room. Network and Internet access will be wireless for students in the classroom. The teaching stations, the computer in the resource room, and the administrative offices will have Cat 5 hardwired network and Internet access.

Each room will have shelves and tables for books and reading materials. Since we believe that local community libraries offer excellent facilities and technology opens a world of resource materials available to both students and teachers, we will not have a library as such. Instead, each classroom will contain appropriate age-level books and reading materials for student use in class and for personal reading.

Grades Pre-K through grade one will have restroom facilities in each classroom. Restroom facilities for grades two through five will be on the second floor, accessible to all students. Restroom facilities for faculty and staff and visitors should be in the administrative area of the first floor and on the second floor.

The specialty rooms will feature an art room measuring approximately 1200 square feet with the availability of natural lighting, as much as possible. The room would accommodate easels and project tables, a sink and counter (6-8 feet), shelves and cabinets, possibly a small kiln and a display area for completed projects.

A music room of approximately 1200 square feet will have room for storage of instruments, music stands, and music as well as space for a piano or keyboard. The risers in the room would serve all grades and be used for both choral and instrumental music.

The media-technology resource room of at least 1300 square feet will have workstations scattered around the room. There will be a teaching station with an installed “SmartBoard” at one end of the room. Adjacent to the resource room will be the storage

area for portable technology resources like the portable “SmartBoard” and the portable computer lab as well as the work area for the technology support team. This technology team will serve all three enterprises as well as the church. The server and phone equipment room with adequate cooling and UPS systems will also be located in this area. Each floor above the first will have a communications closet that will house the network and telephone wiring and equipment.

A two story multi-purpose room measuring approximately 4500 square feet will be used as a theater, an auditorium, a gymnasium, and an indoor eating area during rainy times. The 4500 square foot size is based on a standard basketball court that has an 84-foot by 50-foot activity area plus storage facilities for equipment and folding tables and chairs. The seating capacity should be at least 300 with a stage equipped with adequate theatrical light and sound support. The food preparation area will be able to deliver food to both the multi-purpose room and the outside eating areas. All of the major food preparation will be done in the retirement center kitchen and transported to the distribution area either in hot stacks or refrigerator carts. Vending machines for milk, fruit juices and water will be on each floor.

The kitchen will be designed for dual use. This facility will be used to provide students lunches, snacks and also to provide facilities for use by the church for dinners and other functions involving the preparation and distribution of food. Separate storage and utensil sets and along with specific use guidelines should minimize the conflicts between the two users. The executive chef from the retirement center will supervise the menu planning, purchasing, and staff for the school food service.

The safety of the students, staff, and teachers will be a high priority. Separate fenced play areas for Pre-K-2 and grades 3-5 will contain appropriate safe playground equipment and will be properly supervised. The entire school will be unobtrusively fenced with safety officers on duty 24 hours a day.

The school administrative offices will cover approximately 1800 square feet and include:

- 1) Mail boxes for teachers
- 2) reception area/secretary's work area
- 3) office for principal
- 4) first aid/nurse's evaluation area with rest room / counseling and meeting area
- 5) work room with copier, paper, and supplies
- 6) teacher work room/lunch room/meeting room/resource room which would include refrigerator, sink, cabinets, counter, microwave, tables and chairs, couch, shelves for resources that are shared by all teachers, i.e. professional journals, electronic databases, and workstations with specialized peripherals like scanners, Scantron card readers, etc.

The Curriculum:

The school will have a strong academic curriculum with emphasis on critical thinking, reading and math skills along with opportunities for music, art, drama and physical activities. All aspects of the curriculum will meet or exceed state standards and the standards of recognized national accrediting agencies. Students will learn how to access, organize and evaluate information using technology. The school will be a place balanced with the fun of learning and the joy of the Christian perspective throughout the student's academic experiences. The school will also seek accreditation by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). These accreditation will insure that the school is continuously improving and updating the curriculum, resources, and facilities.

The Staff:

All faculty and administration will be credentialed in their area of specialization or if new to the school, will be required to finish the credentialing process within three years of the start of employment. The pre-K teacher will be required to have a B.A. plus an Early Childhood certification. In addition all non-credentialed staff will be required to agree to criminal record background checks.

The Demographics:

The demographic trends anticipate a slight decrease in percentage of population in the Under 18 group from 29.2% in 2000 to 28.0% in 2010. That means that the actual population in the Under 18 group will increase from 28,395 to 31,661. There are no Christian schools within a five mile radius of the Academy. Mira Mesa Christian Elementary school is 5.6 miles away and requires that at least one parent be a “believer.” St. Michael’s Catholic K-8 school is 5.3 miles away and non-Catholic students have the lowest level admission priority and the highest fee structure. Maranatha Christian School has moved 7.6 miles away and has difficult freeway access. Thus HIS Way Christian Academy will be the only Christian elementary school with a five-mile radius.

The Funding Goal:

The funding goal is to build the buildings debt free and to fund endowments that will provide scholarships for families with multiple students in the school and scholarships for those students who desire this quality of education but can only obtain it with financial assistance. The funding sources will be private gifts, private grants, and limited public sector grants for specific services like technology and mental health

services. This will enable the Academy to maintain a reasonable fee structure while supporting a quality educational environment.