

# **2017-2019 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, we have a school improvement process. 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.

## 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 hospitals, 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	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	School Improvement Planning Team	
General Education Teachers	16.0	16.0	17.0	ACS Faculty	Administration Teachers
Special Education Teachers	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Physical Education	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Vocal Music	0.50	0.50	0.50		
Band	0.50	0.50	0.50		
Drama	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Art	0.20	0.70	0.70		
Counselor	1.00	0.00	0.00		

## Breakdown of Tested Students

Aberdeen Christian School				Aberdeen Christian School			
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Total, Grades 3-6</b>	32	38	37	<b>Total, Gr 7-12</b>	34	24	30
<b>Grade 3</b>	21	20	21	<b>Grade 7</b>	14	13	14
<b>Grade 4</b>	X	X	X	<b>Grade 8</b>	X	X	X
<b>Grade 5</b>	11	18	16	<b>Grade 9</b>	20	11	16
<b>Grade 6</b>	X	X	X	<b>Grade 11</b>	X	X	X

# ACT Aspire Results

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

Many private schools around the country have chosen the ACT Aspire to track academic progress. The table below shows three years of testing data (2016/2017/2018). NOTE: **ACT Aspire is NO LONGER reporting separate writing data.**

**Grade 3:** English 100/100/100, Math 95/85/100, Reading 76/60/77, Science 81/60/79

**Grade 5:** English 100/100/100, Math 100/100/94, Reading 82/94/100, Science 91/94/100

**Grade 7:** English 100/100/93, Math 86/85/100, Reading 93/92/93, Science 93/100/93

**Grade 9:** English 95/91/100, Math 100/73/94, Reading 95/82/87, Science 85/55/87

## Description of Data #2 (National Percentile for 2018)

Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 7	Grade 9
English 57%	English 68%	English 76%	English 76%
Math 75%	Math 48%	Math 80%	Math 74%
Reading 61%	Reading 71%	Reading 76%	Reading 73%
Science 71%	Science 73%	Science 79%	Science 69%

## Analysis of Data

ACS students fared well on the exams. Our strongest school-wide area continues to be English with 98% showing readiness or close to readiness. Followed by Math at 96%, Science 90%, and Reading 88%. Our students exceeded national readiness in 94% of the tested areas, up from 80% in 2017. We exceeded 50% national percentile rank in 94% of the tested areas, up from 90% in 2017. NOTE: ACT ASPIRE is no longer reporting writing results. This has been an area of weakness that we will be doing strategic professional development as we enter the 2018-2019 school year. ACS staff will receive in-depth training on the principles of IEW (Institute for Excellence in Writing).

## 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. The use of ABEKA and ACSI Math in the elementary, as well as, Holt McDougal math curriculum in 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 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:

**2016: English – 26.9 Math – 27.1 Reading – 27.9 Science – 27.4 Composite –27.4**

**2017: English – 16.7 Math – 18.3 Reading – 17.7 Science – 18.4 Composite – 17.9**

**2018: English - 20.5 Math – 22.5 Reading – 23.8 Science – 21.6 Composite – 22.3**

### Analysis of Data

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. We had 7 students take the exam in 2017 with decreases in all tested areas. ACS composite was 17.9 and the state average was 21.8. In 2018, we had 12 students take the test with the composite score of 22.3, a significant increase in all four tested areas and higher than the state average of 21.9.

### Implications of Data

With such a low number of students testing and not all of them being college bound, the probability of lower marks increases. In 2016, we had several college-bound students who demonstrated scholastic excellence, which was evidenced by the increases in scores. Not all students who took the exam in 2017 were college-bound and school did not come easily for many of them. 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. In 2018, we had scores of 20.5 in English, 22.5 in Math, 23.8 in Reading, and 21.6 in Science ACT recommends the following benchmark scores for postsecondary readiness: 18 in English, 22 in Math, 22 in Reading, and 23 in Science. 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 walking in 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.

## Climate Survey Results

### Description of Data

In the winter of 2015 & 2017, 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. Numbers indicate those who strongly agreed or agreed with the survey questions.

#### **3-6 Survey Results – January 2015 & 2017 – Aberdeen Christian School**

1. I feel safe at school:	98/99
2. Rules and policies enforced:	96/80
3. Discipline program is helpful:	95/91
4. I feel like I belong at school:	88/86
5. The overall atmosphere is positive:	100/90
6. Technology:	72/70
7. Administration cares:	100/100
8. My teachers make an effort to know me:	98/93
9. I am growing closer to God:	98/93
10. My teachers believe I can learn:	100/97
11. My teachers are available to assist:	98/91
12. Class work is challenging:	91/87
13. All are treated with respect:	81/64
14. Material is presented so I can understand:	95/91
15. School is preparing me for my future:	95/91

#### **7-12 Survey Results – January 2015 & 2017 – Aberdeen Christian School**

1. I feel safe at school:	100/95
2. Rules and policies enforced:	82/79
3. Discipline program is helpful:	83/73
4. I feel like I belong at school:	86/83
5. The overall atmosphere is positive:	85/81
6. Technology:	79/72
7. Administration cares:	99/89



- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 8. My teachers make an effort to know me:      | 94/77 |
| 9. I am growing closer to God:                 | 91/83 |
| 10. My teachers believe I can learn:           | 97/90 |
| 11. My teachers are available to assist:       | 97/85 |
| 12. Class work is challenging:                 | 97/90 |
| 13. All are treated with respect:              | 79/56 |
| 14. Material is presented so I can understand: | 94/65 |
| 15. School is preparing me for my future:      | 94/83 |

**Staff Survey Results – January 2015 & 2017 – Aberdeen Christian School**

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. Students feel safe at school:       | 100/100 |
| 2. Rules and policies enforced:        | 85/76   |
| 3. Discipline program is helpful:      | 95/88   |
| 4. The overall atmosphere is positive: | 100/100 |
| 5. Technology:                         | 55/92   |
| 6. Administration cares:               | 100/100 |
| 7. Making effort to know students:     | 100/96  |
| 8. Students growing closer to God:     | 95/96   |
| 9. Available to assist students:       | 100/100 |
| 10. All are treated with respect:      | 100/100 |
| 11. Preparing students for future:     | 95/92   |

**Parent Survey Results – January 2015 & 2017 – Aberdeen Christian School**

- |                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. School house well maintained:   | 100/97 |
| 2. I feel welcome:                 | 97/97  |
| 3. Parking Lot Safety:             | 97/96  |
| 4. Playground Safety:              | 76/92  |
| 5. Communication:                  | 97/92  |
| 6. Educational programs:           | 94/92  |
| 7. Staff care about students:      | 97/91  |
| 8. Students enjoy school:          | 90/94  |
| 9. Lunch program:                  | 94/84  |
| 10. Growing closer to God:         | 94/94  |
| 11. Technology:                    | 61/90  |
| 12. Discipline plan effectiveness: | 88/88  |
| 13. Administration:                | 97/96  |
| 14. Overall climate positive:      | 94/95  |

**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. Feedback shows there is an overall satisfaction with the school; however, we need to keep an eye on ensuring all students are treated with respect and being consistent in expectations.

### **Implications from Data**

Aberdeen Christian must not grow complacent with recent successes. Building relationships with students and families through transparent communication is important. 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 (now DRN) 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, and take a proactive approach in working through student conflicts.

\*\*\*We will be changing our climate surveys this year to a narrative format. This will allow parents, students, and teachers to provide feedback on what they appreciate about the school and what suggestions they have for improvement. Results will be reviewed to identify any pertinent themes for the school to consider.\*\*\*

# 2018-19 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 at the readiness or close to readiness levels to a minimum of 90%. Spring 2018 = 88%.

**Activities/Strategies:** 1. Continue auditing State Standards and matching them to curriculum (teacher-prepared course outlines). 2. Implement effective teaching strategies to engage learners using reading and writing across the curriculum (IEW). 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 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades & ACT Aspire annual testing for 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9<sup>th</sup> 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 95% for all students. Spring 2018 = 93%.

**Activities/Strategies:** 1. Continue auditing State Standards and matching them to curriculum (teacher-prepared 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 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades & ACT Aspire annual testing for 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9<sup>th</sup> 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 at Aberdeen Christian School meet the definition of highly qualified. We do our best to staff our school with teachers that meet that definition.

### **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 and approved at the October board meeting and 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 principal and student services coordinator have an orientation for our 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders to provide information about the transition to junior/senior high, as well as, graduation requirements/college-career information. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> qt. mid-term conferences the principal and student services coordinator provide an orientation for 6<sup>th</sup> 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 in September.

### **Monitoring and Support**

The superintendent and special education teacher meet twice a month 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 qualifying students.

### **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.