

CORE VALUES

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL OF TEXAS



For
ROBIN LEWIS
Founder
Providence Christian School of Texas

The Core Values of Providence Christian School are dedicated with heartfelt gratitude to Robin Lewis, whose God-given vision for the education of children led to the founding of Providence Christian School in 1989 and to the development of other schools based upon its model. Mrs. Lewis directed Providence through its first dozen years and in the establishment of a permanent school home on West Lovers Lane in Dallas. Her devoted work for Providence has blessed many hundreds of children and their families and will bless untold numbers in the years to come.



Proverbs 31:10-31

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL OF TEXAS

CORE VALUES

The Core Values of Providence Christian School are the bedrock principles that distinguish Providence as an institution and against which all new ideas and practices are tested. The Core Values are the primary assets to which the Board of Trustees is committed and for which it is responsible on behalf of present and future constituents. The administration, faculty, and staff are likewise committed to and responsible for implementing the Core Values in all policies and practices of the School. Every current family must also sign an assent to them.

FAITH

Providence is committed to education grounded in Christian principles and to supporting and strengthening the Christian faith and character of its students, faculty, and families.

FAMILY

Providence recognizes the primary responsibility of the family, under the leadership of the father, in educating children, and is committed to fostering a supportive community of like-minded families.

INTELLECT

Providence is committed to helping intellectually promising, academically able students fulfill their God-given potential by means of time-tested and classical instructional methods and curricula and by encouraging the development of good habits.

VIRTUE

Providence is committed to promoting the innocence of childhood while also preparing its older students for their further education in a world increasingly hostile to Christian faith and virtue.

STEWARDSHIP

Providence is committed to faithfully stewarding the time, talents, and treasure entrusted to it, and to fostering the faithful stewardship of its students and their families.

Wisdom is supreme; therefore, get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. Esteem her, and she will exalt you; embrace her and she will honor you. She will set a garland of grace on your head and present you with a crown of splendor.

Proverbs 4:7-9

But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good.

1 Thessalonians 5:21

FAITH

PROVIDENCE IS COMMITTED TO EDUCATION GROUNDED IN CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES AND TO SUPPORTING AND STRENGTHENING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND CHARACTER OF ITS STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND FAMILIES.

WISDOM: THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF A PROVIDENCE EDUCATION

Providence students live in a rapidly changing world, for which they need wisdom, the anchor of the unchanging truths of God's Word and His principles. We desire to help students know, love, and practice that which is true, good, and excellent, and to prepare them to live purposefully and wisely in the service of God and man. In so doing, Providence students will grow in wisdom.

THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH: EDUCATION WITH A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

For the Christian, a biblical perspective is the ability to see and understand life through the lens of Scripture—seeing life as God sees it, and by His grace, living in obedience to the truth. In order to teach our students to have a biblical perspective and to recognize truth from error in a world that is bent on “exchang[ing] the truth of God for a lie and worship[ping] and serv[ing] the creature rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25):

- Providence integrates the truth of God's Word throughout our curriculum, as well as in our teaching practices, policies, and programs. All areas of our School aim to be in direct alignment with God's Word.
- Providence employs only faculty who have a clear Christian testimony and who wholeheartedly agree with our mission, philosophy, and core values. We encourage and promote the faculty's spiritual growth, realizing that only to the degree that the knowledge of God's Word and His love lives in them can it flow into the hearts and minds of their students.
- Providence faculty members teach the younger students from classic works that inspire virtue and appreciation of God's creation. As students grow and mature, the curriculum includes works of literary, artistic, or historical importance wherein students will learn to distinguish truth from error, beauty from ugliness, and goodness from evil by asking themselves, “What does God's Word say regarding this issue?”

EXCELLENCE: GIVING GOD THE GLORY

Providence desires to glorify God by its commitment to excellence in all that it does and to teach its students the proper motivation for excelling. The distinction between the world's godless notion of excellence and that for which Providence aims has been well expressed by author, educator, and pastor William McCrae:

Pagan excellence is . . . doing what we do, and all we want to do, with all our might, because this life is all we have. Christian excellence, on the other hand, is described in I Corinthians 10:31: "Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." And Colossians 3:23 says, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." The difference is primarily a question of motive. The goal of Christian excellence is not self-satisfaction, self-glorification, or even self-fulfillment; it is pleasing God, glorifying Him, and fulfilling His calling in one's life.

In keeping with Providence's aim to glorify God, students do not discuss their grades or call attention to their athletic prowess or their material possessions. They do, however, rejoice in what God has granted them and in the achievements and gifts of others. They work hard to do their best to please God and to fulfill His calling in their lives.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Providence strives to strengthen the spiritual lives of our students, their parents, and our employees. It is our strong desire that our entire school community would seek to glorify God by finding their greatest joy and passion in their relationship with Christ; that they would treasure Him above all that this world has to offer; and that they would cultivate their Christian walk through active membership and worship in their respective churches; through spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, Bible study, Scripture memorization, and meditation; and through service and stewardship of their time, talent, and resources.

CHARACTER FORMATION

The motto of Providence is *Esse Quam Videri*—"to be rather than to seem"—reminding us that teaching character is at the heart of the highest-quality education. The current news provides abundant evidence that we live in a society that has lost its moral compass. Our secular culture has adopted a philosophy that there are no absolutes and that truth cannot be known. Examples of weak, unethical, and evil character abound. Christians are surrounded by cultural forces that influence us to think and act in a way contrary to biblical truth, which adds to the importance of Providence students' knowing that God's Word is true and absolute. Therefore, Providence strives to employ only those whose lives are marked by moral excellence and who desire to nurture, mentor, and disciple their students in their character development. We strive to teach our students to emulate the character of Christ.

But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do . . .

I Peter 1:15

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:29-32

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

As a Christian educational community, Providence is committed to maintaining an atmosphere of trust, love, joy, and peace. When this atmosphere is jeopardized by conflict, we are committed to restoring broken relationships and reconciling problems biblically in ways that both please and glorify God and restore the relationship with the person with whom the conflict exists. Specifically, this applies to a commitment to first address the problem directly with the people involved and not bypass them by going up the line of authority; nor by discussing with outside parties. If the matter is not resolved, one may proceed up the proper chain (see Matthew 18:15-20). At all times, humility is expected and a restoration of the relationship and trust is the goal. In other words, at Providence, we make a conscious decision to attack the problem and not one another. Additional steps Providence follows in conflict resolution are found in the *Providence Student Handbook*.

PROVIDENCE CHAPEL

Chapel is part of the Providence education—spiritually, musically, and behaviorally. Students learn that worship is a conversation: God speaks to the students through the truth of Himself and his Son, and they respond in the Spirit with their minds and hearts. Scottish theologian Sinclair Ferguson states that this conversation of worship is “the ultimate dialogue” of our lives, with the “people of God gathered to address the holy Father.” Learning this type of worship as children may be one of the most important lessons ever taught at Providence.

We believe Chapel should help participants become better worshippers in their private times. Author Eugene Peterson has put the importance of setting aside worship time in this way: “Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God—not because He is confined to time and place, but because one’s self-importance is so insidiously relentless that if we don’t deliberately interrupt ourselves regularly, we have no chance of attending to Him at all in other times and in other places.”

We believe hymns are the best musical source available to us to teach about God and His redemptive work. They affirm and incarnate the truth of Scripture, our ultimate source of God’s Word. Hymns equip our students for leadership in the Church and the world by laying the groundwork of intelligent, thoughtful theology as expressed historically by some of the “cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1) who have gone before us.

We recognize that Providence students attend churches that represent a wide variety of worship styles—from liturgical to traditional to the very contemporary. Our Chapel service may be quite different from that to which the students are accustomed. But we believe Providence Chapel will help them become better worshippers regardless of their family’s denomination or their church’s style of worship service.

FAMILY

PROVIDENCE RECOGNIZES THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FAMILY, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE FATHER, IN EDUCATING CHILDREN, AND IS COMMITTED TO FOSTERING A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY OF LIKE-MINDED FAMILIES.

One of Providence's highest priorities is to help Providence families be successful: we are family-focused. We believe that God holds parents and, more specifically, fathers, responsible for the education and training of their children, and that this critical role cannot be abdicated to others. In the situations where one of the parents is not physically present, the school seeks to welcome, encourage, and support the family. Because children emulate their parents, parents must prayerfully study and teach the Word of God to their children, leading them into Godly adulthood. As parents speak and live according to God's Word, truth is imparted to children, moment by moment.

There is a direct correlation between successful living in the home—a home where the mother and the children joyfully and obediently respond to the spiritual, loving leadership of the father—and Providence's ability to fulfill its mission. Therefore, Providence aims to be an extension of the Christian home and a resource to help parents fulfill their God-given responsibility. The School is committed to providing families as much time as possible to carry out their responsibilities and to have a meaningful family life. At the same time, if a child requires long hours of tutoring in order to keep up with the curriculum, family time is compromised. Providence thus may not be an appropriate school for every child in a family.

Providence also recognizes the proper limits of a school's role in the education of the students entrusted to it and the responsibility of parents to rear their children as they are convicted, called, and led by the Lord. Toward that end, Providence

- Encourages fathers in their leadership role in the Christian home;
- Encourages parents to train their children in Godly habits;
- Listens to parents' concerns and questions, and values their parental wisdom and input;
- Encourages semester projects in the younger classes to be family-focused, through which family members and friends can pass along skills, interests, and hobbies to the children;
- Defers to parents the introduction of sensitive topics, such as sex education; and

And fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4

Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

Proverbs 1:8

Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:15

But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow becomes a stumbling block to the weak.

I Corinthians 8:9

- Avoids introducing elements of popular culture in order to allow parents to have the freedom to introduce these cultural influences when they think it is appropriate for their family.

Because the School values family time and the critical role parents play in the development of children, Providence

- Limits the length of school days for more family time and developing special interests;
- Values and includes playtime for young students;
- Limits school field trips to educational ones;
- Defers most decisions for Christian and community service to the family, so that family time will not be stretched;
- Permits no solicitation of the school community for outside ministries and missions;
- Allows students in good standing to accompany their families on educational trips (the *Providence Student Handbook* spells out the current policies for excused absences);
- Encourages mothers to stay home with their students as much as possible and to be not overly involved in other activities;
- Does not invite mothers of very young children to serve in time-consuming Parents' Council jobs; and
- Avoids lavish fundraising events that require lengthy volunteer hours and months of preparation by parents.

GRANDPARENTS' DAY

One of the most important and joy-filled days in the Providence school year is the day on which the School honors grandparents and those who have filled a grandparent's role in the lives of Providence students. Ordinarily held just before the Thanksgiving holiday, Grandparents' Day brings together the entire school community to hear recitations and musical performances by students, to view students' semester projects and artwork, and to celebrate the Godly influence of loving elders in the lives of Providence students.

INTELLECT

PROVIDENCE IS COMMITTED TO HELPING INTELLECTUALLY PROMISING, ACADEMICALLY ABLE STUDENTS FULFILL THEIR GOD-GIVEN POTENTIAL BY MEANS OF TIME-TESTED AND CLASSICAL INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND CURRICULA AND BY ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD HABITS.

Providence seeks to develop young scholars who are responsible, self-motivated, and intellectually curious—students who love learning and will become lifetime learners and good stewards of their gifts.

Providence focuses on the core knowledge and basic skills that students need in order to be well prepared for high school at the most selective college-preparatory schools in the area. Because the School focuses on a core curriculum, the school day is shorter than that at most schools. In this way each family may choose additional curricula or extracurricular activities that it deems important, along with church-related and community volunteer work to which the family feels called.

CLASSICAL, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Providence offers a classical education in the broad sense of being traditional, time-tested, and intellectually rigorous rather than in the narrower sense of being centered in Latin and Greek studies. A classical education is based on great ideas, great books (including primary sources when possible), foundational truths and principles, and enduring traditions and skills. It holds to established standards.¹

The “classics” at the core of a classical education at Providence are works of art, music, literature, history, and science, each of which expresses profound insight, artistic creativity, enduring cultural value, and have not only stood the test of time, but are also the foundation of the Western Civilization and our Judeo-Christian heritage. By studying the classics, students encounter the most influential thinkers, artists, and writers, and gain an understanding of Western history and culture. The classics are touchstones of excellence, so that by studying them, students learn aesthetic discernment and discrimination and how to soundly judge what is bad or worse, good or best. But much more than this, by filtering the classics through the grid of God’s Word, we impart to students a Christian perspective, which equips them to make moral judgments, not merely about the basic questions of right and wrong, but also about profound ideas, including those that directly clash with Christianity. The classical, *Christian* education is marked by the teacher’s ability to train students to make critical judgments about such matters— judgments based upon biblical and philosophical truths.²

Solomon answered God, . . . “Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?” God said to Solomon, “Since this is your heart’s desire and you have not asked for wealth, riches or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king, therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. . . .”

II Chronicles 1:8-12

And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

II Timothy 2:2

Providence purposefully departs from the classical model that follows a strict chronological timeline of study from the earliest years. We begin not with classical antiquity and the Greek and Roman gods but rather with the children's own Christian and American heritage in order to not confuse very young children who are just learning about their own heritage and the faith of their fathers.

THE CLASSICAL, CHRISTIAN TEACHER: COMMITTED TO LIFELONG LEARNING IN A COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS

Providence employs faculty who exhibit a calling to teach, who are knowledgeable and passionate about their subject, who are skilled in their pedagogy, and who love children. Faculty members at Providence are to be scholars themselves—inconstant readers and lifetime learners and researchers. Each member of the faculty must be determined to teach the best material by the most effective means, never content simply to rehash old class notes or lesson plans. Providence teachers are to enthusiastically engage one another in dialogue and debate about the philosophy, content, and methods that constitute the best education. The faculty must stimulate and challenge one another because curriculum is never finished but is always subject to refinement. The faculty members must engage and improve each other because, in the words of educator David Hicks, the faculty is the “school within the school.”³ At the same time, faculty members recognize that instruction must be coordinated for consistency for students of different teachers.

THE PROVIDENCE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

In an increasingly secularized world, the importance of a classical, Christian education has never been greater. The following sections describe key distinctives of a Providence education.

DEVELOPING INDIVIDUALS WHO MAKE THE MOST OF GOD'S GIFTS

We believe that God places a high value on children and that to be blessed with them is a sacred and solemn responsibility. It is Providence's privilege to love, protect, nurture, train, and educate the precious children God leads to the School. Our faculty members treat our students as unique individuals, created in the image of God, each with special abilities and needs. Providence strives to help our students realize their potential spiritually, intellectually, socially, physically, and creatively.

Providence offers a curriculum that produces well-rounded students through its commitment to the fine arts, physical education, and athletics; to semester projects in the younger classes; and to limited, carefully chosen extra and co-curricular activities that encourage our students' creativity and enrich their lives. Providence faculty members strive to provide clear and complete instruction that engages students' interest; homework, essay, and project assignments that further understanding without being “busy work”; and encouragement to persevere in the face of difficulty. Because we focus on children truly learning, not just completing work, we give detailed comments but no letter grades for the younger students.

Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Proverbs 9:9

And we refrain from giving numerous trivial awards, striving rather to help students understand that pleasing God, learning, and achieving understanding are sufficient rewards in themselves.

Finally, Providence values, and is committed to, appropriate class sizes at all class levels. This ensures that each student has opportunities to participate and lead, and that our teachers can get to know their students well, can adequately monitor their progress, and can mentor them as they grow in stature and in understanding.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRIVIUM AT PROVIDENCE

The Trivium—referring to the grammar, logic, and rhetoric stages of learning—was the foundation of classical education, based on a Greco-Roman model developed during the Middle Ages. It consisted of the “aspects of the liberal arts that pertain to the training of the mind.”⁴ What is most important about the Trivium is not that it organizes a curriculum or provides a rigid formula for stages of cognitive development, but that it centers on language: grammar—learning the basics of language; logic—learning to organize language to express one’s ideas cohesively; and rhetoric—learning to articulate logically sound arguments in grammatically correct and eloquent language. The ultimate goal of the Trivium is to teach students the proper use of the tools of learning before they apply them to all subjects.

Providence’s curriculum is informed by a proper understanding of the Trivium. In the lower class levels—and this greatly distinguishes a Providence education from the “progressive” model found in most schools today—the emphasis is on facts and memory work. Thus, all courses of study begin with basic information—whether phonograms, math facts, maps, or specimen collections. As students mature, the coursework focuses additionally on gathering and interpreting information and on its limitations and logical implications. Ultimately, students learn to articulately present what they have learned, both orally and in writing. But Providence students develop through all the stages almost from the beginning, as younger students not only learn facts but also reason from and write about what they have learned, and older students continue to add new, more complex factual information to their store of knowledge in all of their studies.

Therefore, Providence’s curriculum carefully trains students in language, is grounded in rich content, and equips students with God’s Truth and sound reason to guide their thinking.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHARLOTTE MASON AT PROVIDENCE

Providence bases important aspects of its educational philosophy and pedagogical methods, particularly in the lower class levels, on the theories and practices of British educator Charlotte Mason (1842-1923). The elements of Charlotte Mason’s educational *philosophy* that have been incorporated into that of Providence are the following:

- Parents are the primary influence in their children’s lives, and they must accept and fulfill this responsibility—it cannot be delegated. In Mason’s words: “More than anything else [it is] the home influences brought to bear upon the child that determine the character and career of the future man or woman.”

- Children are born as individuals of worth—as “persons,” in Mason’s terminology—and, as such, should be valued and respected. Curriculum for children, therefore, should reflect their value and potential as human beings and should never be “dumbed down.” Rather, the curriculum must be full of books and experiences that exemplify and teach truth, beauty, and goodness. In particular, a school’s curriculum should be filled with “living books” and not simply textbooks, graded readers, and empty works of the sort Mason termed “twaddle” (that is, works lacking in depth, breadth, and literary quality).
- The teaching and reinforcing of mental and moral habits help students automatically learn to do what is right and will aid them in their future development. Charlotte Mason believed children should be “taught what they ought, not what they want.”

The following notable elements of Charlotte Mason’s educational *practices* are incorporated into Providence’s curriculum:

- Nature study should be an integral part of children’s grammar school years. Nature study helps children love and appreciate the magnificence of God as the Creator of all. Moreover, nature study is foundational to developing skills in inquiry, observation, and analysis that are integral not only to scientific investigation but also to fields as diverse as the study of history and of the visual arts.
- The use of “picture studies” helps students recognize, appreciate, and respond to art. Picture studies are done on a regular basis both for art appreciation and for their language-eliciting capability. Picture studies develop students’ memory skills and speaking ability as they study the history, style, and unique qualities of great works of art and the lives of the artists who created these works.
- The use of oral and written narration develops students’ overall language skills. Students tell back or “narrate” a story they have heard or read, comprehensively and in rich detail. As students narrate, they learn good writing style, as they often recite or write in the same style as the author. Narration also strengthens and develops their vocabulary, comprehension and memory skills, and gives them ownership of the material. Just as one learns to distinguish counterfeit from real currency by studying authentic currency, one learns to distinguish good language from poor by modeling good writing and speaking.
- Classical literature, music, and art are embraced as integral parts of the curriculum. Our library, classroom selections, and reading lists represent the finest of children’s literature. Students are taught the history of great classical composers and artists and trained to recognize their work.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

For further reading on Classical Education, please refer to websites listed in the footnotes to this section.

APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGY

Technology instruction is not emphasized in the curriculum owing to the School's focus on core knowledge, reading, expanding students' attentiveness, and limiting distractions. Providence is not anti-technology, but in the classroom it chooses to keep technology primarily in the teacher's hands. Outside the classroom, Providence encourages older students to acquire important computer skills and offers some summer classes and online programs to facilitate their learning.

THE PROVIDENCE CURRICULUM

Providence offers its students a rich humanities, sciences, and arts curriculum that integrates the study of literature and the arts with the study of history and geography. In that integration, and in the following subject areas, Providence's curriculum is distinctive and may differ from other, comparable preparatory schools. In most subjects, the curriculum is advanced beyond typical school curricula.

ART

Art encompasses both aesthetic appreciation and creative expression. As Christians, we acknowledge God as the Ultimate Artist. Created in His image, we thus possess an innate creative capacity. Such creativity witnesses to the impress of deity upon our souls, mirroring His image in us and radiating His mind through us as we create. As a classical and Christian school, we explore great works of art by past masters filtered through a Christian perspective. Such exploration enables students to experience the intellectual and emotional power of artistic genius while cultivating their own creative potential and aesthetic discernment. Students additionally study artistic methods in various media to learn how to create artistic works of their own. Each school year concludes with a Fine Arts Day display of each student's best work during the year.

ENGLISH

Through the utterance of His Word, God spoke all things into existence; through the revelation of His Word, God established the means by which we might know Him; through the Incarnation of His Word, God showed Himself to humanity as our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. Through the Word, humanity discovers God, the meaning of life, and our responsibility to love one another as God has loved us. The Word also encompasses language, including its meaning, its form, its structure, and its communication. These elements of language comprise the study of English at Providence, a curriculum that exposes students to the finest and most nobly written literature and that aims to provide students both the inspiration to be attentive, discerning readers and the skills to write clearly, engagingly, and nobly themselves. These aims are achieved through deliberate and careful study of classic literature, poetry, drama, and historical texts, as well as through frequent writing and rewriting. The textual analysis students learn and the repeated writing they do enhance their analytical and critical capabilities and their own powers of expression.

In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:1,14

Providence particularly emphasizes its students' comprehensive understanding and competent use of the English language. Accordingly, the Providence language arts curriculum

- Teaches students to read phonetically;
- Teaches reading, writing, and spelling in an integrated format;
- Teaches and requires correct grammar and mechanics;
- Encourages neat, consistent penmanship, so that students' written words are legible and pleasing to the eye;
- Encourages students to delight in books and acquire the habit of reading for a lifetime by helping them gain the common knowledge necessary for reading comprehension;
- Encourages students to read classic works of literature; and
- Teaches students to memorize Bible passages, poetry, and great speeches. In contrast to the current thinking of progressive educators, Providence believes that memorization and recitation provide significant benefits to children's intellectual development, especially in strengthening language skills.

HISTORY

The term *history* derives from the Greek *historeo*, which can be translated either as “to visit” or “to see.” Both “visiting” and “seeing” express the Providence philosophy of history. We “visit” history through great books as we travel through time and “visit” kings and kingdoms, philosophers and fools, and heroes and villains. Class Seven takes a three-day Texas history trip, and Class Eight takes a week-long trip to Washington, D.C., to help cement the history they have studied in class. Thus “visiting,” students learn to “see” in two ways—imaginatively and intellectually. Imaginatively, they “see” through factual and fictional works that stimulate and color their imagination about the events and personages of history; intellectually, they “see” by observing, analyzing, interpreting, and learning from the past.

At Providence, we study the past to understand the present and plan for the future. Philosophically, as a classical school we emphasize the study of Western history and culture, but we also recognize the importance of non-Western cultures—such as those of China, India, and the Islamic nations—in the twenty-first century, and therefore we integrate the study of non-Western history and culture into our curriculum as appropriate. To help lay a strong foundation of God and Jesus in the early grades, we begin our study of history with American history. Ancient history study begins in Middle School when students are better prepared to study false religions such as the gods and goddesses found throughout Greek and Roman history. In practice, we explore history through chronology, philosophy, biography, geography, and economics. We emphasize primary texts and the biographies of great figures in history. Most importantly, we recognize that history is “His story”—that is, history witnesses to the sovereignty and providence of God at all times and in all events, and thus “to visit” and “to see” history is really to visit and to see *His story*.

LATIN

In keeping with classical tradition, Providence instructs all students in Latin, beginning in Class Four and continuing through Class Eight as our foreign language.

While Latin is not a spoken language in the world today, it has significant value for modern students. First, Latin, the language from which the modern Romance languages are derived, provides a thorough understanding of grammar and practice in translation. This foundation makes the modern languages easier to learn. Second, the logical structure of Latin promotes structured, logical thinking. Third, because many words in English have Latin roots, studying Latin increases students' vocabulary. And, fourth, the study of Roman history and culture is foundational to an understanding of Western civilization.

Most of our students enter high school with Latin credit, at which point they may choose to continue with Latin or to study a modern language. Providence recognizes that some families will choose to teach modern languages to their students through family home study or extracurricular classes.

MATH

Mathematics witnesses to God's nature in the orderly finitude of the material universe and to His transcendence beyond that universe unto infinity. Mathematics orients students' minds to God's mind, cultivating in them appreciation, knowledge, and mastery of math facts, computation, real life math applications, development of logical thinking, and algebraic concepts. Mathematics also cultivates discipline in students, enabling them to participate in the scientific and technological stewardship of this world for the service of God and man. Mathematics instruction at Providence carefully reinforces every skill and concept learned by not dropping the concepts once they are covered but rather by returning to them recursively, and with increasing complexity, throughout the school year.

MUSIC

Providence teaches music to every student. God's Word exhorts us to celebratory praise, reverential worship, and skillful expression of our faith through singing and by playing instruments. God's grace equips all of us with means to worship Him through music, and Providence's music program purposes to develop its students' musical skills. This process begins with teaching students to listen and hear discriminatively in order to understand musical ideas, to sing correctly and accurately, and to have a working understanding of music notation. This includes folk songs of Western culture, classical music composed in the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries, and the historical hymnody of our Christian heritage. Ultimately, Providence's music curriculum challenges students to appreciate excellence in music. An understanding and love for the classic, traditional values of music teaches Providence students to know and discern what is good, true, and beautiful.

Nature gives certain dispositions of mind which we can get from no other source, and it is through these right dispositions that we get life into focus, as it were; learn to distinguish between small matters and great, to see that *we ourselves* are not of great importance, that the world is wide, that things are sweet. . . . Our hearts are inclined to love and worship; and we become prepared by the quiet schooling of Nature to walk softly and do our duty towards man and towards God.

Charlotte Mason,
Ourselves, vol. IV, page 98

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him.

Colossians 1:16

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Romans 1:20

NATURE STUDY

Beginning in our early learning program, the study of nature is an important component of Providence's science curriculum. Almost from birth, children begin to learn about God by observing and studying His creation. Nature study trains students in their powers of observation, recognition, counting, and classifying. It allows them to glorify God as they see the awesomeness of His design and the perfect order of His creation. Nature study at Providence includes gardening; tending small mammals, reptiles, and fish; careful observation, drawing, and maintaining records and data; experiments; dissections; and field trips.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

We designed our athletic program to inspire a lifetime of enjoyment in a variety of sports and fitness activities, but the ultimate goal of which is to "present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God" (Romans 12:1). As God has given us bodies finely adapted for His service, He also gives us the responsibility to nourish, strengthen, and refine our bodies in physical education and competitive sports, and to train our bodies to be fit for future service to God. Through our athletic program, we hope to develop Godly character in our athletes while aiming to glorify God in all our efforts. Providence believes that athletic and physical training produces lifelong results in students, strengthening the body, mind, and character through discipline, skills acquisition, consistent practice, self-control, and teamwork.

SCIENCE

Since the Creation is itself a revelation of God, then the study of it will reveal God. Science reveals God's unchanging faithfulness and orderliness by teaching students to understand the language of creation. This scientific language and literacy is a must for the future Christian leader of a society that is becoming increasingly technologically oriented. Students are taught through the five steps of the scientific method; to think and speak scientifically; and to learn in laboratory settings that emphasize hands-on discovery. Science forms a foundation for further study in math and science, and the problem-solving and critical-thinking skills developed in the process of studying science are transferable to other disciplines. Therefore, through the study of science, the Providence student will be a better decision-maker and more confident in the logic stage of classical education.

The entirety of this curriculum requires substantial parental commitment, involvement, and reinforcement if it is to become part of students' academic skills and habits.

¹ Dan Russ, Ph.D., The definition of "classical education" is taken from an unpublished essay, "Classical, Christian Education." Used by permission here and following.

² Hal Brunson, Ph.D., "What Is a Classical, Christian Education?" This paragraph is adapted from an address to Covenant Christian Academy, Colleyville, TX, 20 May 2002. Used by permission.

³ Russ. The paragraph to this point is adapted from "Classical, Christian Education."

⁴ Sr. Miriam Joseph, Ph.D., *The Trivium*, 1937, 2002; page 3.

Further Reading on Classical Curriculum:

The Lost Tools of Learning, by Dorothy Sayers, www.gbt.org/text/sayers.html

When Children Love to Learn: A Practical Application of Charlotte Mason's Philosophy for Today, ed. by Elaine Cooper, Crossway Books: 2004.

The Charlotte Mason Companion: Personal Reflections on The Gentle Art of Learning, by Karen Andreola, Charlotte Mason Research & Supply Company: 2008.

He called a little child and had him stand among them. And He said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."

Matthew 18:2-6

VIRTUE

PROVIDENCE IS COMMITTED TO PROTECTING THE INNOCENCE OF CHILDHOOD WHILE ALSO PREPARING ITS OLDER STUDENTS FOR THEIR FURTHER EDUCATION IN A WORLD INCREASINGLY HOSTILE TO CHRISTIAN FAITH AND VIRTUE.

Providence understands that a life of godly wisdom and virtue is countercultural, opposed to current societal values and behavior. The School is unwavering in its commitment to fostering an environment that promotes virtuous living among like-minded families. Virtues are habits that give us the power to act rightly. They are an inner disposition, a sure habit of mind, which settles the question of how students will discharge their duties. They are the building blocks of character and are essential to living the Christian life well.

Providence desires that its graduates influence and shape their culture for God's glory. Equipped for leadership, prepared to discover their vocation, and dependent on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, students seek knowledge and understanding in the fear of the Lord. Providence seeks to expose children to what will ennoble them (Philippians 4:8). We celebrate acts of courage, works of ministry, and things of beauty. In an effort to support one another as iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17), we expect parents to foster a home environment where Providence children can interact without parental fear that they will be exposed to worldly experiences that do not honor their own family's preferences and decisions.

OBEDIENCE

Scripture teaches that all authority is derived from God and that the powers that be are ordained by God (Romans 13:1-3). Thus, God has ordained government, church, and family as the structures of authority through which He accomplishes His purposes in the world. Therefore, every individual will be held responsible before God for his responses to authority.

It is Providence's duty (working in harmony with parents) to train its students for future success by demonstrating to them, and requiring of them, an obedient, submissive, God-honoring response toward those in authority over them. Therefore, Providence students are taught to practice prompt, first-time obedience; to be always respectful in word, tone, and facial expression; and not to whine, complain, or talk back.

KINDNESS & HUMILITY

Providence believes that courtesy and good manners are not only characteristics of mature ladies and gentlemen but are also important aspects of “lov[ing] your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18), of showing honor and respect to others, and of demonstrating the worthiness of others. Providence teaches, reinforces, and encourages good habits in a student’s intellectual, spiritual, moral, and physical life in the belief that the development of a disciplined lifestyle, in the context of a relationship with Jesus Christ, will provide a solid foundation for a responsible and joyful life.

SIMPLICITY

Providence encourages an atmosphere in which the simpler things of life are valued. An attitude of “keeping things as simple as possible” has always been a priority in Christian family living. Providence helps its families promote an attitude of simplicity by:

- Providing structure and routine, which, in an unpredictable and insecure world, bear witness to a God who brings order out of chaos;
- Keeping our campus and classrooms serene and elegantly understated, in keeping with our classical philosophy, by avoiding elaborate and distracting classroom decorations; and
- Choosing not to raise funds through elaborate social events that would demand a tremendous number of volunteer hours and a great deal of expense, while at the same time excluding families who could not afford to participate in costly events.

DILIGENCE

Aiming at a love of learning and a self-disciplined lifestyle, Providence develops diligence in its students by:

- Teaching organization – planning, order, consistency – as a means of achieving freedom, rather than constraint;
- Inculcating habits of close attention and effective use of study time;
- Encouraging students to persevere in the face of difficulty;
- Asking students to correct their mistakes as part of the learning process; and
- Requiring neat, consistent penmanship, which demonstrates discipline, care, and regard for one’s readers.

As Paul counseled the Christians at Philippi, “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Philippians 2:3, 4

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8

The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. “Master,” he said, “you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.” His master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”

Matthew 25:20-21

STEWARDSHIP

PROVIDENCE IS COMMITTED TO FAITHFULLY STEWARDING THE TIME, TALENTS, AND TREASURE ENTRUSTED TO IT, AND LIKEWISE TO FOSTERING THE FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP OF ITS STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Providence is committed to biblical stewardship. For Christians, stewardship is the realization that everything we have in our lives—our time, our talents, our resources, and our families—are all gracious gifts from God, and that He owns it all, not just a fraction or percentage. It is our responsibility, therefore, to wisely, intelligently, and carefully manage all that we have been given by God in a way that pleases Him. As a school, Providence is committed to stewarding its resources faithfully and wisely. Even more important, Providence recognizes and honors the stewardship duty we have to parents who have entrusted us with their most precious possessions—their children’s hearts and minds.

STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

Providence is committed to raising the funds to endow financial aid sufficient that eventually no child would be unable to obtain a Providence education because of his or her family’s inability to pay the full cost of that education. Until that time, Providence is committed to devoting a substantial sum each year to provide partial financial aid for families who need assistance through the Scholarship Committee’s financial aid review process.

Providence is committed to administrative leanness so that most of its budget goes directly to instruction. The Providence faculty is committed to wise and frugal use of resources. Providence is committed to the ongoing and proper maintenance of its grounds and facilities

Finally, Providence is committed to making a Providence education not only the best education available, but also the best value available.

FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP IN STUDENTS

STEWARDSHIP OF GOD-GIVEN GIFTS

Providence teaches students that their talents, skills, and spiritual gifts are from God, that they must steward them carefully and use them to bring Him glory and honor. We support students as they discover and develop their gifts and talents by

- Helping students understand that individuals are each given different gifts and that each student is important in the body of Christ;
- Creating a curricular program and extracurricular opportunities within our means that allow students with a variety of gifts to develop their talents;

- Instilling in students the importance of doing their best in all of their endeavors—and doing so to honor their Lord rather than to seek the praise of men;
- Creating a school-wide environment of hard work and genuine accomplishment instead of an atmosphere consisting of false notions of self-esteem;
- Promoting an atmosphere that cultivates and honors friendship, loyalty, and inclusiveness, as brothers and sisters in Christ; and
- Encouraging students to celebrate others' successes and to humbly and graciously receive the praise they themselves earn.

STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

Providence further teaches students that how they use their time is part of how they serve their Lord. Providence teaches students to be good stewards of their time by

- Working with parents to help students develop self-disciplined, efficient study habits so that homework and studying for tests do not consume all their after-school hours; and
- Teaching students that each day is a precious gift that cannot be relived. Students thereby learn not to squander their time on pointless, worldly activities, but rather to invest their lives in activities that reveal and promote truth, beauty, and goodness.

The stewardship of time in study is discussed more fully above with regard to the core value of "Intellect." The stewardship of time in service is discussed above with regard to the core value of "Family."

STEWARDSHIP OF PHYSICAL BEING

Our students must also understand that their physical bodies belong to God, and that they should practice good stewardship of their physical beings. To teach this principle, Providence

- Requires physical education activities;
- Encourages participation in Providence sports teams;
- Promotes nutrition and healthy eating habits by not providing or permitting carbonated drinks in lunches; by limiting snacks and rarely using candy as a reward; and by not allowing younger students to share food at lunch, so that parents have charge of their children's diet; and
- Teaches modesty by requiring uniforms; by limiting jewelry and makeup; and by focusing on the internal strengths, beauty, and character of each student. In so doing, Providence limits distractions; promotes unity among students, regardless of their families' financial means; and encourages the preservation of innocence amid cultural pressures.

And let not your adornment be merely external — braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

1 Peter 3:3-4

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body.

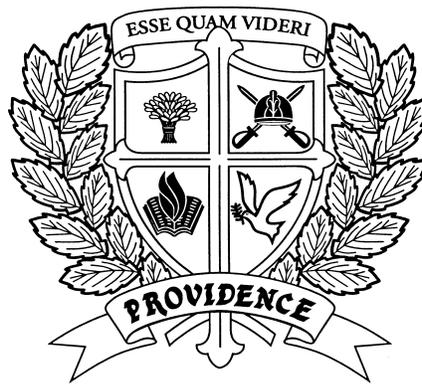
I Corinthians 6:19-20

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of Providence Christian School of Texas is to provide academically able students with a challenging educational experience designed to help them know, love, and practice that which is true, good, and excellent and to prepare them to live purposefully and intelligently in the service of God and man.

MOTTO:

Our motto is *Esse Quam Videri*, which means “to be rather than to seem,” reminding us that teaching character is at the heart of the highest-quality education.



CREST:

The crest consists of a shield representing the shield of faith (Ephesians 6:16) divided into four quadrants by the cross. Wheat represents Christ as the bread of life (John 6:35). The helmet and swords represent evangelism (Ephesians 6:17-19). The Bible with the flame represents wisdom, truth, and knowledge (Proverbs 3:13). The dove symbolizes the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17).