



Statement of Artistic Discernment

Ben Lippen Fine Arts

The arts are a gift from God and a reflection of His creative nature. Because all people are made in the image of God, we possess the capacity and calling to create, cultivate beauty, and communicate truth. At the same time, we recognize that sin has corrupted every aspect of creation, including the hearts of artists and the works they produce. Consequently, every artistic work must be approached with humility and discernment, acknowledging both its potential to reveal truth and its capacity to distort it. Through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, creativity becomes an avenue that proclaims hope, cultivates virtue, and bears witness to God's reconciling work in the world. Whether in the classroom, in the studio, or on the stage, we seek to approach the arts with an attitude of worship, offering our gifts for the glory of God and the good of our neighbors.

Applications of Artistic Discernment

Faculty members exercise prayerful, biblical discernment when selecting repertoire, scripts, visual art, choreography, and other instructional materials. While no single guideline can address every circumstance, decisions should be made by considering the work in light of the following principles:

- **Mission Alignment**
 - Artistic selections should support the school's mission and contribute to the formation of Christlike character within students. Every rehearsal, lesson, exhibition, and performance should contribute to the development of students who love God, serve others, and pursue excellence with humility.
 - Whether through joy, lament, beauty, or honest struggle, artistic selections should direct students and audiences toward the hope of the gospel and the promised restoration of all creation in Jesus Christ.
 - Artistic selections should cultivate an appreciation for what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and praiseworthy, while recognizing that beauty may sometimes emerge through honest depictions of brokenness and redemption.
- **Educational and Artistic Merit**
 - Artistic selections should possess meaningful educational value, promote artistic excellence, and provide opportunities for students to develop technical skill, creativity, collaboration, and aesthetic understanding.
 - Students should encounter selections from diverse historical periods, cultures, and artistic traditions, learning to appreciate both the common grace reflected in human creativity and the ways every culture reflects humanity's need for redemption.
- **Holistic Evaluation**
 - Artistic selections should be evaluated in their complete historical, literary, and theological context rather than judged solely by isolated words, scenes, images, or musical moments.



BEN LIPPEN SCHOOL

- Scripture honestly portrays the reality of sin without celebrating it. Likewise, artistic works may depict the effects of sin, suffering, injustice, doubt, or evil when such portrayals serve a meaningful purpose and ultimately lead toward truth, wisdom, justice, redemption, or a deeper understanding of the human condition. We avoid works that glamorize, trivialize, or encourage sinful attitudes or behaviors.
 - Content should be appropriate for the emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and developmental maturity of the students performing or studying it. Younger students should be protected from themes beyond their capacity to process wisely, while older students may thoughtfully engage more complex material under careful instruction and guided discussion.
 - Public performances and exhibitions should reflect sensitivity to the intended audience, recognizing that these events represent both the students' and the school's Christian witness within the broader community.
 - Language, imagery, choreography, costumes, and staging should be approached with wisdom. Material containing profanity, crude humor, gratuitous violence, sexually explicit content, or irreverent treatment of God or sacred things will ordinarily not be selected unless there is an exceptional educational reason and the material can be presented faithfully without compromising the school's mission.
- **Student Shepherding**
 - Teachers and directors are responsible for exercising mature spiritual judgment, consulting with school leadership when appropriate, and communicating openly with families regarding content that may require additional context.
 - Parents are the primary disciplers of their children. We seek to partner with families through transparency, thoughtful communication, and respect for parental concerns while maintaining the educational integrity of our programs.