

ORANGE CITY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

April/May
2025

BE THOU OUR VISION

Orange City Christian School is a biblically-based community that partners with parents, educating hearts and minds to serve in Christ's Kingdom.



Congratulations, Class of 2025!

The graduation ceremony for the 8th grade Class of 2025 took place at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 22nd, at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Orange City.

The class chose Jeremiah 29:11 as their passage for the evening: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Addressing the class this year was Mrs. Karlyn Brunst, 8th grade teacher for the graduating class. Her address challenged the students to remember the words from the verse they chose-God has a plan for them. She focused on what true prosperity looks like, God's promise to not harm them, and the hope we have in this promise.

The twenty-eight graduates received their diplomas and Bibles from board representatives, Brad Cleveringa and Shannon Schuller, parents of two of the graduates. Trey Oolman and Abigail Van Maanen were selected to speak on the graduates' behalf, providing memories of their time at OCCS, thanking teachers, staff members, and parents for their roles in helping the graduates reach this milestone and for setting a biblical foundation for the graduates as they move forward with the plans God has for them. The ceremony closed with the class singing the class song, "Oceans".

Afterwards, family and friends gathered with the graduates in the gym at Unity Christian High School to express their congratulations and share in the celebration.

—Matt Van Schepen, Assistant Principal & 8th Grade Homeroom

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

June 23-July 1
Online JMC
Registration Begins

June 26 at Noon
NICSTO Applications
Due

June 30
ESA Deadline

July 11
OCCS Golf Outing

July 14-27
School is Closed;
No TRIP Sales

August 5-7, 12-14
9:30-12:00 pm
Gear Up for School
(GUFS) for those
registered

August 21
Back-to-School Night

August 25
First Day of School

August 26
First Day of Preschool

Memorials

Mary Woudstra



A big shoutout to our incredible 7th and 8th grade student coaches! Throughout the school year, these students have generously given up their study hall and lunch time to play with and support our younger students during lunch and noon recess.

More than just supervisors, these coaches have been friendship role models—offering ideas for fun activities, encouraging kindness and inclusion, helping resolve conflicts, and creating joyful memories. Their leadership and caring presence have made a meaningful impact on our school community.

Thank you, coaches, for the difference you've made!

—Michelle Alons, Counselor

Shaping Desires

This year I had the privilege of leading weekly devotions with our staff. Rather than rotating the responsibility among staff, I selected a theme and shared what God was teaching me each week. I really enjoyed it. My theme this year was “Shaping Desires”.

Shaping desires is at the heart of Christian Education. Our world, culture, and community constantly bombard us with ideas about what is important. These ideas often stand in conflict with what the Bible teaches should be important. Christian Education is about viewing our world, culture, and community through the lens of Scripture. What is important to Christians should differ from what our world perceives as **important**.

A Christian education strives to work with the Church and Christian home to align our desires with the Holy Spirit as we teach about all of God's Creation. James 4:1 asks: “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?” Our sinful nature battles with the Holy Spirit within us.

Romans 12:1-2 urges us to “Stand Firm” against the pattern of this world. “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Christian Education is one piece of being transformed as we educate our minds about God's Creation.

Shaping desires encourages us to take the focus off of ourselves and instead, focus on others. As Luke 6 states: “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that.”

Shaping desires is no easy task in our individualistic, selfish culture. The world celebrates when we make things about ourselves, and worldly desires pull strongly even within our Christian communities. A Christian Education, and OCCS, strives to shape our desires and those of our students in a way that glorifies God in everything.

Thank you for partnering with us this past school year.

Shalom,
Jason Alons

Strings Night

On May 6, 82 OCCS students in grades 4–8 showcased their musical talents at the annual Strings Night concert. Centered on the theme “Stand Out,” the evening featured lively pieces and an original drama about five girls who become princesses—only to discover that true courage means being exactly who God made them to be. With music, laughter, and the message of 1 Corin. 10:31, the students reminded us that standing out is really about living for God's glory.

—Dixie Wielenga, K-4 Music and 4-8 Orchestra



Solo & Ensemble 2025

The halls of Sioux Center Christian School were alive with music on April 29 as 6th-8th grade students took part in the annual Solo & Ensemble event. Students joyfully shared their musical talents in performances of strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, and voice.

Judges provided encouraging feedback and helpful tips for growth, and the students represented OCCS with skill and heart. We give thanks to God for the blessing of music, the joy of learning, and the opportunity to glorify Him through every note!

-Dixie Wielenga, K-4 General Music & Orchestra



Math Bee Season

Math bee season is short, intense, and exciting. Congratulations to the 6th grade team for placing 3rd out of 49 teams! Congrats to these students who also placed individually: 7th grader, Eliana Zwart (3rd) and 6th graders, Becca Oordt (1st) and Grant Scholten (4th)

-Kim Philipsen, STEPS



Thank You!

Tulip Festival was again a wonderful (and delicious!) success! From the Food Tent to the Straatmarket booth, we were thrilled to serve thousands of hungry festival goers.

This year brought a few exciting changes to our menu. Instead of the traditional tavern sandwiches, we introduced pulled pork! We also debuted the “Tiger Dog,” a fun twist on the classic hot dog, topped with pulled pork. Over at the Straatmarket, bologna on a stick offered a tasty, convenient grab-and-go option. In total, we made 6,500 pigs in a blanket to be sold alongside a generous spread of soup, hot dogs, pulled pork, blossoms, stroopwafels, almond bars and more! Even with a few chilly days, the crowds still came and we’re incredibly grateful.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who contributed whether you served on a committee, worked a shift, baked, cooked, or supported us financially. Your efforts made this festival a success and a blessing to many.

Amidst the busyness of Tulip Festival season, may we not lose sight of the reason behind all we do. We serve an amazing and sovereign God. It is a privilege to serve together, to bless others, to pray alongside one another, and to point our children to the God who deserves all glory and honor. To God be the glory in all that we do as we serve in His Kingdom!

-Bethany Schuller, Tiger PAWS President

Sports Update

As we wrap up another school year, we also bring the 2024–25 athletic season to a close! It’s been a busy and rewarding spring for our Junior High students, many of whom participated in marching band, track, and soccer—on top of their regular school activities.

Our track team had the opportunity to compete in all four scheduled meets this year: Unity Christian, Western Christian, Northwestern College, and Sioux Center Christian. We are grateful to these schools for hosting and organizing these events. We were also fortunate to enjoy some beautiful spring weather. Our coaches truly appreciated working with this group of hardworking, respectful junior high students who brought a lot of energy and enthusiasm to the season.

Our soccer teams also had a strong and successful season. The coaches were impressed with the athletes’ dedication and growth, both individually and as teams. The players consistently developed their skills and demonstrated excellent teamwork throughout the season.

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to our coaches for their commitment and flexibility this spring. They navigated challenges with professionalism and care. Our track coaches were Melanie Witt, Karlyn Brunst, and Kinsey Schiebout. Our boys soccer team was led by Jason Alons, while our girls soccer coaches were Jordan Helming and Maggie Alons.

Thank you all for a great season!

-Travis De Jong, Athletic Director



Farewell

OCCS bids farewell to some staff members who have served our school faithfully in different capacities.

-Ardene Huisman has been serving our school for 32 years, mostly in the 1st grade.

-Darrel (Fritz) Kroese has been serving as our custodian for over 21 years. He “retired” during the school year.

-Kristina Wolf has been serving as one of our kindergarten teachers for the past 3 years.

-Rachel Harcum has been serving as a classroom aide for the past 3 years.

-Linda Juhl has been serving as a classroom aide for the past 5 years.

-Mary Goslinga has helped out with students throughout the building for the past 6 years, serving as a classroom aide in kindergarten this year.

-Noelle Altman was our art teacher this past year.

Please thank these staff members for their service at OCCS and wish them well as they begin new chapters in their lives.

K-4 Students Shine in “Music Man Kids”

The K-4th graders delighted audiences with their energetic and heartwarming performances of *Music Man Kids* on April 3-4, 2025. From lively tunes to charming costumes and scenery, the students transported the audience back to 1912 River City, Iowa.

The students eagerly embraced the timeless songs like “Seventy-Six Trombones,” “Wells Fargo Wagon,” “Pick a Little, Talk a Little,” and the always-entertaining “Shipooopi!” While the story was unfamiliar to many of the students at first, they quickly fell in love with the quirky characters and unexpected twists of the musical. Even the seemingly “unlovable” townsfolk of River City won their hearts.

The 4th graders took on the challenge of full character roles, memorizing lines, singing, dancing, and miming the playing of band instruments—all with impressive poise and enthusiasm. From the slick-talking Harold Hill to the graceful Marian Paroo, each student brought his/her character to life with energy and confidence. Even the easily-swayed school board members turned Barbershop Quartet became an audience favorite, harmonizing beautifully once Harold Hill got them to stop arguing long enough to sing!

The production was a testament to the creativity, commitment, and collaboration of students, parents, and staff alike. More than just a performance, it was a celebration of God’s gifts—creativity, music, teamwork, and joy. We thank God for the talents He’s given these students and the opportunity to refine and use them in ways that bring delight to others. To God be the glory!

—Dixie Wielenga, K-4 Music and 4-8 Orchestra

Board Report – May 2025

April Balance Sheet: \$3,337,187.92

Project Engage Updates:

Phase 1 remodel of interior rooms of the school began on May 28 with Hoogendoorn Construction. We are excited for this portion of Project Engage to be completed this summer.

REMINDER that we continue to fundraise for Phase 2 which provides additional classrooms, a science lab, and a gymnasium to alleviate some of the stress on the current facilities in terms of usage and scheduling. This portion of the project will break ground when 75% of the project cost is raised/pledged.

The Board is thrilled to announce a new partnership in support of our Project Engage fundraising initiative. Following a series of insightful conversations, we are pleased to welcome Fellowship Development, based in Omaha, Nebraska, as a key partner in this important effort.

Fellowship Development brings extensive experience in providing on-site, full-service capital campaign management tailored specifically for Christian churches, schools, and nonprofits. Their mission-driven approach not only equips organizations with the tools and strategies needed to reach their fundraising goals, but also inspires a spirit of generosity rooted in faith. Their work helps supporters experience the joy and abundance of giving as an act of worship and stewardship.

We are confident that this collaboration will strengthen our campaign and advance our mission in powerful ways. We look forward to the journey ahead with Fellowship Development walking alongside us.

Building Fund	\$ 591,412.21	Cetera	\$ 1,776,217.86
Pledges	\$ 1,186,603.21	CD	\$ 750,000.00
Expenses	\$ 148,476.62	Total	\$ 4,452,709.90

We are hiring for a few positions: Art Teacher (Part-Time), Para-Professionals.

ESA applications must be completed by June 30. *First-time applicants:* Parents/guardians will first be directed to sign up with an email and password. Parents/guardians will receive a message from Odyssey asking them to confirm their email address. After confirming the email, the parent/guardian can sign in to the Odyssey portal to begin their application. *Returning applicants:* Parents/guardians with an existing Odyssey portal account will log in to the existing account to apply for the 2025-26 school year.

We are thankful for the completion of another school year. We pray that our students and staff will enjoy their summer break. We appreciate your continued prayer support as we make decisions regarding the future of OCCS.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Moret, Board Secretary

