



BE THOU OUR VISION

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

RUN!

The school year is off to a running start. We don't ease into the school year. We hit the ground "running." August/September has been full of activity at school: new classes, new staff, Fun Raiser kick-off, theme kick-off, sports, silage piles, pig-in-the-blanket making, class projects, field trips, and the list goes on. Sometimes it feels like the school year is one big race.

Our theme this year is "The Amazing Race." We started the year with 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 which says, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it for a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever." What a wonderful, challenging passage to begin the year!

I would not consider myself a dedicated runner, but I have participated in a few races in my life. During those races, I may want to improve my time, enjoy the run, get some exercise, etc. But no one would confuse me with someone who was lining up to *win* that race. It is easy to pick out those handful of runners who are lining up with the goal of winning. Everything about them exudes passion for running and focus on the goal. They may not take first place, but there is no doubt as to what their desire is right from the start.

God's challenge to us through Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 is not to win, but to run like we *want* to win. What would it take to transform a runner like me, who casually enters races, into one who enters the race with the goal of winning? It would take passion, dedication, hard work, and hours of training.

I believe the same is true about our Christian race. It takes the same dedication and hard work of a physical race. We can be a casual runner, or we can line up and run as though we *want to win*. God calls us to do the latter. Ironically, I believe the Bible teaches that the way for us to "run in such a way as to get the prize" is to learn how to serve and put others first.

Thank you for your support of OCCS. I am looking forward to an exciting year of learning to run this Amazing Race. I am so thankful we can do it together as a community.

In Christ,

Jason Alons
Principal

Theme Kickoff Chapel

Students at OCCS geared up for "The Amazing Race" kickoff chapel the afternoon of September 21, 2023. Unfortunately, the outdoor race had to become an indoor event due to a rainy forecast. However, this did not dampen the students' spirits, and they readily took their mark, they got ready, and they went...

The entire student body was split into five teams. Each team advanced through nine different stations that correlated with this year's monthly topics focusing on how we should run a life race. At the starting line station, the students heard that the day that they were born was the day that their "Amazing Race" began. After learning about the training, equipment, hurdles, and the perseverance needed to run the race, the teams were cheered for and prayed over by our "cloud of witnesses" at the finish line. Just as scripture encourages us to run our race as to win the prize, the students enjoyed ice cream sandwiches as their prize for participating well in the kickoff race.

Thanks to the many pastors, grandparents, parents and staff members who helped the students get off to a great running start. It is our deep hope that as we go through the year many students will understand that even though the Christian life takes hard work, self-denial, and grueling preparation, "we do it to get a crown that lasts forever" (1 Corinthians 9:25b). It truly is an AMAZING RACE!

Crista Smidt, guidance counselor



School Year Kickoff Event

This year's kickoff to school was moved back a couple weeks due to the busy schedule that seems to come with the first week of school. Despite the many other events going on in the area and the concern of cooler temperatures with a later date, the event was successfully held on Saturday, September 9. The goal of this year's event was to bring together members of the school community for an evening of food, fun, and fellowship. A pulled pork meal was attended by over 350 people in the gym with a freewill donation taken to help offset costs. Outside on the playground, middle school students ran carnival games to the delight of younger students, who could be found plucking ducks out of a pond, dropping a ball on the plinko board, or racing through an inflatable obstacle course. The evening ended with a "drive-in" movie on the green space. The event took in approximately \$3000 of donations and received a \$2500 matching donation from Del Walinga & Modern Woodmen for a total of \$5500 that will go towards the middle school activities fund and the Phase 23 building project. Thanks to all who volunteered, supported, and attended this year's event!

Matt Van Schepen, assistant principal



Silage Piles

In late summer and early fall, OCCS families cover silage

piles in Northwest Iowa to help farmers and raise money for the school. Bert Reinders talks to farmers beforehand to figure out when the pile is ready. At the pile he guides all the volunteers. Volunteers are OCCS families who want to help and also have the benefit of raising money for their tuition. Volunteers may have fun unless they are swinging full tires. In that case, Troy Wiuff says "You might get wet."

At a silage pile, 20-60 people start by pulling a long tarp over the pile. Then volunteer telehandlers bring the tires onto the pile. Then other volunteers form a line of people, pass the tires along the line, and throw them on the tarp. You can't drag or throw the tires or you will rip a hole in the tarp. If you make a hole, you shout "tape" as loud as you can and Calvin Reinders will come with the tape and cover the hole.

Silage piles are a good way to raise money. In 2022, nearly \$85,000 was raised covering piles; 30% of the money helps families with tuition, and the other 70% goes toward the school's building project. Silage piles are a good way to raise money, help local farmers, and bring people together for hard work and fun. *Deacon Vogel, Greyson Moret, and Troy Wiuff, eighth graders*

Sports Report

As we wrap up September and head into October, our Junior High students are approaching the busy final weeks of our fall sports season. This fall we have students participating in OCCS volleyball, Jr. Knights football and cross country.

Our volleyball teams are approaching the halfway point of the season. Both the 7th and 8th grade teams are off to a great start! We have strong participation this year. Our 7th grade has 13 girls playing, while our 8th grade has 12 girls playing. It is great to see the girls out playing volleyball! This season both our teams are coached by Kortney Haan with the help of a couple parents.. We appreciate their dedication to our teams and the time they have given to work with our girls.

Students also participated in the Unity Christian Prediction Run again this fall. This is always a fun event for our kids. Before the race, each participant must try to guess their 1 mile run time. The top 10 participants in each category receive a medal, and the top 5 fastest times in each category also receive a medal. This year OCCS took home multiple medals in placing but also in predicting times. Thank you to Karlyn Brunst and Melanie Witt for helping out with this fun event again this year!

Travis De Jong, athletic director

Writing for a Purpose

Throughout this year's Spotlight Newsletters, you will be seeing articles written by some of our 8th grade students. This is a collaboration between Mrs. Den Boer and Mrs. Philipsen, designed to give students an authentic audience for their writing. Working in teams, students on the Spotlight Squads will choose a topic, research it, and draft and polish an article for your enjoyment. Students who do not write for the Spotlight will publish a middle school yearbook in May.

Middle School Intramurals

From 2:55-3:20 six teams of 7th and 8th grade students and eight teams of 5th and 6th grade students go outside to play an intramural sport. There are four to five sports throughout the whole year: Kickball/Softball, Ultimate Football, Volleyball, Basketball, and Yard Games. Intramurals is supposed to build teamwork, and most students try to win the championship of the sport that they are in. Fifth and sixth graders play together on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and seventh and eighth play on Mondays and Wednesdays. They alternate on Fridays. Students who don't play intramurals have the choice of study hall or outside recess.

During the winter sports, which are basketball and volleyball, the students have two groups, non-competitive and competitive. Kids get the choice to be in one of the two leagues. This is more fun because your teammates fit your level of competitive intensity.

There are some things the students would like to change about intramurals. They would like to have more time to play and more involved refs, but the students enjoy the challenge of trying to beat the teachers. Last year the kids beat the teachers in basketball for the first time in a while! The students enjoy intramurals, though there are some changes that would improve it. It helps you get to know people in different grades.

Carson Foreman, Jordan Reinke, and Leyton Woudstra, eighth graders

Tiger PAWS

Tiger PAWS (Parents and Advocates Willing to Serve) is off to a great start! Because of our commitment to Christian education, Tiger PAWS's vision is to serve our school community by providing prayer, service opportunities, and financial support. To start the year, Tiger PAWS gave \$50,000 to OCCS for tuition assistance and purchased chapel shirts/school supplies for all of the students. Thank you for the support which makes this possible!

Several of the Tiger PAWS committees have already been busy; here are some reports of what's going on:

*The Mentor Family Program at OCCS pairs an experienced OCCS family with a new family. It's a great opportunity to walk alongside someone and show them all that OCCS has to offer. We've had a great response this year, and 20 new families have a mentor family who intentionally reaches out to them at different milestones throughout the year.

*The School Supplies Committee supplied classrooms with 500 notebooks, 600 whiteboard markers and nearly 4000 pencils, as well as hundreds of other supplies! We are happy to work with Craft Central to provide these supplies. Teachers and students appreciate having all of the supplies before the first day of school so learning can begin! The committee is thankful for the opportunity to serve OCCS in this way!

Thank you for your continued support of Tiger PAWS!

Sarah Bonnema, Tiger PAWS President



Convocation 2023

Runners, on your marks! Get set! Go! August 23, the first day of school, marked the first day of "The Amazing Race" at OCCS. We enjoyed a hot, muggy morning joined by parents, grandparents, and friends out on the school playground to kick off the new school year and this year's theme, "The Amazing Race." As everyone gathered, we enjoyed an instrumental prelude of 8th graders on flutes and violins. During the service, we sang two of this year's theme songs, *When We Walk with the Lord* and *By Faith*. We also learned more about "The Amazing Race" from a skit performed by several of our 8th graders. The skit compared our Christian life to a race, complete with everything from training and rules to hurdles and equipment. We were reminded to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the perfect runner, and the prize He has in store for us. Mr. Alons closed out the service by introducing the faculty and staff, and students were dismissed to their classrooms with their teachers. We are thankful for the many spectators who came to cheer us on as we began the race of this new school year!

Karlyn Brunst, middle school teacher

First Grade

First grade is a great place to be. We have gotten off to a great start! We are enjoying reading new books, playing new games, and meeting new friends. Every day is a new adventure of learning and growing. We are currently working on words that begin with blends, subtraction, the story of Abraham, and what makes sound and light.

On September 15 we had the opportunity to visit Heritage Village during the Harvest Festival in Sioux Center (see our class pictures below). Despite the slightly rainy weather, we enjoyed exploring what life was like many years ago. We made some homemade apple cider and tasted it. We learned how ropes and horse shoes were made. We also fed and petted some fun farm animals. Some great parents came along with us to explore the grounds. Eating our lunches at the village was another highlight.

Learning in first grade is a big step up because we now have spelling tests and school everyday! We also get to enjoy art class! We love our nice classrooms and lockers. Mrs. Huisman and Mrs. Krommendyk are our teachers. We are excited to see what is to come during the rest of the year!

*Sincerely,
A first grader*



MEMORIALS

Duane Peter Haak
Lambert Kleene
Geraldine Klomp
Wilma Foreman
Harriet Vander Stoep

Board Report – October 2023

Thank you to all who attended our kick-off event in September. It was a beautiful evening, and we had a wonderful time of fun, games and fellowship together.

Also, thank you to all who participated in the silage piles fundraiser. 15 piles were covered.

The annual Society Meeting was held on Monday, September 11.

- 85 members were in attendance; 7 absentee ballots were accepted.
- Retiring board members were Dan Foreman (At Large), Jen Elgersma (Calvary CRC), Steve Vis (Partner Society). We sincerely appreciate the years of service each of them has given on the OCCS school board.
- New board members elected were Josh Dykstra (Calvary CRC), Shannon Schuller (At Large), Brad Cleveringa (Partner Society).
- Recognized for years of service at OCCS were:
 - 5 years: Rachel Oolman, Jen Wielenga
 - 10 years: Jenn Mills, Matt Van Schepen
 - 15 years: Wendy Eason, Kim Philipsen
 - 20 years: Kim Huizenga, Darrel Kroese
 - 30 years: Randy Hilbelink, Ardene Huisman, Crista Smidt
 - 40 years: Dixie Wielenga

Thank you for your commitment to our school and for serving faithfully!

- Enrollment for 2023-2024 – 33 in two preschool classes; 314 in K-8 (increase of 10 from last year)
- Election of Board Officers and Committee Assignments:

Assignments:

- President – Tim Van Voorst
- Vice President – Collin Korver
- Treasurer – Christina Zuiderveen
- Secretary – Emily Moret
- Vicar – Brad Cleveringa

Committee Assignments:

- Education – Tim Van Voorst, Collin Korver
- Finance – Christina Zuiderveen, Brad Cleveringa, Shannon Schuller
- Building - Joe Poppema, Josh Dykstra
- SHARE – Schuyler Noteboom, Emily Moret

Thank you for your continued prayers for OCCS!

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Moret, board secretary



New Staff

We welcome new staff members to our school. Also joining us are Deputy Dorhout and McGrath, the therapy dog. Take a look at our Facebook page for more interesting facts about our new staff members!

Pictured Above: Jen De Groot - Paraprofessional, Allison Timmermans - Kindergarten, Faith Tyrrell - Art, Julie Letsche - Title 1, Heidi Griess - Resource, Richard Elliott - Paraprofessional, (not pictured) Lindsey Vargason - Paraprofessional.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

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|------------------|--|
| October 14 | Honor Band Auditions |
| October 25 | 8:40am Chapel led by 1st & 6th grades |
| October 26 | NWI Christian Schools Strings Festival |
| October 27 | End of first quarter, 12:00 dismissal |
| November 2 | Pastors' Day |
| November 6-9 | Library Book Fair |
| November 7 | 1:30pm dismissal 3:00-7:30 p.m. - P/T Conferences Honor Choir Festival |
| November 9 | 1:30pm dismissal 2:30-7:00 p.m. - P/T Conferences |
| November 10 | No School |
| November 17 | Iowa Jr. Honors String Orchestra |
| November 20 | Fall Music Concert |
| November 22 | 11:05am Chapel led by 2nd & 7th grades |
| November 22 | 12:00 dismissal |
| November 23 & 24 | Thanksgiving Break, No School |
| December 19 | All School Christmas Caroling |
| December 21 | 12:00 p.m. dismissal |
| Dec. 22-Jan. 2 | Christmas Break |
| January 3 | Classes resume |
| January 12 | End of second quarter, 12:00 dismissal |
| January 23 | 1:20pm chapel led by 3rd & 8th grades |

Northwest Iowa Christian School Tuition Organization

NICSTO

NICSTO is designed by Iowa state law to promote the expansion of school choice for the benefit of Iowa's students, our children, and grandchildren. The program distributes funds in the form of grants annually to low or moderate-income families.



A donation to NICSTO results in a 75% tax credit on your Iowa taxes. For example, a gift of \$1,000 will bring a \$750 tax credit. There is no limit on how much you can give!

Your donation directly benefits **Orange City Christian School**. In the **2022-2023 school year** we were able to distribute **\$200,000 to 72 families** in need of tuition assistance.

THANK YOU

for supporting OCCS!

Please send your completed form and donation in before
December 1st.



Contact Jason Alons for more information



712-737-2274



jalons@orangecitychristian.net



www.orangecitychristian.net

NICSTO

Northwest Iowa Christian Schools Tuition Organization
Telephone 1-712-395-3018

Contribution Memo

An Iowa Tax Credit Certificate will be sent to you in January 2024
Iowa Income Tax Credit 75%.

Taxpayer Name

Date of Contribution

Address

Amount of Contribution

City

State

Zip Code

Social Security Number or Taxpayer I.D. Number

Telephone Number

Your contribution may be mailed to

Northwest Iowa Christian
Schools Tuition Organization
811 7th St.
Sheldon, IA 51201

The donation will be given to the school where it is needed most, unless you list the school of your choice.

School in NICSTO

Clearlake Classical Academy
Hull Christian School
Hull Protestant Reformed School
Inwood Christian School
Ireton Christian School
Netherlands Reformed Christian S.
North Iowa Christian School

Orange City Christian School
Rock Valley Christian School
Sanborn Christian School
Sheldon Christian School
Sioux Center Christian School
Siouxland Christian School
Unity Christian High School
Western Christian High School