

Nurturing Faith and Respectful Dialogue at Calgary Christian School

The Christian Worldview Integration and Oversight Policy (CWIP 2021)

Calgary Christian School has grown from its humble origins as a small, independent elementary school in the basement of a church, to serving nearly 1,000 students in its Kindergarten through Grade 12 learning programs. Through our growth and maturity from one denomination, our learning community has come to serve families from a variety of Christian churches. Embracing a shared vision of each of us pursuing a life in Jesus Christ, our School has developed a policy to ensure that every participating Christian family feels supported in their pursuit of faithfulness. Through clear expectations and learned means of discernment, CCS strives to continuously foster an environment where Christian values are integrated seamlessly into all aspects of education while promoting exploration into and respect for diverse theological perspectives.

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES:

The Christian Worldview Integration and Oversight Policy (CWIP) was adopted by the CSCE Board in 2021 to specifically articulate and shape classroom practices, communal expectations, and mutual accountability between all stakeholders of CCS. The fundamental principles of CWIP are:

Partnership with Parents: We recognize the partnership between school and parents in nurturing Christian beliefs. While the school teaches substantive doctrine and theology, parents play a crucial role in promoting Christian faith in alignment with their family and church community. Expect your student to come home to explore and understand what your family and Church believe based on your explanations.

Positive Teaching Approach: Christian doctrine, theology, and practice are presented positively, fostering professionalism and respect. While birthed from the Reformed tradition, our curriculum aligns with our Foundational Documents and emphasizes the central role of scripture.

Inclusive Environment: Discussions on Christian doctrine, theology, or practice promote an atmosphere of love, with the intent to educate and inform. Any form of belittlement or bullying based on beliefs is strictly discouraged.

Transparent Communication: Topics involving Christian doctrine, theology, or practice are communicated in advance, allowing parents to engage with their children and request the exclusion of any objectionable content. Open and respectful discussion among students is encouraged to help each claim and deepen their faith as their own.

PURPOSE:

CWIP aims to ensure that the business of Calgary Society for Christian Education

- aligns with the School's stated core values
- acknowledges the collaborative roles of the school and parents in shaping students' Christian knowledge and faith

- encourages open, honest, and respectful discussions in an atmosphere of humility and love.

SCOPE and RESPONSIBILITY:

CWIP applies to all members of our school community, including the Board of Directors, Principals, teaching staff, volunteers, and students. Responsibilities are clearly defined, emphasizing the collaborative efforts of the Board of Directors, Executive Director, Principals, and others in implementing and overseeing the policy.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT and CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:

We are committed to developing a comprehensive Christian Worldview Integration Program, involving a working team of professionals to ensure a well-rounded and age-appropriate curriculum. Regular curricular and program assessment and feedback mechanisms are in place to continuously measure efficacy, engagement, relevance, adherence to core values and mission, as well as reviewing the personnel and improving means of program delivery.

In summary, the Christian Worldview Integration and Oversight Policy for Calgary Christian School provides a nurturing and inclusive environment where diverse theological positions are respected. We aim to empower students to embrace their Christian faith while fostering open dialogue and understanding among our community members.

To read the Policy in its entirety, click on the link below:

[CSCE Christian Worldview Integration and Oversight Policy](#)

FAQ's

Q: Who determines which Biblical beliefs or doctrines are presented in our Faith Formation classes?

A: To serve a theologically diverse community, CCS is ready to accommodate and help each student explore the beliefs and doctrines of their specific tradition within the wider Christian community. CCS respects that doctrines are set by specific churches or church denominations. Other than living by the key creedal beliefs expressed in its foundational documents, the school does not hold positions or “take a stance” on specific doctrinal differences.

Because the school was founded in the Reformed Christian tradition, topics may be introduced initially from that perspective, but are not limited to it. On the contrary, in age and developmentally appropriate learning spaces, exploring and sharing our Christian differences is encouraged. This is why creating and sustaining safe learning environments is so critical: each student must be able to express their beliefs without fear of judgment, reproach, or bullying.

Q: Will parents be notified in advance of the topics being presented in Bible and Faith Formation classes?

A: Yes. Alberta law already provides parents the option to exclude their child from specific lessons or training at school. CWIP further ensures this consideration to parents will be practiced. Teachers will contact parents in advance of any lesson that may be deemed sensitive or controversial. Alternate learning will be made available to any student withdrawn from the class at the direction of their parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Bible curriculum and Faith Formation class content for all grade levels is available online on the Parents page menu at [the Calgary Christian School website](#).

Q: What oversight process is in place to ensure the program remains rooted in the School's foundational statements, or that effective teaching is being provided in our Bible classes?

A: This is a shared responsibility, but ultimately, it is the CSCE Board of Directors that ensures the Executive Director has provided adequate resources, content, and personnel to operate the Faith Formation Program. At CCS, this responsibility is further assumed by a Director of Faith Formation, who is responsible for class content, staff training, and program development. The Principals work closely with the Director of Faith Formation to ensure ALL instructors are capable of integrating faith into the lesson plans of their specific disciplines, and that other instructors and guests are effective in respectfully and effectively delivering lesson content.

While Faith Formation activities - like any other classroom activity - are supported in real time, the entire program is reviewed by the Executive Director and Board on a recurring basis of not less than three and not more than 5 years.

Q. Why doesn't CCS just stay away from topics that may be controversial?

A. Studies from such reputable groups as the Barna Institute and our own anecdotal data from CCS graduates reveal that 50% of high school students will leave the Christian faith after high school. Some of the reasons for this are that students have felt they had no place to safely ask their challenging and controversial questions before they move out on their own away from home. For example, students tell us that they think we had intentionally hidden or lied to them by not talking about pre-biblical creation stories - stories that they will encounter in University. To help students keep their faith, we are trying to create an age-appropriate environment for students to learn, think for themselves, talk with the parents and pastors, and develop a faith that is firmly anchored and will keep growing for the rest of their lives.