

## Cole Valley Christian Schools' Position on Standards

*Everything we teach and do is from a biblical perspective and we desire our students to know, love, and be able to apply God's Truth, and view everything through the lens of His Word. Therefore:*

*Cole Valley Christian Schools exercises complete freedom in determining what we want our students to know and be able to do. As a private school, we are not bound by any government mandate to use specific standards or to teach standards in a prescribed way.*

- Cole Valley Christian develops Essential Learning Outcomes for each grade level and subject area.
- We take seriously our partnership with parents to exceptionally prepare our students for college and their next steps, while creating options and maintaining flexibility in their education. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to fully understand the standards that are being utilized in other schools and ensure that our Cole Valley Christian Essential Learning Outcomes meet or exceed the level of those standards.
- We reject any prescription from the federal or state government that dictates HOW we teach what we want our students to know and be able to do, and we exercise our FREEDOM to teach everything from a biblical perspective.

Most 'standards' are very benign; for example, "**Goal 2.2: Apply the concepts of rates, ratios, and proportions.**" We desire to know and understand that this is a standard that other schools use, but this would just be one input to a Cole Valley Christian Essential Learning Outcome. We would ensure that our learning outcomes meet or exceed this standard for that grade level. For example, our Cole Valley Essential Learning Outcome might be "**Understand why rates, ratios, and proportions are useful and apply the concepts to real world applications such as money and measurement**".

Some standards are more problematic and conflict with our core beliefs. For example, a standard for 10<sup>th</sup> grade Biology that the state has had in place for years is "**Goal 3.1: Understand the Theory of Biological Evolution.**" We will teach the 'theory' of evolution and help our students see it for what it is ... a myth. We will then counter this with facts and evidence of God's creation and prepare them to understand Truth versus the deception that our world has fallen into. Our Cole Valley Essential Learning Outcome would state "**Students understand the theory of Biological Evolution, are aware of the holes in the theory, and can understand and articulate the wonderment of God's intricate Biological creation, and evidence for it**". We believe it is imperative that our students are fully exposed to, and prepared to encounter such worldly philosophies and approach them from a biblical perspective.

- While our accreditation requirements state that we need to adhere to standards in order to benchmark and prepare our students, they do not dictate the basis for those standards. We

exercise this freedom utilizing a variety of inputs that go into our development of Essential Learning Outcomes.

- It is important that our students are well prepared to do their best on standardized tests. Standardized tests are just one assessment that we use to inform us on how we can help each student grow, and they help the student eventually prepare for college prep tests such as the SAT and ACT. The reality of our world is that the SAT and ACT will be based on Common Core standards and the vast majority of our students take those tests in order to maximize their college options. The best way for us to prepare our students is to ensure that our Essential Learning Outcomes meet or exceed the expectations that will be evaluated on these tests.
- We have NOT adopted the test that all public schools will be moving to, the SBAC. We continue to use NWEA MAP tests as our standardized testing platform as we have done for over 10 years. We evaluate this every year, as there is no perfect solution that we have yet found. Our desire is to use the most effective instrument to help our students grow, and so far, NWEA has provided us with data that helps us accomplish this goal. As with almost every nationally normed and accepted instrument, NWEA has begun migrating the test to be based on Common Core standards. However, NWEA does NOT include many of the elements of the SBAC that have caused concerns that have been well publicized in the media.
- As new text books are developed and updated to incorporate Common Core standards, they will also most likely reflect the changes in our culture that have been occurring over the past several years. Not all of this is due to the standards themselves, but more as a reflection of the culture. It will become increasingly more difficult for us to find curriculum that is not influenced by these cultural shifts. Curriculum is more than just a text book and we consider it our responsibility to teach everything from a biblical perspective. Therefore, we will choose curriculum accordingly. The main point is that we have the freedom to choose curriculum and the method for teaching.
- Cole Valley Christian desires to separate ourselves from the political debate surrounding controversial issues. Many of the educational arguments being played out in society are very political in nature and as such, create much speculation. We have a responsibility to be informed about the trends and potential impacts so that we can navigate through them, but we will always strive to make decisions based on God's Word and what is best for our students and families.