



Christian School Insights

Victory Christian

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Guided by His Eye

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Have you ever been guided by someone's eye? David was. He shares in Psalm 32:8, "*I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.*"

This past week we observed our 11 month old granddaughter learning how to be guided by the eye of her grandmother. She is learning how to walk, standing up next to coffee tables and walking around the edge of the table. While at our house, she was doing this when she spotted a magazine in the middle of the coffee table. Just as she started to reach up for the magazine, she paused for a moment, looking toward grandmother to see if it was "okay" to continue. She was looking to be guided by her grandmother's eye, facial expressions and words. It is amazing that at such a young age, children are learning to be guided by the slightest gesture.

I don't think that David actually saw the "eye" of God; rather, he was pointing to the sensitivity he had experienced because of his relationship with God. It was this sensitivity and his obedience to the Holy Spirit the provided direction in "the way", not "a way", that he would follow, a way ordained by the Father.

More Effort Is Needed

It would be great if all we needed to use was our eyes in directing students to follow "the way" presented by parents, teachers and administrators, and the Bible. For many students, it takes a whole lot more effort than just the movement of our eyes. However, we do know from research that the greater our level of relationship with our children and students, the greater will be our ability to influence their daily lives.

Quality Relationships are Important

It is through quality relationships that students feel liked, respected, and valued by teachers, and as a result, students value the subject matter being taught.

Students who felt teachers cared for them believed they learned more. Furthermore, students' feelings of being accepted by teachers were significantly related to emotional, cognitive and behavioral engagement in the class. Ultimately, it is these students who keep returning to VCS year, after year.

High Expectations

Most parents and students who attend VCS have high expectations of the school. Based on what we have communicated about our staff and school, these expectations are much higher than in public schools and other private schools.

When these expectations are met, parents view their investment and sacrifice as worthwhile. When expectations are not met, there is a gap that develops between what they expected and the reality of what students bring home on a daily basis. If the gap continues to widen, at some point in time, parents will begin to question their investment and sacrifice - leading them to consider other educational alternatives.

Retention

Student retention last year was 82%, with the greatest level in grades 3, 5, and 11 – each at 87%. Of those not returning, 28% transferred to public, private schools, and 3% to homeschool. 45% were related to financial situations, 8% to family issues, 13% to a move, and 5 percent related to international students.

Out of those 31% that transferred to another school, I wonder how many were related to the gap in expectations or the need to do a better job of guiding and directing the lives of our students.

What do we need to do to improve our retention?

It is simple: carry out what we have promised - strong discipline, dynamic spiritual environment –Bible classes, prayer, praise and worship, high academic standards, caring attitudes, teacher professional and student behavior accountability, respect for others and their property, honesty, integrity, and excellence in every area.