

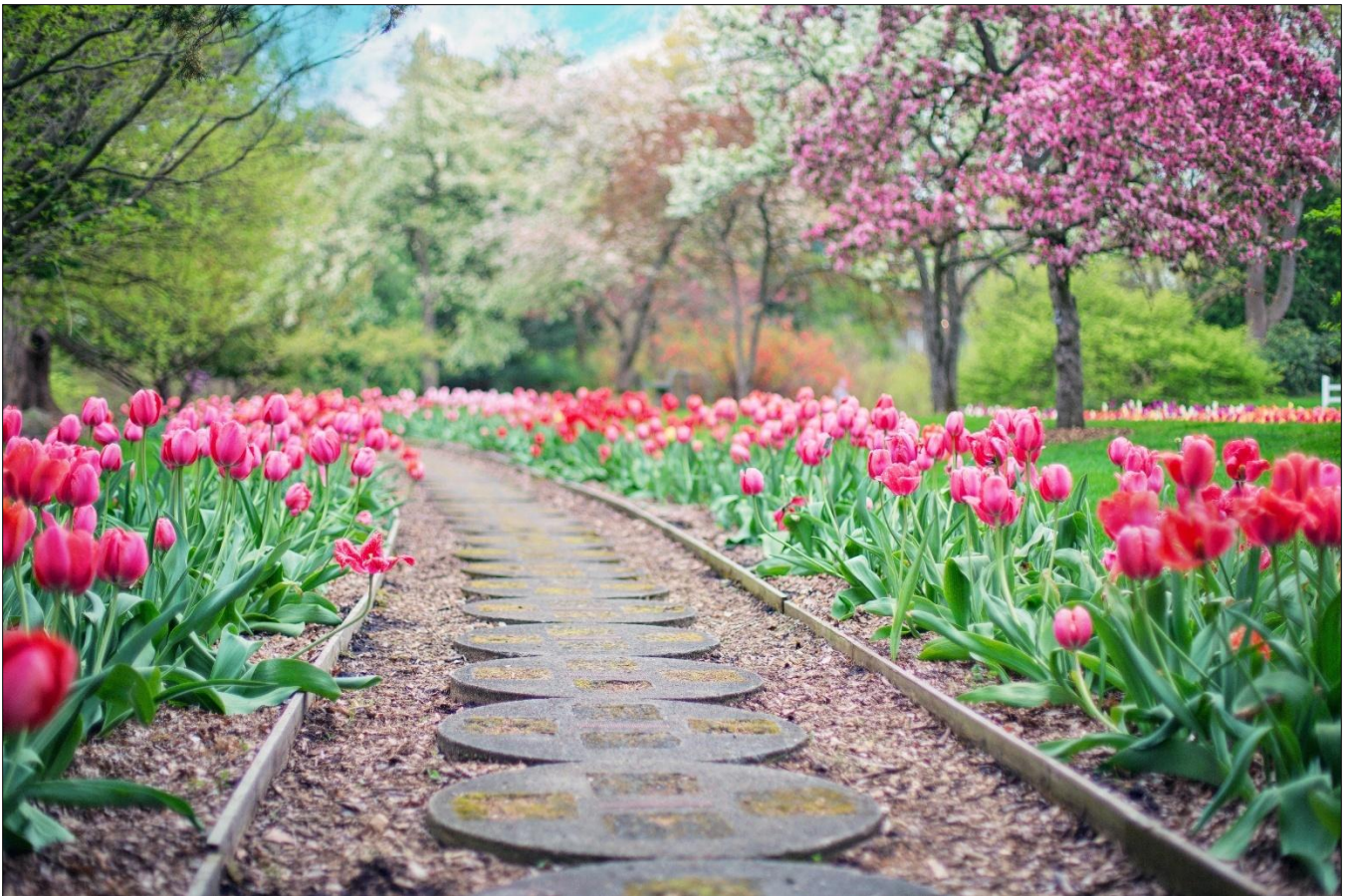


HIGHLIGHTS

Graduation Issue

~

May 2025



*“And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee;
he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee:
fear not, neither be dismayed.” - Deuteronomy 31:8*

HELP

Mr. Ron Koole, Principal

"Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Sound familiar? So we begin our worship services each Sunday. It is proper that we acknowledge with these words that we as frail creatures of the dust, and sinners at that, depend on God for grace and the strength both physically and spiritually to worship Him properly. But petitioning God for help applies not only to worship, but also to anything we attempt to do. Apart from the help of the Lord with the added prayer, "...yea, the work of our hands establish thou it", all of our labor is bound to be fruitless and vanity.

This need for the Lord's help certainly applies to the work of teaching the youth of God's covenant in the good Christian school. Before one is prepared to teach God's children, he must be taught himself. Psalm 25:4-5a states, *Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation;...* The Lord uses means to accomplish this. Preparation for this work of teaching began for me in my earliest youth. I was raised in a godly home with God-fearing parents who instructed and disciplined their children in the ways of the Lord. And they made use of the good Christian school for my (our) instruction at considerable sacrifice. God's help came through a stay-at-home mother who dedicated herself for the sake of her husband and children, and a father who worked long factory hours to provide for his family and pay the tuition bills. I thank the Lord for this help He provided in my youth to prepare me for my teaching career. Education at Hope School, Covenant Christian, and Calvin College were the institutions God used to prepare me to teach.

The Lord also gave to me help through my wife, Sherry. The words of Proverbs apply here: *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. - Proverbs 31:10-12. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. - Proverbs 31:28.* Sherry filled in so many areas where I lacked. She did my typing for years, designed bulletin boards, came up with art projects, and really served as the unpaid school secretary while I taught out West. Even more, she took care of children when I had meetings, was the source of much encouragement, and endured several moves from one state to another. I thank the Lord for her help.

So many others have provided help for me and the school over the years of my administrative work at Hope. High on the list are the duties carried out by office secretaries. The Lord has provided Hope School with secretaries with abundant skills and a heart and love for the work. They have been of great service to the Board, teachers, administrator, and the children. The work has been done efficiently and on schedule. So much of what they do goes unnoticed by most, but not by the administrative office. I thank the Lord for their service.

Every administrator knows that he has a responsibility to give guidance and provide leadership, always with the godly instruction of the children in view, but he answers to the School Board who set policies to guide this work. Their wise supervision is the God-ordained help the administrator needs to carry out his calling. The Lord has provided many men with such qualifications on Hope Boards over the years. I thank the Lord for them.

My prayer is that the Lord continues to provide His help to all involved in providing the Christ-centered education for the covenant youth at Hope School for years to come. That includes teachers, the parents, grandparents, and many supporters of this precious institution.



In this *Highlights* we recognize and congratulate our 20 eighth grade students. It is our prayer that they have been blessed through the instruction they have received at Hope School and that the instruction has prepared them well to continue their studies at CCHS next fall.

We also want to recognize those parents whose youngest child graduates from Hope School this year: Shon & Brenda Griess, Daryl & Jodi Koole, and Dave & Dawn Meulenbergh. We thank them for having their children educated at Hope School and pray for their continued support.

We also thank Mary Kalsbeek for her years of volunteer service in our library. Mary has served as co-librarian with Lorraine DeVries and has contributed much to updating and reorganizing the library.

Enjoy your reading of this year-end edition of the *Highlights*. Note the supply lists for next fall as well as the abbreviated 2025-26 school calendar.

2025-26 School Calendar

August 25	First Day of School
Aug. 29-Sept. 1	Labor Day Break
September 17	School Pictures
September 22-26	MAP Assessments
October 2	PTA
October 9-10	Parent/Teacher Conferences
October 16-17	Teachers' Convention
November 27-28	Thanksgiving Break
December 24-Jan 2	Christmas Break
January 16	End of 1 st Semester
January 19-23	MAP Assessments
February 5-6	Parent/Teacher Conferences
February 12	PTA
April 3-10	Spring Break
May 25	Memorial Day – No School
June 1	Graduation (1/2 day)

WORK BEE

The Building Committee has scheduled a Work Bee for Saturday, May 31 beginning at 8 AM. Volunteers will be needed to prepare the landscape beds for mulching, remove blinds in 3rd-6th grade classrooms, paint a few small rooms, patch parking lot, and a few other details. Please bring shovels, rakes, wheelbarrows and an appetite for donuts and coffee.

HOPE CLASSIC RACES

Come join the runners and walkers (5K / 1 mile) or be a cheering spectator at the 27th Annual Hope Classic Races on Saturday, May 24. Over 250 people have already registered. There will be refreshments for all runners and spectators. Come have an enjoyable morning with us! Go to www.hopeprcschool.org/classic for more information.



ANNUAL HOPE PRCS FOUNDATION REPORT

Brandon Wassink, Chairman

Matt Rutgers, Geoff Veldman, Phil Kalsbeek, Tom Huizinga

The Hope PRCS Foundation was established to provide income and funds used to support this school. With these funds, we exercise biblical stewardship over the financial resources that God has given to this school (Matthew 25:14 – 21). Through His Word and by the faith He has given us, we seek His wisdom and blessing as we make decisions and labor for the cause of Hope School. We may confidently say the Lord has blessed this school in the past and we pray He will uphold us in the future.

In 2024, the Foundation focused on our 2 main fundraising events. The golf outing, which took place in June, raised \$14,809.81. The Clay Shoot event in September gained a total of \$21,757.50. These fundraisers are crucial for contributing to our investment portfolio and funding the annual school gift. Understanding the time, effort and coordination to execute these events, the Foundation recognizes the generosity and dedication of our sponsors and donors that give willingly to Hope School year after year.

The Foundation has once again approved \$50,000 to be given to the school. The same amount given every year since 2021. It is our intent to assist Hope School with these funds and continue to keep tuition affordable.

The Foundation sent out year-end mailers to supporters of Hope School to remind them to consider giving to the Foundation. I would like to also encourage you to remember the Foundation in your giving. Another way the Foundation is able to grow is through gifts. Please consider putting the Foundation in your estate planning.

The Foundation is pleased to report that the investment portfolio trended upward this year. As of December '24, the portfolio amount was \$953,404.04. Up about \$94,000 from 2023. A special thanks to Dan Kalsbeek with Evergreen Capitol for managing these funds and providing investment advice to the committee.

We are also happy to announce that Dan Gritters has agreed to serve on the Foundation Committee. Our thanks to Dan for his willingness to serve for the next 3 years.

Over the past 3 years of service on this committee, I have seen so much support from businesses and individuals who care for the future of Hope School. During this time, I've been especially encouraged and motivated by so many successful businesses owned by our members. Thanks again to those businesses who not only provide for their employees and families, but are also able to give to our good Christian schools.

Hebrews 6:10-12 "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which he have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Steve Langerak, Chairman

Matt DeBoer, Joel DeVries, Scott Moelker

The 100th anniversary celebration of the PRC, which takes place the first week of June, is the occasion for a very busy month of May for all of our area PR schools, and Hope is no exception. As this year of covenantal education soon comes to a close, the Education Committee thanks the teachers, administrator, and support staff for their hard work and dedication to the cause of Christian education. We are pleased to report that all of the teachers plan to return for next school year and the only need we currently have is for a choir director for the 4th- 6th grades and junior high choirs. If you have any interest in this position, please contact a committee member. This committee is losing two Board members as their terms expire and we thank Matt DeBoer and Joel DeVries for all the work they have done. Another long-time member of this committee is also retiring, and we will definitely miss the wisdom, guidance, and leadership that Ron Koole has given.

A beautiful prayer of David is recorded for us in Psalm 25: 4-6: "Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. Remember O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old." This great God of our salvation uses many means to carry out His will and it is not hard to see that He has used Ron and Sherry Koole to shew, teach, lead, and cause to remember the tender mercies and loving kindnesses of God to all the children who attended Hope School in the past 29 years.

Ron and Sherry were married in 1978. Ron began teaching in Hull, Iowa in 1979 and taught there for seven years. They spent the next nine years in Loveland, Colorado where Ron taught and worked as administrator. In 1995 Ron, Sherry, and ten children moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan where Ron taught at Heritage Christian for one year. Ron took the position as administrator and teacher at Hope in 1997 where God blessed them with four more children.

Over the years Ron has faithfully labored as administrator, algebra teacher, Phys-Ed instructor, athletic director, as well as being active in the work of the board by serving as adviser to Education, Enrollment, and Building committees, and attending monthly Board meetings. Sherry has served on School Circle and was always involved in Family Fun Night and many fundraisers. She also enjoyed being part of the motor movement program for kindergarteners. Together Ron and Sherry have been janitors at Hope and with the help of many of their children, and now grandchildren, have kept the school clean and tidy. They were also instrumental in starting the Hope Classic races which they have organized and promoted for the past 27 years.

Life for the Kooles changed in 2014 when a bow hunting incident took from Ron the ability to use his legs. This did not keep Ron down for long, and soon, with a lot of help from his wife and many others, he was back doing what he loved to do in being part of the education of God's covenant children. Ron's dedication shows all of us, as he often tells his children, "You don't need to walk to walk with God."

Some of the most memorable events for Ron and Sherry were being part of the 75th anniversary celebration and enjoying Grandparents' Day, and Friends and Family Nights. One of the most challenging times was the year of COVID.

Through all of this they have seen the goodness of God to them, to Hope School, and all who support the cause of covenantal education. We thank Ron and Sherry for all the work they have done and for the godly examples they are for us and our children and we thank our great God for them.

ANNUAL BOARD SECRETARY'S REPORT

Joel DeVries, Board Secretary

Psalms 145:3,4: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts".

In August of last year, the doors of Hope School opened for a 78th year of Christian education. Hope School has already served many generations, and we pray for God's continued preservation in the generations to come.

This 78th year also marks the end of an era at Hope. As you know, early in the school year, our administrator of the past 29 years informed the Board of his plans to retire. Ron has been teaching and working as administrator for 46 years in Protestant Reformed schools of Hull, Loveland, Heritage, and Hope. The Board and Society sincerely thank Ron for his many years of dedication to Christian education. Soon after he informed the Board of his retirement, notices were sent out to the Protestant Reformed community, and two qualified men submitted applications for the job. After multiple meetings of the Ed. Committee with each applicant, Dan Kuiper was offered the contract. He accepted the position and is already working on learning the responsibilities of the job. Dan plans to carry on all of Ron's administrative duties, including teaching 8th grade algebra and a junior high P.E. class.

The Board is pleased to announce that all our other teachers are returning next year. The Board thanks all the teachers for their time, effort, and dedication to Hope. Other than teachers and administrator, there is a long list to thank: Laurel, the school secretary, teacher aides, librarians, the School Circle, maintenance man, bus drivers, janitors, room moms, and many others who volunteer their resources of time, talents, and finances to help the school. Without all these people working together, the task of covenant education would become nearly impossible.

The Building Committee has been busy with the upkeep and the maintenance of the school. Aside from the never-ending list of maintenance items, the committee did complete a few bigger projects this year. The county drainage project that was started last summer was completed in September. Blinds were replaced in 10 classrooms and AC was installed in the remaining areas of school that did not have it. Security cameras have been installed, mostly inside the school facing exterior doors, with several more outside. Thanks to the School Circle for financing the blinds and cameras. The AC was financed by a private donor for which we are also thankful. Also, a new maintenance man, Dan Boeve, started this year and is doing a fine job. Thanks to Larry Meulenberg for his past years of service in this capacity.

The Transportation Committee completed the purchase of the used bus that was approved at the annual meeting last year. That bus is in regular service and is working well. Carol Boeve completed her CDL training last summer and has been driving a regular route this year, along with Jen Kalsbeek and Dan Kuiper.

The Education Committee of the Board has been busy as well. The committee held

annual reviews with the teachers and staff in January, and, as already noted, conducted interviews for the administrator position. Also, the committee has been working with Ron and the teachers on curriculum updates to add Scriptural and creedal references in the curriculum. Although our curriculum has always been based on Scripture, the committee hopes this will help enhance lesson plans and encourage teachers to bring God's Word into each unit. The committee also reviews results of MAP testing, program material and the yearbook, and oversees the Technology Committee and Robotics program.

Speaking of Robotics, there was a great level of participation this year: 16 students from 7th and 8th grade made up four separate teams. Matt Elzinga once again was the lead mentor, with help from Matt Moelker, Matt Rutgers, and Ben Petroelje. The annual RoBowl was held in November at Hope with 4 teams each from Hope and Heritage, and one team each from Eastside and Randolph.

The Technology Committee is always busy with upkeep on Chromebooks, staff computers, projectors, and more. This year they did some work getting a cooling unit installed in the server closet as a first step to upgrading the servers. The committee also welcomes back Dan DeVries as tech maintenance man. Dan formerly held this position but had stepped away three years ago. Thanks to Hank VanderWaal for doing the tech maintenance work during those three years.

This year the Board is recommending a budget of \$1,436,664 which is an increase of \$99,271 or 7.4% from the 2024-2025 budget. The Board is also recommending a salary increase of 3% for the teaching staff. The Finance Committee's proposed budget has the cost of tuition increasing 5% for this coming school year.

Four Board members are retiring this year: Matt DeBoer, Joel DeVries, Josh Meulenberg, and Brad Schipper. Thanks to the retiring Board members for your work over the last three years.

When we survey the world around us, we can't help but see what a blessing our Christian schools are to us! We give thanks to God for His gracious care and make it our prayer that this generation and all to come "shall praise thy works" and "declare thy mighty acts" for "great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised"!

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Josh Meulenberg, Treasurer

Kevin Koole, Vance Grasman

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable." Psalm 145:3 With only two months remaining in the year, we are in a good financial position with regard to the overall budget. A review of the financial statement shows that our income is at 91.4% of budget and our expenses are at 79.9% of budget. Our target position for both after ten months is 83.3%. We continue to count money coming in for the Spring Drive. We are hopeful to meet our yearly drive goal which is currently about \$37,800 shy of the goal. We ask that you strongly consider this need and give as you are able. You will see a final 2024-2025 financial summary in the next issue of the *Highlights*.

At the annual Society meeting a budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year was approved. Tuition will be increasing 5% for all families. The Hope Foundation has again pledged

\$50,000 towards the operation of the school. We are thankful for their support. It was approved to run a budget deficit of \$43,400 during the 2025-2026 fiscal year, but anticipated interest from putting some of our funds in CD's will offset the deficit so that we plan to end the year with a minimal budget deficit, the Lord willing.

Thank you to all tuition paying families who have stayed up to date or ahead of tuition payments during the past school year. A reminder that the last tuition payment of the year is due in May, so please have that into the office by May 31st. If you need to make special arrangements, please contact a member of the Finance Committee.

Finally, with a new slate of School Board members comes new committee assignments. As of this article, we do not know yet who will join Vance and Kevin on the committee, but we do know that Vance Grasman will take over the reigns as the new treasurer.

The Finance Committee expresses its gratitude to the individuals, families, and businesses that have given graciously towards Hope School again this year. We stand in awe of God's faithfulness. The next verse, verse 4a, of Psalm 145 says, "One generation shall praise thy works to another." Our fathers have done this to us. We continue to do this right now, and our children will do this in their future. Great is thy faithfulness, O God our Father! We give continual thanks for the financial support of Christian education at Hope School. To God be the Glory! Please continue to keep the financial needs of Hope School in your prayers.

Actual to Budget. YTD April	Actual	Budgeted	%
<u>Income</u>			
Church Collections	41,570.50	46,000.00	90.4%
Gifts and Pledges	308,200.75	346,000.00	89.1%
Gym Rental	4,095.00	5,000.00	81.9%
Hope Foundation	50,000.00	50,000.00	100.0%
Miscellaneous			
School Circle Gifts	0.00		
Special Ed Society	11,687.10	15,583.00	75.0%
Tuition	775,917.66	841,960.00	92.2%
Z - Bus Fees	19,657.35	19,950.00	98.5%
Total Income	1,211,128.36	1,324,493.00	91.4%
<u>Expenses</u>			
Accounting Fees	6,150.00	7,000.00	87.9%
Band Expenses	2,000.00	3,000.00	66.7%
Building and Grounds - Y/E	14,682.19	50,000.00	29.4%
Class Trip Fund	3,000.00	3,000.00	100.0%
Educational Supplies and Books	35,000.00	35,000.00	100.0%
Federation Dues	4,187.67	5,136.00	81.5%
Insurance, General	17,626.25	17,436.00	101.1%
Insurance, Group	70,023.14	103,200.00	67.9%
Insurance, HRA - Y/E	0.00	4,000.00	0.0%
Insurance, Workers Comp	2,496.87	2,478.00	100.8%
Janitors Supplies	3,292.82	4,500.00	73.2%

Library Fund	2,000.00	2,000.00	100.0%
Long Range Building Fund Trans	16,666.70	20,000.00	83.3%
Miscellaneous Expense	1,056.14	2,500.00	42.2%
Office Equipment - Y/E	0.00	1,500.00	0.0%
Office Supplies	1,874.08	1,600.00	117.1%
Payroll - Band / Choir	21,266.26	25,400.00	83.7%
Payroll - Building Maintenance	1,283.48	2,500.00	51.3%
Payroll - Discovery Room	76,927.31	94,924.00	81.0%
Payroll - Janitor	30,000.00	36,000.00	83.3%
Payroll - Lawn Maintenance	2,188.46	5,000.00	43.8%
Payroll - Librarian	4,740.00	5,250.00	90.3%
Payroll - Office	33,810.00	39,900.00	84.7%
Payroll - Substitute Teachers	1,515.00	2,000.00	75.8%
Payroll - Teachers	508,750.96	611,664.00	83.2%
Payroll - Teachers Aids	16,333.00	23,328.00	70.0%
Payroll - Technology Maintenance	90.00	3,000.00	3.0%
Payroll Taxes	49,725.69	65,214.00	76.3%
Phys Ed Uniforms	866.88	1,000.00	86.7%
Repairs and Maintenance	4,151.24	10,000.00	41.5%
Retirement Plan	17,718.85	20,050.00	88.4%
Snow Removal	3,616.00	3,500.00	103.3%
Teacher Classroom	1,700.00	1,700.00	100.0%
Teacher Development - Y/E	1,681.80	2,000.00	84.1%
Technology Supplies	4,847.17	5,000.00	96.9%
Utilities, Electric	16,692.15	23,000.00	72.6%
Utilities, Gas	10,131.55	12,000.00	84.4%
Utilities, Internet & Phone	3,881.67	4,400.00	88.2%
Utilities, Trash	1,661.89	2,000.00	83.1%
Utilities, Water & Sewer	1,348.34	1,400.00	96.3%
Z. Bus Expenses			
Bus Depreciation Fund Trans	16,666.70	20,000.00	83.3%
Bus Driver Cost Subsidy	1,250.00	1,000.00	125.0%
Bus Driver Payroll	22,442.50	25,250.00	88.9%
Bus Driver Payroll Taxes	1,470.07	1,927.00	76.3%
Bus Driver Workers Compensation	1,007.63	1,000.00	100.8%
Bus Insurance	3,286.73	2,136.00	153.9%
Bus Repair	14,023.46	7,000.00	200.3%
Gas and Oil	9,826.25	13,500.00	72.8%
Transportation Supervisor	3,000.00	3,000.00	100.0%
Total Z. Bus Expenses	72,973.34	74,813.00	97.5%
Total Expenses	1,067,956.90	1,337,393.00	79.9%

FEDERATION, PUBLICITY, CIRCLE, CONTACT, COMMITTEE

Phil Kalsbeek, Chairman
Joel DeVries, Tom Huizinga

We have been blessed as Board members and committees to witness our schools working together in training and preparing our teachers for the future. The Teacher Development Program has seen all three tiers of the Federation Mentorship Program active this year. The Teacher Training Committee continues to encourage Boards and teachers to use this program to prepare our teachers to teach the next generation in the light of His Word.

As a committee we continue to encourage the staff by bringing lunch, snacks, and giving birthday gift cards as a small token of appreciation throughout the year to show our support as a Board for their work. We thank Laurel Lotterman, the school secretary, for all her efforts in helping us as a committee update the website and ordering gift cards for the staff.

Our committee also communicates throughout the year with the School Circle to give them ideas where there is need for extra funds on random things that arise throughout the year. The School Circle has given funds this year for the new security camera system around the school and new blinds in a few classrooms and new additions to the playground. The Circle's efforts are noticed and we as a Board are thankful for the work they do to help support, assist, and encourage the community at Hope School.



SCHOOL CIRCLE NEWS

HOPE SCHOOL CIRCLE REPORT

Jori Kuiper, Secretary

We give thanks to God for another amazing year at Hope School! It has been such a blessing for the School Circle to once again work with teachers and staff with the goal of supporting Christian education and bringing glory to God.

We're especially thankful for the opportunity we had to help our teachers in many ways this year. From organizing room moms, collecting classroom supplies through the Lend-A-Helping Hand committee, bringing a special Love Lunch in February, and providing snacks and a lunch during Teacher Appreciation Week, it's been a joy to serve. Thank you, teachers, for your hard work and for teaching our children in a way that honors God. We truly appreciate all you do!

This school year was filled with a number of successful fundraising efforts. We have continued to sell TRIP certificates, Key Cards, and Motman's gift cards, and we had a great time with events like the Start Strong Jog-A-Thon and Family Fun Night. With the help and support of all the moms of the school, the School Circle has again been providing students with hot lunch every week and running a snack sale every other week. Thanks to your support of these fundraisers, we were able to assist with the cost of our athletics program and were able to support some great improvements around the school, like new blinds in some classrooms, and a security system to help keep our students and staff safe.

It has been such a joy to serve Hope School this year. The Circle wants to say a big thank you to everyone who came to our events, donated, or supported our work by serving. We are so grateful for each one of you. As we look ahead, we pray that God will continue to bless Hope School, not to make a name for ourselves, but to honor and glorify His name in all we do. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." Colossians 3:23-24.

STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

OUR WRITING ABILITIES

Mrs. Deb Hoeksema, Kindergarten

I am always amazed at the amount of growth that kindergarteners undergo over the course of the school year. We start out in August barely able to write our own names. Our first pre-decodable reading book does not have any words, just pictures that they "read". The decodable books at the end of the reading curriculum are chapter books. Each week, we start learning our memory verse by identifying all the words that we recognize. The last few memory texts of the year can be read in their entirety without any help by the teacher. By the end of the year, the children can write their own understandable sentences just by sounding out the words. These students are well on their way to being able to glorify God by their reading abilities.

To show off their progress, I had the students complete a few writing activities. The first one was for them to write a report about their family. The next two are their responses to writing prompts that were given. I have included their own spelling in addition to a translation, although, you might not need it.

- Kaden Gritters – I have 6 people in my family. We like to pula vitu game (video games). I love my family because thae (they) love me.
- Willem Kalsbeek – I have 9 people in my family. We like to golf. I love my family because we love wrkking (working).
- Kayla Klamer – I have 6 people in my family. We like to do cupiyotr gamse (computer games). I love my family because gamse (games). It is fun. It is sopr (super) fun!
- Sawyer Kregel – I have 6 people in my famiy. We like to plae (play). I love my family because I plae basboll (play baseball).
- Ezra Huizing – I have six people in my family. We like to have fun. I love my family because I love to go to the beaches.
- Walker Cammenga – I have 5 people in my family. We like to go fishen. I love my family because we can haz anos (have animals.)
- Payton Jordan – I have fife (five) people in my family. We like to playe gams (play games). I love my family because we like to reyd (read).

My favorite Bible lesson is:

- Emmy Meulenberg - gonoe in the fishs blee because he gis swolod. (Jonah in the fish's belly because he gets swallowed).

- Olivia Duncan – Dandel and the liun den because lias r me faforit ininums. (Daniel and the lions den because lions are my favorite animals.)
- Wells DeMeester – adum and ev because they wr the frst pepl. (Adam and Eve because they were the first people.)

One thing I would tell next year's class is:

- Casey Van Den Top – du not toc ovr Mis Huxsmu (Do not talk over Mrs. Hoeksema.)
- Leah Tanis – kindergarten is not scary.
- Blake Bylsma – if you listn you will have fun.
- Garrett Van Baren – kidnrgtln is fun.
- Morgan Engelsma – yor bran will git smrttr. (Your brain will get smarter.)

GOD'S GLORY IN CREATION

Miss Melanie Hanko, 5th Grade

What a school year it has been! There have been a lot of firsts for me this year and I would think at least a few firsts for you all. Each school year brings its blessings and its hardships. Personally, I have lots to learn as I become more experienced with teaching 5th grade. Yet, what a blessing it has been to teach in a Reformed Christian school. Throughout the year, myself and the 5th grade class have learned many memory work passages. The more one studies these passages, the dearer these passages become. I'd like to take some time to reflect on a small portion of these verses.

We started the year by learning of God's excellency in the heavens recorded in Psalms 8 and 19. Friends and Family Night was an amazing opportunity to reflect on the greatness of God's creation above us. Perhaps you can take a minute this summer to gaze at the wide expanse that is the night sky. At least one of those small dots is a planet. Do you realize that the planet Jupiter has a diameter that is 11 times larger than Earth's diameter? Jupiter holds just a small part of just one single galaxy. These are just a few facts that the students learned! It is good to stop and look around at creation's beauty. Then we can respond with the Psalmist and say, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalm 8: 3-4). How quickly in our studies we can't help but exclaim, "how great is our God!"

We also studied the life cycles of plants and animals. We saw the minute details in the cells. How each tiny, tiny part works together for one cell. Just one tree holds a multitude of cells and systems working together. Yet, a tree is only a small part of an ecosystem. Many plants and animals may depend on a tree or forest of trees. Then, we saw the vast expanse found within ecosystems, marveling at the biodiversity. Almost all living things depend on the heat of the sun. Psalm 19 compares the sun to a bridegroom or a runner. In verse 5 we read, "Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." So often we forget of the beauty surrounding us. Perhaps we are rushing to work in the morning and miss the beauty of a sunrise. Let us stop and listen to the creation around us. Do you not hear the declaration of God's glory?

When we see God's work in creation and especially His revelation in the Word, we respond praising the LORD for His strength and wonderful works. Psalm 78 puts it like this: "We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done" (vs. 4). It is a blessing to be able to study and teach the many different subjects in 5th grade in light of God's word. Each chapter, we must keep in mind that all things are under His control. These are the mighty works of God.

However, there are days that the beauty of creation seems to mock us. There are days when we just don't feel like rejoicing with the morning birds or enjoying the warmth of the bright morning sun. So also we must take to heart the comfort of the gospel truths. Our last couple memory verses for the year included Isaiah 53 and Psalm 139. In Isaiah we read, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." What a comfort that Christ knows our pain and understands our sorrows. He suffered that we might never have to suffer God's wrath. When we enter into the dark valleys of this life, we can know that Christ is with us.

Finally, we learned Psalm 139:1-12 for our finally memory verse. God knows our very path. No matter where we go God will be with us. He knows when we sit down and when we get up. He knows our every word. Through every valley and mountain that we walk, God is with us. No matter where we go, God is with us. Even if we would flee to the depths of the sea, God would be with us. So then also we can sing Psalter number 384 verse 3, "If I the wings of morning take to some remotest land, still I shall be upheld by Thee and guided by Thy hand."



Take some time today to be still and meditate on God's revelation to us in His Word and His creation. To get you started here are some samples of the 5th graders poetry about God's creation.

God's creation is as mighty as can be.
The waves move along the treacherous sea.
Listen to the splish splash,
The waves swiftly move along,
While the seagulls squeal in song.
As you look thro the deep dark blue,
You realize just what God has done for you.
And as you stare out at the glistening sea,
You know just how thankful you really
should be.
~ Kenzie Huizinga

Flowing smoothly along a stream,
Then suddenly plunging down a ravine.
Hits the rocks in foamy spray
Washing up into the bay.
God has created the waterfalls

And flying overhead are the gulls
Always flowing day and night
Definitely one of the most glorious sights
~ Barbara Quenga

I fly above the treetops,
Like a person running from the cops.
Zooming down to earth,
I give all what it's worth.
I zoom past a tree
As fast as can be.
All the sudden I hit a tower
And all I'm left with is no power.
As I pass a cloud
I hear a crowd.
Everyone saw me and would stare
Then I started to glare.

I went back home
To my very big dome
I'm glad God created me.
~ Emma Kleyn

The universe so large
Is in our Savior's charge.
To big, massive willow trees,
All the way to tiny, tiny bees.
Everything in His control,
Everything to the whole.
He cares for all.
On him we call.
Our Savior, the Christ
His body (for us) sacrificed.
~ Lucy VanUffelen

A spark floats to the ground
Without making a sound
It seems so small
Not a big matter at all
Suddenly the dry brush lights
Firefighters get ready for one of their
biggest fights
A firefighter dies
And his family cries
Finally they stop the fire, which was such a
fright
Only after they saw a display of God's
endless might.
~ Grady Hanko

THE HEAVENS DECLARE

Mr. Nate DeVries, 8th Grade

II Peter 3:3-6: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:"

This passage of Peter teaches two different ideas that relate to today's belief in evolution and the denial of an Almighty Creator. One of these ideas, that all things continue as they were from the beginning, is very similar to what is called uniformitarianism, an important topic that we spend a lot of time on in 8th grade. Uniformitarianism teaches that geologic processes continue and have continued at the same rate always. This is a foundational principle in all of evolution, from geology to biology to cosmology. All things must continue at the same rate always for the ideas of evolution to have any scientific basis and any perceived credibility at all. One classic example of this is the theory of the expansion of the universe, an idea that came as a result of Einstein's theories and mathematical formulas. This idea of the expanding universe was proposed in the 1920s by four different physicists, and it was further developed by Erwin Hubble soon after. Hubble thought that the "expansion" of the universe was caused by galaxies moving through space, similar to sound moving through space called the Doppler Effect. Almost immediately, the theory that space itself was expanding was put forth, which led unbelieving scientists to theorize that if space itself was expanding then if reversed there would come a time when the amount of space was zero. This led to the beginning of the Big Bang Theory, which almost all scientists and eventually almost the entire world's population accepted as truth. Since it became functional, the James Webb Space Telescope has been sending an unending stream of data back to earth that almost all contradicts what is accepted as truth

regarding the origin of the universe. In August, an article published some of the latest findings that show that space is actually not expanding; instead, galaxies are moving outward through space rather than carried along with space as it grows. These data fit perfectly with the model of those who believe in creation while they are completely at odds with the Big Bang. Cosmological theories will have to be modified quickly to explain these phenomena.

The second idea in the passage that relates to those who teach and believe evolution, while denying God, is that there is no coming judgment. Peter shows that before the flood, as today, many deny that there will be a judgment like the one God brought by the worldwide flood. Instead, wicked men ignore the teaching of the scriptures and the amazing signs in the creation while proposing ideas that in themselves are far harder to believe than belief in an "Intelligent Designer". In Psalm 94, God says, "Yet they say, Jehovah shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it." As science reveals more and more of the complexity and wonder of the creation, the people of the world are left with even less of an excuse. Especially in the last 5-10 years, through DNA technology and research and the James Webb telescope, almost all the ideas that evolution is based on and hold to have been shown to be false, based on presupposed assumptions, and either bad or falsified data. This is sadly God's judgment on the world as He taught in Romans 1: 21, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened..." This gives us more reason to praise God and thank Him for the truth of the Gospel, that we are no longer in darkness, but have been crucified with Jesus and raised with Him to newness of life. It is through the work of Christ alone that we do believe in a Creator and have firm hope that in the sure, coming judgment we will be found to be righteous even though the same unbelief of the world is yet a part of us. As more is revealed about God's creation, we grow in reverence and awe of our heavenly Father and come to see clearly that God has not hid himself but as to His power and godhead is clearly seen.



8th Grade 100 word stories:

Spooked

By Hannah VanderVeen

Where am I? I had left Sage's and my campsite to find firewood but had not been able to find my way back. I shouted. There was no response. I tried to find a trace of a trail I might have created but failed. I was starting to panic when I saw a plume of smoke in the distance. I walked quickly, feeling relief at finding the camp again. I stepped into the clearing and suddenly had a hand around my mouth. I managed to muffle a small scream when Sage's voice said in a humorous tone, "It's just me!"

The Ultimate Cliff Jump

By Chase DeVries

The lemmings walked down the trail that they had walked every day since the day they had been born. Bill, the leader, led them all, knowing that whatever he did they would do. Being thoroughly sick of living with the others for so long, he had devised a plan. The next day, Bill took a different route than he normally did. The others followed him. Bill jumped off

the cliff he had led them to, landed on a platform he had found, and watched the others fall to their deaths. Then, he scurried into his pre-dug tunnel to the surface.

Caught Red-handed

By Ally Kooienga

Timmy's eyes opened wide as he saw his mom unpacking groceries. There they were, the Berry Cherry Munch! That was Timmy's favorite cereal! Timmy ran and begged his mom to let him eat them. She smiled and said, "It's almost lunchtime. Maybe tomorrow you can."

When his mother left, Timmy climbed from his chair, walked to the pantry, and looked at the cereal. He grabbed the box and opened it. Then, it fell out of his hands! Cereal was everywhere!

Timmy quickly started picking up the cereal and stained his hands red. When his mother returned, she caught him red-handed!

Lurking Death

By Oliver DeMeester

Looming deep inside the dark woods, a figure lay, motionless. It had been sitting there still for a few minutes now. When I told Dad about it, he came rushing out. Soon, Mom, my older brother, and Dad were gathered around me. My brother had his gun on his lap as he sat in the morning's cold, wet grass. Hardly anyone spoke as we gazed curiously at the still, silent corpse.

"Should we go check?" said Dad.

"Yeah!" we all said at once. We all headed toward the object.

"It's dead!" Mom screamed with shock.

It was my first deer!

A Pet Goldfish

By Kate DeVries

Jack came home from the party with an orange goldfish in a plastic bag. He grabbed a bowl from the kitchen. Placing it on his dresser, he filled the bowl with water and put his goldfish into it. As Jack went to find food for his fish, his little brother Lucas dashed past him. Jack watched as Lucas wandered into the bedroom. Jack returned a few minutes later to see a puddle of water and thousands of tiny pieces of glass on the floor. He was also just in time to hear the sound of Lucas swallowing the goldfish whole.

The Federal Pizza Party

By Dane Meulenberg

The CIA agent searched the house, which had had numerous noise complaints. Everytime a cop went in, they disappeared, so the CIA was called. He walked through the living room and up the stairs. Finally, he got to the last room, which had lights streaming from it. He opened the door slowly, pointed his rifle inside, and braced himself. To his surprise, 7 cops and one man sat having a pizza party, and watching TV.

"Hey, come join us!" said a cop. The agent set his rifle down and sat in a bean bag chair.

"What're we watching?" he asked.

One Shining Moment
By Logan Bylsma

There were twenty seconds left on the clock during the basketball championship game. The Eagles were up by one point, and the Cougars needed a steal and a quick bucket in order to win. Fifteen seconds left. Jimmy helped Mack trap a guy in the corner and stole the ball. Ten. Jimmy sprinted down the court, dribbling the ball and heading toward the right side of the hoop. Five. He jumped and laid the ball high onto the backboard. Two. The ball was going round and round the hoop and fell onto the court. Game over; Eagles won by one.

The Apple
By Ben Engelsma

FFFWWWWIIIZZPPPP..!

"Man, I've never rode a time machine before, where are we going?" Mikey said.

"We are gonna see an apple fall on Isaac Newton's head," Steve said.

KhaZAM!

"All right, don't touch anything, we're here to see the apple fall, nothing else!" Steve said. "We're gonna go behind the tree now."

"There it goes!" Steve said.

All of a sudden, it disappeared.

"This apple is great!" Mikey said.

"What are you doing!" Steve said. "This will change the world forever!"

Whap! Mikey threw the apple at Newton's head.

"Ouch!" Isaac said. "Wait a minute, I just had an idea."

Judgment
By Cara Kalsbeek

I walked into the small town. Surprisingly, no one paid any attention. They were too busy listening to the old man who was yelling at them. "Fire and brimstone! They are coming! Watch out!"

I listened to him idly for a few minutes. He continued to yell, his voice becoming louder every minute until he was screaming. When this happened, I turned and walked away. I didn't need to listen anymore. I decided to leave.

When I stopped to rest that night, I heard a faint boom from the direction of the town. I shrugged and continued on my way.

Just a Dream
By Aubrey Rutgers

In the middle of Antarctica, where I live, there are no warm, sunny days. But, every night before I fall asleep I wish that there be sun and warmth the next day. Nothing ever happened; it was as cold and windy as the day before. Until, one day I woke up to sun shining through my window. I ran downstairs and out the front door. I saw a pretty, blue bike. I hopped on and rode all day. I didn't even need shoes, there was no snow; my wish came true. I then woke up; my wish hadn't come true.

The Dead Stinkbug
By Nelle Kregel

The stinkbug slowly climbed up the window at Carla's school. Then, a breeze came from the open window, and the stinkbug fell down to its death. A spider swiftly came into the scene and wrapped up the stinkbug. Carla sat, trying to think of how to write her one hundred word essay that her teacher had told her to write for English class. Then, she thought of an idea! She would write about the stinkbug! She looked at the remains of the stinkbug being slowly wrapped up by the spider and wondered how she would write about that dead stinkbug.

Snap!
By Ella Miersma

Short, eight-year-old Tim's hands hurt as he desperately tried to grab a hold of a branch. He and his friend Ross had been trying for hours to climb the same tree in Tim's backyard.

"It's too tall!" complained Tim as his hands slipped. Ross stood behind him, watching.

"Or you're too short," Ross said. Tim frowned.

"Shut up, Ross." Again, Tim attempted to haul himself up into the tree. He finally managed to pull himself up to the next branch. Before he could be proud of himself though, the skinny, brittle branch snapped and sent Tim plunging to the ground.

*Congratulations,
Class of 2025!*



Logan Bylsma



Oliver DeMeester



Chase DeVries



Ethan DeVries



Katelyn DeVries



Benjamin Engelsma



Brodie Griess



Brooklyn Huizinga



Cara Kalsbeek



Allyson Kooienga



Addison Koole



Anthony Kregel



Nelle Kregel



Dane Meulenberg



Ella Miersma



Sonya Minderhoud



Aubrey Rutgers



Lillian Rutgers



Hannah VanderVeen



Keira Wassink

SUPPLY LISTS

Kindergarten

Backpack	Pillow (15" x 15" max)
Folder w/ pockets	Gym shoes - velcro style
Scissors	2-3 large glue sticks
Crayons (24)	Eraser
Pencil box/holder	Colored Pencils (optional)

Journal Pictures
*Please label all items

*We provide "fat" Tri-Write pencils

1st Grade

KJV Bible (2 nd semester)	Scissors
Pencil box	Folder (2 pocket)
12 pencils	1 large eraser
Gym shoes (labeled)	Washable markers
Colored Pencils	16-24 crayons
2 glue sticks	

2nd Grade

KJV Bible – large print if possible	
Pencil box	Gym shoes (labeled)
12 Pencils (#2)	2 large erasers
2 solid glue sticks	1 Spiral notebook
16-24 crayons	Scissors
Colored pencils	Old sock for whiteboards
Washable markers	(2) 2-pocket folders
Pencil sharpener	Dry erase marker

3rd Grade

KJV Bible	12 pencils (#2)
2 Glue sticks	2 large erasers
Colored pencils	Scissors
Washable Markers	Gym shoes
Crayons (optional)	Paint Shirt (labeled)
Pencil box	
(2) 2-pocket folders	
2 red pens	
1 spiral notebook	
3 (100 ct) packages sticky notes	
Old sock for whiteboards	



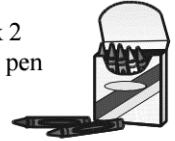
4th Grade

KJV Bible	Scissors
Pencils/Eraser	Notebook paper
2 red pens	3-ring binder
Colored pencils	Binder dividers with 5 tabs
Glue stick or Elmer's glue	Gym shoes (labeled)



5th Grade

KJV Bible	Pencils/Eraser
Colored pencils	Scissors
Pencil sharpener	Notebook paper
3-ring binder	Gym Shoes
2 red pens	Highlighter x 2
Ruler	Black felt tip pen
Fine tip dry erase marker x 2	
Glue stick or rubber cement	
Binder dividers with 5 tabs	



6th Grade

KJV Bible	Wite out
Psalter	3 ring binder w/ 8 folders
Notebook paper	Scissors
Gym shoes (labeled)	Colored pencils
Eraser	Ruler
Pens	Black felt tip pen x 2
Highlighter x 2	Dry erase marker x 4
5 subject notebook	Old sock for whiteboards
Half-circle protractor (3.75 inch)	
Pencils	

**All 6th-8th grade students will be issued a free assignment book



7th & 8th Grades

KJV Bible w/ **references, concordance, and maps**
Blue/black pens
Black felt tip pen
Several red pens
Colored pencils – not erasable, Crayola brand preferred
Highlighter
Dry erase markers
Pencils
Eraser
Scissors
Something in which to carry above items
Notebook paper
Binder w/ folders
5 subject notebook
Ruler
Protractor & compass
Scientific calculator - TI-30XIIS (available at school for \$14)
Gym clothes – labeled
Gym Shoes

PARENTS:

Please mark your child's items with his/her name, especially clothing items.