



Hamilton District Christian High

Shaping Hearts - Inspiring Vision

Foundational Statement

The by-laws of Hamilton District Christian High School form the constitutional and organizational basis for our school. Article 2 of these bylaws states the theological basis for our organization. One phrase in this article, “as interpreted by the Reformed Creeds,” can be understood in several different ways. The purpose of this document is to explain how HDCH interprets this phrase. This explanation also provides the *raison d'être* for the Christ-centred, Biblically-rooted educational program for the students of HDCH.

The basis of Hamilton District Christian High School is the triune God as revealed in the Bible. This infallible Word of God is interpreted from a Reformed biblical foundation where Jesus Christ is central to the Biblical story. In professing a Christ-centred foundation to education, HDCH asserts that the Triune God is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of each student, staff member, parent/guardian, and the school community. In fact all of life, including academics, is subject to His authority and is need of His transformational love. For in Him, by Him and through Him are all things. (Colossians 1: 15-20). All of creation shouts of the magnificence of Jesus Christ. This is the core of the Reformed biblical foundation of HDCH.

Specifically, we affirm that every square inch of our Christian learning community is rooted in Scripture alone, trusting in Christ alone, built through God's grace alone, enacted by faith alone, and all for the Glory of God alone. To that end, HDCH believes:

1. That the Bible is the only true source of written divine revelation which alone teaches all that is necessary for our salvation from sin and is the standard by which all Christian behaviour must be measured.
(2 Tim 3:16, Deut. 12:32, Belgic Confession Article 7)
2. That God also reveals Himself to us by the wonders of His created universe.
(Romans 1:20, John 1:1-3, Belgic Confession Article 2)
3. That our salvation is accomplished by work of the historical Christ alone. His perfect life, death on the cross and glorious resurrection alone are sufficient for our salvation and restoration to God, the Father-Creator.
(John 3:16, Romans 4:25, Heidelberg Catechism Q & A 45)
4. His redeeming work is also for all salvation and transformation of all creation. Our world belongs to God and Christ alone has saved it by His death and resurrection.
(Deut. 10:14, Romans 8:18-25, Our World Belongs to God #7 & 19)
5. That in this salvation we are rescued from God's wrath by His grace alone. It is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that brings us to Christ raising us from spiritual death to spiritual life.
(Romans 3:20-23, Heidelberg Catechism Q & A 62 and 63)
6. That our being made right and complete is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone. There is nothing we can do in ourselves to obtain this release from sin.
(1 John 5: 10-12, Ephesians 2: 8-9, Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 60 and 61)

7. That our salvation is for God's glory alone and that in thankfulness we joyfully live for His glory alone.
(*Ephesians 1: 11-12, 1 Chronicles 16:8-36, Westminster Shorter Confession Q & A 1*)

Further, the HDCH Christian learning community believes that it exists as part of God's ongoing story where God alone is sovereign and King. This true historic story started with God's perfect creation. The story continues with the fall from perfection because our disobedience to the Creator King. The bad news is that this disobedience affected all of creation with death and decay. This story then moves on to the good news as God provides the way out of death with new life found only in Jesus Christ. HDCH continues to live in and proclaim God's story as we wait for Jesus Christ to return. Therefore, when we study in the academics, express and create in the arts, play and participate in athletics, learn and work in the trades, or experience and enjoy the variety and complexity of people relationships, we do it not only in the context of today's culture, but more importantly in the context of God's biblical story. We must take every thought captive and make it obedient to Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:5)

By affirming this truth we also acknowledge, that in and of ourselves we are not capable of redemption (*Heidelberg Catechism Q & A 8*). We need the total help of God in our lives. This divine intervention comes to us unconditionally. It is a free gift from God. (*Ephesians 1:3-6*) This is a mystery that is beyond our limited finite understanding of the Creator of this universe. We do know that Jesus loves the world He created and came to save all who believe and call on His name (*John 3:16-17*). While we realize that not all people will receive or want to accept this gift from God, we are commissioned by God and empowered by His Spirit to bring His story to those who have not yet heard. (*Acts 1:8*) At HDCH we do this both by our words and our actions. We do so only in the power of God - confident that once God decides to enact His good news of salvation, no individual will have the power to resist. (*Act 13:48*) Finally at HDCH, we take joy in the fact that once a person has received this gift of new life from God, it will never be taken away. God is faithful and true and can not go back on His word (*Matt 24:24, John 6:39, Rom. 8:30*). It is then God's preserving gift that challenges us at HDCH to persevere in God's story, living out Jesus love to His fallen but redeemed creation (*Matthew 28:18-20, Our World Belongs to God #32*). Since He is faithful, it is incumbent for us to persist until He returns.

This founding vision of the Reformed biblical story remains HDCH's vision today.

We believe that the Lord God, by graciously giving us the scriptures, has revealed to His people ordering principles intensely relevant to education, and demands that the whole Word of God empower an education, in which we profess that:

LIFE – Human life in its entirety is religious, since God created men and women to serve Him everywhere. This requires us to educate our children for His Service.

BIBLE – The Bible as the written Word of God is the Truth by which the Holy Spirit enlightens our understanding of God, ourselves and the world, and that the Bible is the infallible authority by which He directs and governs all our activities, including the education of our children.

CREATION – We can understand the world rightly only in its relation to God, because the world, in its origin, gracious preservation and ultimate restoration is the work of the Triune God, and the glorification of His name is the purpose of the Creation.

HUMANITY – We were created in the image of God to enjoy covenant fellowship with our Creator and to reflect the excellencies of our Maker, and we were instructed to exercise

dominion over the world in loving obedience to God and to interpret all reality in accordance with His design and law.

SIN – Sin is disobedience of God's law through which each person became estranged from God and neighbour and brought God's curse upon the creation. As a result, we have become corrupt in heart, blind to the true meaning of life, and repress the knowledge of God, which confronts us in creation and in Scripture.

JESUS CHRIST – Through our Saviour, Jesus Christ, there is renewal of our educational enterprise because He is the Redeemer, the Light, and the Way for human life in all its range and variety. Only through Him and the work of His Spirit are we guided in the truth and recommitted to our original calling.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD – The Kingdom of God is God's righteous and universal reign through Jesus Christ whose grace and power make education possible and meaningful. In obedience to Christ we submit in every area of life to His commandment to love the Lord with all our heart and mind.

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION – The purpose of Christian education is to direct and guide students to commit their heart to Christ who is the Truth, to attain to understanding, to gain wisdom, to practice righteousness, and to perform responsible service to the Lord in church, state and society.

PARENTS – God has given parents the responsibility to nurture and educate their children. Therefore, Christian parents should establish and maintain Christian schools.

THE STUDENT – The student as child, entrusted by God to parents, needs ordering, correction, and instruction. Children of the Christian home share in the promises and demands of the Gospel. Hence they ought to receive Christian education.

THE TEACHER – Christian teachers, both in obedience to God and in cooperation with parents, have a unique pedagogical responsibility while educating the child in the school.

THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL – The Christian school established and controlled by a society of Christian believers, in accordance with legitimate standards and provisions, possesses the freedom to function in education in total and voluntary submission to Christ the King.

(The text in italics above has been taken from HDCH By-laws)

In addition to the creeds noted in the above document, thoughts and ideas have come from four other sources:

1. The Cross and Our Calling – Redeemer University College, 2003.
2. Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport by Richard Mouw; Zondervan; GrandRapids, Michigan; 2004.
3. The Cambridge Declaration - The Alliance of Confessing Evangelical.
4. Young, Restless, and Reformed by Colin Hansen in Christianity Today, September 2006