



Principal's Corner

Brian Koetje, Principal

“Deep Hope”

In this edition of the Growing Times, we introduce you the Teaching for Transformation program that is being implemented at ACS. Along with the Storylines, Throughlines, and Formative Learning Experiences (see p. 1), teachers also create a **Deep Hope** for their students. This Deep Hope goes above and beyond academics to the heart of what Christian Education is all about. Teachers at ACS will invite students to explore their role in God's Story and to nurture and empower each student to practice their life's expression. Tie strong academics with the deep hope of each teacher at ACS, and you have a powerful combination!

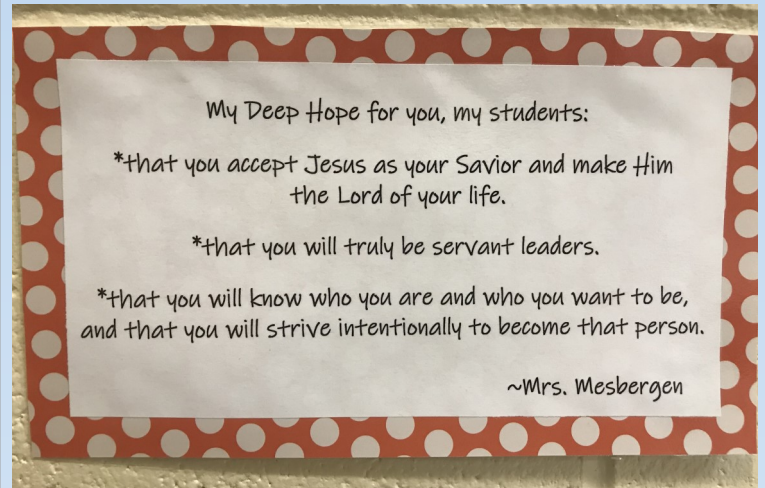
Recently, I joined our 8th grade students in order to lead a devotion on leadership. This is a topic that is very important to our middle school team, as we prepare students to be leaders in their high school and community. In fact, in the first month of each school year, we take the 8th grade students to Calvin College for a Leadership Retreat, to be challenged by speakers and to spend time together setting goals for leadership during their final year at ACS. It is a privilege for me to take part in this retreat. As this is my seventh year at ACS, the current 8th grade students were in 2nd grade when I started. I have been able to watch them grow in so many ways. When I joined them, I noticed that their teacher, Mrs. Mesbergen, had led them in a session to create a Deep Hope for themselves. The Deep Hope created by the 8th grade students is below:

*Our deep hope for our class is that we will
Grow in our faith,
Be prepared for High School,
Be a leader that others look up to, and
Stretch ourselves to be people who include others.*

Wow! These students DESIRE to grow in their faith and they want to be leaders in the way that God has gifted them as they head off to high school after they graduate from ACS!

Mrs. Mesbergen, similar to all ACS teachers, works very hard to make sure that her students have an excellent academic experience during their time at ACS. She is diligent about reaching the students where they are at and challenging them to reach their potential. However, it is so important to understand that this is done within the context of a bigger picture— that the students understand their calling and role in God's Big Story and the restoration of His world. As the students enter Mrs. Mesbergen's

room each day, they encounter her Deep Hope for them, as the students that God has entrusted to her each day. Below is a picture of her Deep Hope for her students.



As I mentioned earlier, it is not just Mrs. Mesbergen. Every ACS teacher has a Deep Hope for their classroom. Some are posted in the hallway, some are hanging in their classrooms. I took a walk through the classrooms after school one day, smiling widely as I saw the passion and care that the teachers have put in to these statements.

A few examples of Deep Hopes that you will see at ACS:

- ◆ My Deep Hope is that you will love the Lord, love others, love yourself, love creation, and know that you are loved.
- ◆ My Deep Hope is that you would invite others into the Story by sharing God's love with them even when it is hard. I hope that you will be different from others around you, and that when people look at you, they will see God.
- ◆ My Deep Hope is....that you will love His creation with proper stewardship because of the love we have for the Creator.
- ◆ My Deep Hope is that you know of the Lord's vast love for you and you live as image-bearers...that you desire to be Kingdom-builders...that you learn as you fail, knowing that God sees your immeasurable worth.

It is an honor and a privilege to be a part of a group of people who are living out their calling in order to prepare the next generation to live out their callings and be Kingdom-builders! If you have a chance to visit ACS at some point, I invite you to take a walk through the halls and see the mission and vision of Allendale Christian School come alive through the actions and words of our teachers—the DEEP HOPE of passionate Christ-followers!

Humbly Serving Him,