



## Principal's Corner

*Brian Koetje, Principal*

### **"Deep Hope, Part 2"**

Recently, I was talking with an ACS parent, and sharing some details about the Teaching for Transformation framework that we are implementing at ACS. After the conversation, this parent told me, "make sure this is not your best kept secret!" Along these lines, I will continue to share stories about the impact of this program on our students and staff as we journey together to serve our God in all aspects of life.

One year ago, in the fall edition of the Growing Times, we introduced the Teaching for Transformation (TfT) program. This program is truly transforming the way we do Christian education, and it has been truly amazing to watch our staff follow this journey! I shared how, as part of the program, teachers create a **Deep Hope** for their students. This deep hope goes above and beyond academics to the heart of Christian Education. The deep hope narratives of ACS teachers invite students to explore their role in God's Story and to nurture and empower each student to live for Jesus in everyday life. Tie strong academics with the deep hope of each teacher at ACS, and you have a powerful combination!

As we enter year two of TfT implementation, the teachers have begun to invite students to think critically about their education at ACS and their role in God's Kingdom, and write their own Deep Hope statements. The process of writing deep hopes allows students to describe, at their current place, what they understand how they live and learn in God's story. The students will be able to revisit, rewrite, and update these statements as they continue along their faith nurture journey. Ultimately, these statements will be visual evidence of the spiritual growth that ACS students see as they move through the grades and prepare for high school.

In the past few weeks, I have been able to start reading some of the first Deep Hope statements written by ACS students. It is such a joy to watch these students begin to critically think about their role in God's restoration process and to express this in writing. In the lower grades, we understand that the students deep hopes will be focused more on their current situation. However, we believe that the journey they go on at ACS will help them form a "sixty-year perspective" where the big picture of the Kingdom begins to influence their perspective, and their deep hope.

The following column shows examples of Deep Hope statements from a variety of grades at ACS.

#### Second Grade:

*"My deep hope is that me and my family and friends go to heaven some day to live with Jesus."*

#### Third Grade:

*"My deep hope is that we can know God more! Also, that we can love others all the time, invite people to play with them, and that we can know God's love the entire year!"*

*"My deep hope is to see Jesus some day!"*

#### Fourth Grade:

*"My deep hope is to learn more about God and to love God more. I hope to be a gracious communicator and to be loving, kind, nice, and have hope. I hope to love the people who need it."*

*My deep hope is that we as a class know that God wants us to have hope and put it in His unfailing love—for we are saved by Him. We know that hope is good!*

#### Sixth Grade:

*"My deep hope is that I want to be more connected to God through my gifts and talents and my love of song and prayer. That overall I will come closer to God."*

*"My deep hope is to be closer to God and His world, and put my burdens on Him. I hope to learn more about His love for me, realizing all of His blessings that He has for me."*

#### Seventh Grade:

*"My deep hope for this year is to improve as a person, grow a closer relationship with God, find myself as a person in his kingdom, and expand my knowledge of God."*

*"My deep hope is that I will become a better person in Christ, and I will show Christ to others through my kindness."*

#### Eighth Grade:

*"My deep hope this year is to understand God and his love for me more, and to become a better leader and friend and try to be more like Jesus in everything I do."*

*"My deep hope for the school year is that I will find my identity in God. I want to be able to be a faithful and kind leader to others. And I hope that this year I can show leadership to those who need help around me. I want to be a light in the darkness, and show the love of Jesus Christ."*

I thank God that He has blessed ACS with people who are passionate about helping students formulate and live out their Deep Hope to further His Kingdom!