

PARTNERSHIP AT VERITAS: OUR PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES

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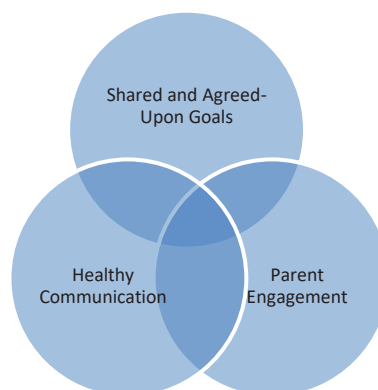


At Veritas, we believe that education can truly be a “garden of delight,” a place where young plants are given excellent nourishment, rich “soil,” and joyful

encouragement. *Partnership of Veritas with Christian parents whose faith is growing within the care of a church ensures that the minds and hearts of students are cultivated not only at school, but also at home and church.*

This partnership is at the very core of who we are as a community of faith and learning. By partnership, we mean we are in covenant with one another, and with God, in this shared vision and mission. Cooperation and collaboration are the paths to successful partnership.

Partnership of Veritas and Christian parents is dependent on three main ideas:



SHARED AND AGREED- UPON GOALS

One distinct and beautiful thing about a Veritas education is the clearly established “telos”—the end goal described in our Portrait of a Graduate. We—both school and parents—have a clear picture of the desired outcome of a Veritas education.

Together we work backwards from graduation to our youngest grades, assessing the school’s curriculum and culture for their alignment with the Portrait of the Graduate. In joining the Veritas community, families are agreeing on the objectives captured in that portrait.

In addition to defining the Portrait of the Graduate, we strive to clearly communicate the educational and cultural core beliefs of Veritas as a Christian and classical

*Veritas School is an ACCS-accredited school in Richmond, Virginia.
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school. Our core beliefs include our Statement of Faith, as well as our classical distinctives such as: instruction in Latin and Logic; pursuit of students' hearts along with their behavior; the study of great literature, art, and music; integration of disciplines; commitment to orthodox Christian theology and standards of morality; and the cultivation of students' affections.

Our published goals and beliefs makeup the non-negotiable "90%" that define us as a school. These goals and beliefs serve as the engine for both our curricular and co-curricular offerings. When families and the school agree on this 90%, the other 10% can be approached with graciousness and flexibility. Agreement on the Portrait of the Graduate, for instance, allows each of us to set aside preferences in uniform details, snow day decisions, and the like. When we disagree on these noncentral issues, there is opportunity to compromise, give preference to others before ourselves (Phil 2: 2–4), and to choose contentment.

Walking shoulder to shoulder in agreement on the major objectives, the 90%, we can avoid much of the distraction and division that so often plague school communities.

HEALTHY, BIBLICAL COMMUNICATION

Partnering well requires healthy, biblical communication from everyone in the community. The school must communicate the goals and priorities mentioned above; teachers must communicate students' academic and social progress; parents must communicate questions, concerns, or helpful information about their children.

A key to healthy communication is understanding the power of the tongue, taking our words seriously. The tongue is a tool, a weapon if you will, that can cause great good as well as great harm. It has the power of life and death. As Christians involved in gospel community with



one another, we should take great care that our words are life-giving, full of grace, and a source of encouragement. When they are not, we should repent to God and to those we have offended. Some of the surest indicators of true gospel-centered relationships are admitting mistakes and confessing sin against one another.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

"Engagement" rather than "involvement" is the best way to describe the role that parents play at Veritas. Parental involvement—volunteering, attending school events, etc.—is important and necessarily fluctuates with seasons of life, but parental engagement both with children about what they are learning and with other adults and families of the Veritas community provides strong support for students as they learn and socialize with classmates. To be part of Veritas is to partner not only with the school but also with the other families God has brought together in this important work.

MODELING

By God's design parents are, by far, the most significant influence in a child's life. While Veritas School will consistently invite students to consider that which is true, beautiful and good; will provide skills for a lifetime of learning; and will fill classrooms with

faculty who love God and others, the school's influence pales in comparison to the impact of the daily-witnessed practices of parents.

For the partnership between parents, church and school to be of greatest effect, students must experience alignment between the three institutions. Adults must be consistent, winsome, caring, and compelling. Children are keen observers.

Hypocrisy, double-standards, and inconsistency are deeply felt and have long-term effects.

We must reflect on what our children witness. How do we navigate conflicts with our spouses, neighbors, bosses, and pastors? What entertainment do we choose, and who do we invite to dinner? Which books are dusty on the shelf and which do we read over and over? How do we speak of those in authority? Do we remain faithful to our commitments, and how do we handle disappointment? How and how often do we seek forgiveness? Are we kind?

The truth is that we all—without exception—regularly fail our Lord, our fellow man, and our better selves. In these moments, what do our watching children learn about God, about His grace, and about making things right? Do they witness lives humbly submitted to the sanctifying work of Christ?

READING (ALONE, TO, AND WITH YOUR CHILDREN)

One of the best ways to be engaged with a child's education is to read. Read to children, with them and in front of them. Encourage children to read beyond the classroom requirement so that they understand that reading is not about school, but about learning, growing, and stewarding the mind God has given them. The benefits of reading are quickly evident in the life of a student—well beyond the assigned work—and equip children for a lifetime of learning and joy.

PARTICIPATING

The administration will hold various parent forums and meetings each year for the purpose of maintaining strong communication with parents. Because of our covenantal model, it is critical that parents take advantage of these opportunities when possible. We ask that every family be represented at three events each year:

- Back-to-School Night
- Community Dinner
- Spring Parent Forum

We also strongly encourage every family to attend one of the many Veritas U sessions we hold each year. Veritas U offers parents the opportunity to attend evening workshops, book discussions, and seminar series led by members of our faculty and administration. Veritas U evenings are held two to three times each year. Recent Veritas U courses include: An Introduction to Classical Christian Education, Reinforcing the Fundamentals of Singapore Mathematics, Navigating the Digital Age, Inspiring Your Children to Read, and a discussion of *That Hideous Strength* by C. S. Lewis.

SPECIAL ANNUAL EVENTS

There are many other very special events in the life of our school that always prove to be a tremendous blessing. We hope you will work these events into the rhythm of your family life.

- Convocation
- Lessons and Carols
- Speaker Series
- Spring Concert
- Art Show
- Commencement

SERVING AND VOLUNTEERING

Parents are encouraged to volunteer at Veritas in many different capacities. Some volunteer positions are for one-time events while others are ongoing. Volunteering helps foster a closer, caring community at Veritas, while allowing teachers to focus on academics. Many of Veritas' events and activities are dependent on the support and creativity of parent volunteers.

Parents will have an opportunity to sign up to participate in committees both in the upper school and lower school.

Examples of volunteer committees are prayer, room parents, golf tournament, community service, and Grandparents Day.

The committee coordinators will work directly with the administration to carry out their activities.

CONNECTING

Engagement is a natural result of connecting. We desire and expect that Veritas parents would be connected—both to what their child is learning and also to the lives of others in the school community. To be a part of Veritas is to not only partner with the school but to partner with the other families God has brought together in this important work. As parents care for their children, it speaks volumes when parents are truly interested in what students are learning and experiencing at school. Knowing that parents also care for classmates and classmates' families prepares children for the communities they will love and serve in the future.

Veritas is not a perfect school seeking to partner with perfect parents who attend perfect churches. We do, however, desire to humbly seek to honor God and His good and perfect gifts by together giving attention to that which is praiseworthy.