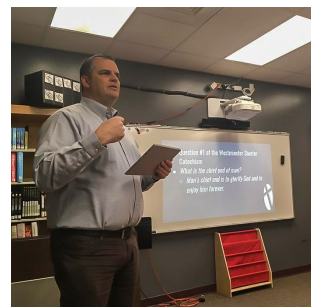


LIONHEART

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF INTERMOUNTAIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

— FALL 2021 —





CHANGE

By Mitch Menning, head of school

For the past nine years at ICS, seven and a half as head of school, I've been walking our team through change. It's hard. It's unsettling. And often, it's good. Sometimes leaders get labeled as "change agents." We don't always hit the mark, but my dad used to often tell me, "The best place to be is smack dab in the middle of God's will."

Now I've found myself walking our team through a change I wasn't anticipating in past years. As most of you already know, this school year is my last at ICS. Starting next summer, I am shifting the focus of my time to being a full-time stay-at-home husband, dad, brother, and son.

I've been walking with our team through a new set of questions: How will that affect ICS? Who will be our new head of school? What will that

person be like? How will it impact me? Will our school be ok? Again, I go back to the wisdom of my dad: "The best place to be is smack dab in the middle of God's will." God has made it clear to our family that this is the change he wants us to embrace for our future. But I also fully believe this is the change he wants ICS to embrace for our school's future!

Change can definitely be hard. There are times, given the fact that we intend for our children to continue at ICS, I find myself asking the same questions. But God is indeed in this. Please pray for ICS, for the wisdom of those involved in the search for the next leader, for our school board and leadership team, and for peace and encouragement for our whole team. I'm grateful we are not in control; our sovereign God is in control and He is the ultimate "change agent."

ALUMNA STORY

By Jessica Ermfinger, ICS alumna of class of 2017

Iwent to ICS from pre-k through senior year and I am very grateful for the experience I had and the opportunities I was given. ICS created a space that allowed me to grow in my leadership, faith, and desire to serve others. The faculty and staff always encouraged me and supported me through everything I wanted to accomplish. They cared for me not only as a student, but also as a sister in Christ.

While the jump from a small private school to a large public university had its challenges, I felt equipped to pursue others in a way that was honoring to Christ. I knew that conversations about God would not come up naturally, nor would they be woven into my education. However, one of the biggest lessons I learned in my time at ICS was how to love others regardless of their beliefs, background, or sin. This is the mindset I took with me as I graduated ICS and took my next steps into college. Through the multiple opportunities to serve, I adopted a heart to serve others and make others feel known and loved. This led me to pursue leadership positions in ministry within Young Life and at Hope Church that helped me create lasting relationships and community.

I recently received my bachelors degree in athletic training from the University of Utah; I am currently at Baylor University pursuing a masters degree in sport pedagogy and working as a graduate assistant athletic trainer. While experiencing a private Christian school, a public university, and now a private Christian university, I am reminded of how grateful I am that I received a Christian education which helped instill in me a love for ministry and a love for others. Seeing my teachers incorporate the love of Christ into each day challenged me to see how He works in each situation, regardless of how mundane or simple it may seem. ICS gave me lifelong friendships and mentors and I feel incredibly blessed to have been able to attend.

Currently, Jess is at Baylor University in Waco, Texas pursuing a masters degree in sport pedagogy. She is working as a graduate assistant athletic trainer with the football and men's golf teams. She also manages a group of student workers who work with the football team, providing them the opportunity to learn more in the field of athletic training.





FALL ATHLETICS HIGHLIGHT

ICS coaches continue to embrace a season of growth and reaching goals

The goal of the Athletics Department at ICS is to compete with Christian character. Our athletes are coached under leaders that desire to see them win on and off the field. ICS is committed to developing integrity and Godly character as well as athletic abilities. Our coaches have come to ICS for a time such as this and we remain grateful for their leadership and intentionality with our student athletes.

HS CROSS COUNTRY: Faith Longoria is an ICS mom, upper school math teacher, and beloved ICS high school cross country coach. She has been coaching cross country for five years. Coach Longoria started running at the age of 14, running cross country and track all through high school and college. While in high school, she ran summer track through AAU and was sponsored by Nike. Her team also competed in the junior olympics. At the college level, she ran for Virginia Commonwealth College for two years, then transferred to Christopher Newport University. Coach Longoria continues to run as an adult as it helps with her energy and is a valued time to be alone and pray. She is thankful God has given her the ability to continue running. Her goals for the cross country team include everyone making it to State, and for the team to finish in the top five in Utah!

MS VOLLEYBALL: Our middle school volleyball coaching staff has worked together as a team to lead our young players to victory this season! This year's coaches include two alumni, Danielle Scott ('98) and Isabel Aste ('20). Jordan Creekmur also joined the coaching staff this year. The coaches hoped for the girls to have fun this season, continue to work on basic fundamentals, learn the rules of the game, develop a passion for volleyball, and ultimately prepare themselves for competition at the high school level.

HS VOLLEYBALL: Kalani Gasper returns this year to coach our high school volleyball team. Coach K continues to want to see the program grow and succeed. He brings extensive coaching experience to the program, and it shows through his passion and excitement from the bench and on the court. On the court, the results are significant as the team will head into the State Tournament as the #1 seed!

Athletic Director Ryan Behmer has worked extremely hard to build up the ICS program this year and assure that more than just athletic abilities are being fostered. We're grateful he's joined our team and walks alongside our coaches as they teach our athletes to have Christ-like character, to be wise on and off the field, and to be influencers in their circles!

BASEBALL: This year, our high school baseball team was in need of a new coach. Through connections, former MLB All-Star relief pitcher George Sherrill accepted the position to coach the ICS Lions. While he has an extensive background playing professional baseball for various organizations including the Mariners, Orioles, Dodgers and Braves, this is his first coaching gig. Coach Sherrill went out to a practice to observe the Lions and felt as though God was telling him, "If not me, who?" He saw kids with no experience being welcomed and encouraged by more seasoned athletes. Moreover, he saw a group he was willing to lead. When considering goals for this season, Coach Sherrill said he'd like to make it to State, and winning a game at State would, of course, be awesome. The team indeed finished strong, winning three of their last four games. Coach Sherrill also desired for the athletes to win with humility and to lose with dignity, which we all agree they accomplished.

MS CROSS COUNTRY: Kristin Lunsford has been the ICS middle school cross country coach for four years. Coach Lunsford started running track in middle school and has continued running since. She finds running relaxing and hopes her athletes learn to love it as a lifelong sport as well. Coach Lunsford has completed three half marathons, running her first one at the age of 40. She also competed in a sprint triathlon at Bear Lake, taking 3rd place in her age division. She desires for the team to succeed and enjoy their time on the course. The team focuses on Isaiah 40:31 throughout the season as a reminder that it's the Lord who renews their strength!



A SUMMER OF TRUST

By Andrew Hobbs, director of Camp ICS and MS/HS social studies faculty

Over the summer of 2021, I had the opportunity to lead Camp ICS, a summer program for children from four to twelve years old. When I was first approached with the opportunity, I knew it could be a lot of fun and it would also be a lot of work. After some initial planning meetings, I honestly thought I was in over my head. We set our attendance goal to average fifty campers per week, a number well-above that of previous years. I thought it was a pipe dream for us to enroll that many campers. However, God blessed us with an average of fifty-two campers per week. What began with concern that we would not have enough campers to meet our goals, very quickly turned into a scramble to find enough employees for the number of campers signing up!

I remember several times in particular when I was in desperate need of another camp employee and God brought them just in time. One such example occurred when Jennifer Adema, ICS Admissions Director, happened to mention Camp ICS to a couple high school students at her church. They followed up with me for an interview. I hired them to work most of the summer, and they did a fantastic job! Those same two employees connected me with incoming ICS junior Jack Heiple, who I hired to work the last two weeks of camp. I still needed more employees for those last days after hiring Jack and God provided in yet another way. I was walking through the building one day

during camp when I ran into a former ICS student who was visiting for the day. She asked me if I had any hours for her and she ended up filling a key position the last two weeks of camp.

God is faithful in the big things and in the little. He created our problem of not having enough employees to staff the camp by sending us so many campers and then graciously provided the employees we needed! The Holy Spirit through Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 9:8, "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work." That is exactly what God did this summer. His grace was sufficient for us to do the good work of running a camp where one-hundred-sixty-three campers throughout the summer learned about the God of the Bible (some of them for the first time) and created memories that will last a lifetime. Our God is good!

JUMPING INTO 5TH GRADE

Fifth grade students enjoy their final year of Elementary School to the fullest

Fifth grade is a year of lasts and also a year of anticipating change. Our ICS fifth graders are wrapping up their elementary years and looking forward to starting life as middle schoolers! In Mrs. Frazee's 5th grade class, the students can expect to mature in their learning by increasing their independence in the classroom. Each student has their own cubby, a foreshadowing to managing their own locker. The seating in the class also rotates, as students have a chance to try out traditional desks, standing desks, a comfy couch and wheeling desks. This creative and fluid seating arrangement allows for the students to stretch their social circles, anticipate their favorite seating arrangements and allow for more fun and comfort in the learning environment.

This year's class was able to participate in the first ever Outdoor Lab, partnering with Pioneer Bible Camp in Eden, UT. During this overnight trip, our students were submerged in God's creation and in full community with one another. Science lessons took a unique perspective as learning went outdoors, fully tangible, and taking on a new clarity.

Kaileigh Schroeder said her favorite part of the Outdoor Lab was playing carpet ball. She thinks future 5th graders will have a lot of fun at the Crystal Hot Springs portion of the field trip. All in all, the students had a great time learning outside of the classroom. Mrs. Frazee reported, "It was so encouraging to see the way the class connected and worked together on the Outdoor Lab trip! This trip will definitely continue in the years to come."

The transition to middle school can feel intimidating; lockers, different teachers, choosing electives and increased privileges can feel like a lot to manage! It is our hope at ICS that our students can enter 6th grade with an increasing knowledge of who God is and who He created them to be. Our prayer is that they are equipped with confidence to step into this new phase of their academia. Nostalgic feelings will pass through them as they reflect on time spent in their elementary years, but so will anticipation of what is to come. This is Mrs. Frazee's inaugural year teaching 5th grade at ICS. She was previously ICS' 2nd grade teacher and is doing an incredible job with our fifth graders!



ANNUAL REPORT

Though we've found ourselves still dealing with the realities of COVID-19 at ICS, we haven't allowed that to slow us down in pursuing our vision and implementing major initiatives while living out our mission.

I. TEACHING FOR TRANSFORMATION (TFT)

One of the major initiatives we're implementing is the second year of Teaching for Transformation (see teachingfortransformation.org for more details). Last year, we spent half of our late start professional development time diving into introductory Tft modules. Tft is a philosophy for a Christian school to provide authentic and most effective Christ-centered education. Over 100 schools have implemented Tft in North America in the last 10 years and have seen incredible results in tangible and intangible ways.

Three main aspects of Tft are Deep Hopes from where we start all of our planning, *Core Practices* that include *Storyline*, *Throughlines*, and *FLEx (Flexible Learning Experiences)*, and *Habits of Learning*. Eight staff members are diving in deeper as early adopters this year, while the rest of the faculty learns more about Tft. Find below the *Deep Hopes and Storylines* of our early adopters:

MRS. BUCKLEY, DEAN OF ACADEMICS:

Deep Hope: My Deep Hope is for our team to be encouraged to embrace their call to faithfully serve God and His students. What if each employee at ICS felt empowered and emboldened to be God's good and faithful servant in our school community?

Storyline: Serving faithfully

MRS. COMBE, PK FACULTY

Deep Hope: My Deep Hope is that my students would know they are deeply loved and a unique creation of our God. As curious adventurers we will explore, discover and play together as we start to understand how we fit into God's plan.

Storyline: Wonder and Grow

MRS. HARMON, MS MATH FACULTY

Deep Hope: What if my students discover that they are uniquely equipped and capable of doing hard things? I hope they are always curious and continually seek to find how they fit into God's story.

Storyline: God is > than...

MR. HULIN, PE FACULTY

Deep Hope: My Deep Hope for myself and my students is that our responses and actions brought out by sports and competition point others to Christ as we care for our bodies through exercise.

Storyline: Be better today!

MR. MENNING, HEAD OF SCHOOL

Deep Hope: My Deep Hope for the culture of ICS is for team members and students to thrive in an authentic community that truly loves one another, encourages risks through success and failure, and inspires every unique person by reflecting the heart of Jesus.

Storyline: Reflect the heart of Jesus.

MRS. PIMENTEL, SPANISH FACULTY

Deep Hope: My Deep Hope for myself and my students is that we love and are loved as we remain in awe of God.

Storyline: Connecting in a broken world through language and culture.



These eight Tft Throughlines are featured in ICS' lobby's plexiglass displays.

Miss Potter, 3rd Grade Faculty, ES Academic Dean

Deep Hope: My deep Hope for myself and my students is as image bearers of God we will reflect a portion of His glory as we learn, grow, and work together to discover our role in the world around us.

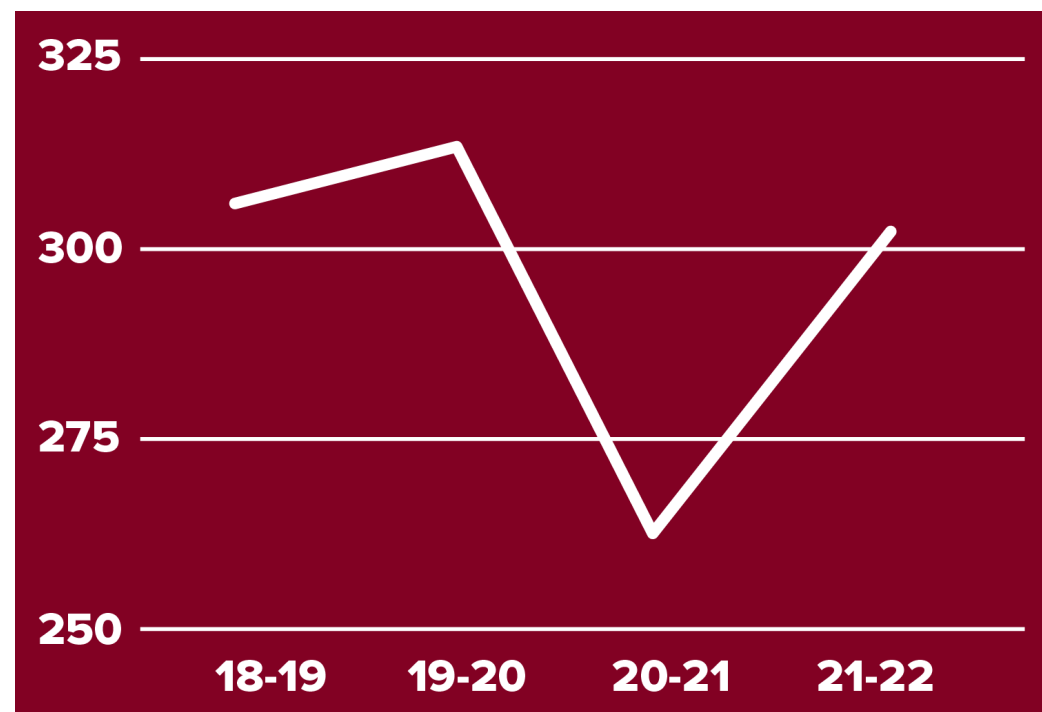
Storyline: Reflecting God’s image

Mrs. Schumacher, HS English Faculty, HS Academic Dean

Deep Hope: My Deep Hope for my students is to recognize within the struggle that our world groans under, the gracious gifts that God has placed in our lives and to desire and discover how to best use these gifts in order to endure and then thrive in our identities as Christ followers.

Storyline: Writing our stories as Christ-followers: as writers, as servants, as readers, as thinkers, as stewards, and as friends.

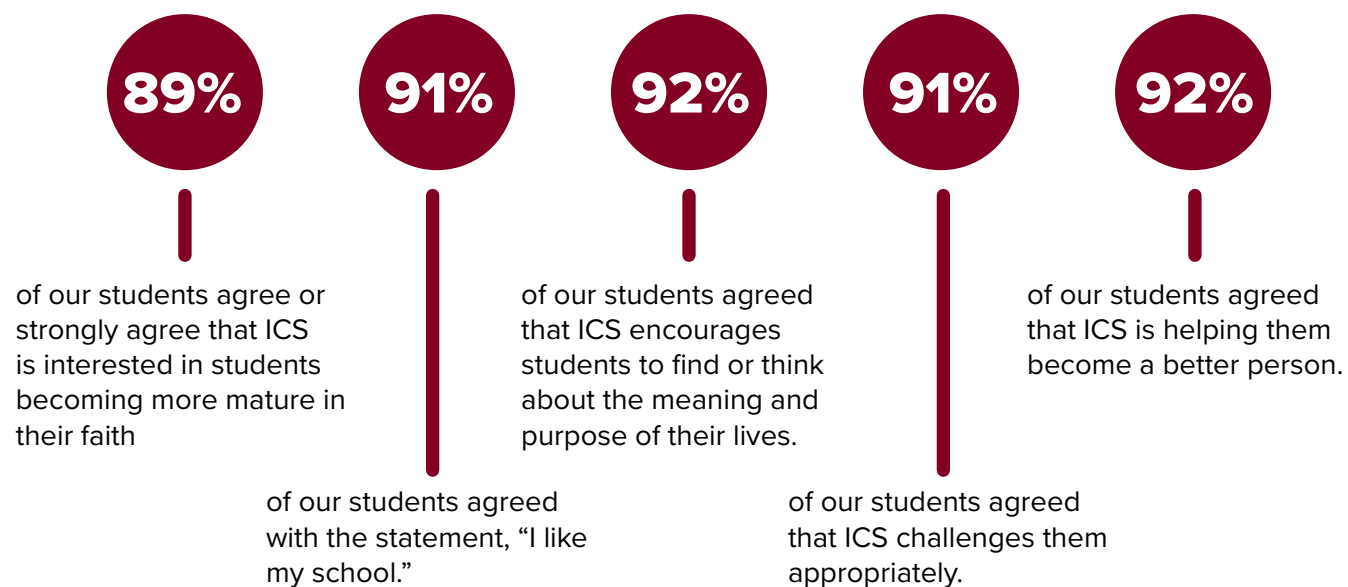
II. ENROLLMENT



The year 2020 was not on anyone’s radar. Our enrollment numbers were looking great going into the 2020-21 school year. Then COVID hit and everyone’s plans changed. However, **we’re happy to report that our 2021-22 enrollment numbers have nearly recovered to pre-COVID levels and, through God’s provision and difficult adjustments, we ended the 2020-21 school year in the black.**

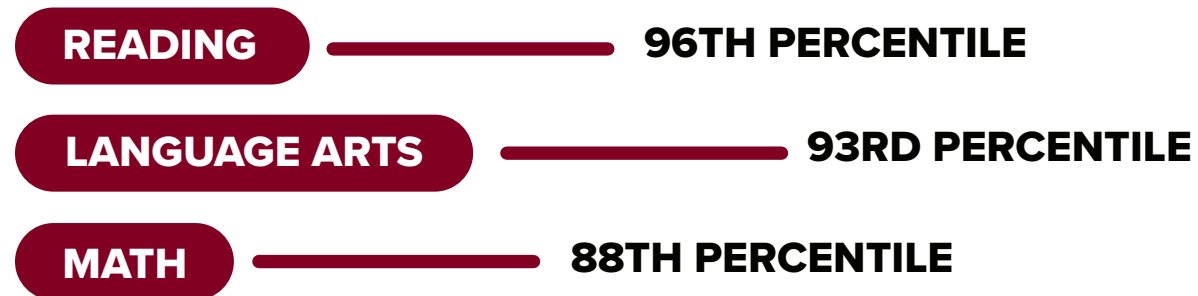
III. SPIRITUAL CLIMATE

Last May, we conducted the first annual “Spiritual Climate Survey” of MS and HS students through CSEE (Center for Spiritual and Ethical Education). When students do surveys we recognize they might not all come in glowing, however, some highlights of this survey in our first year include:



IV. MAP SCORES

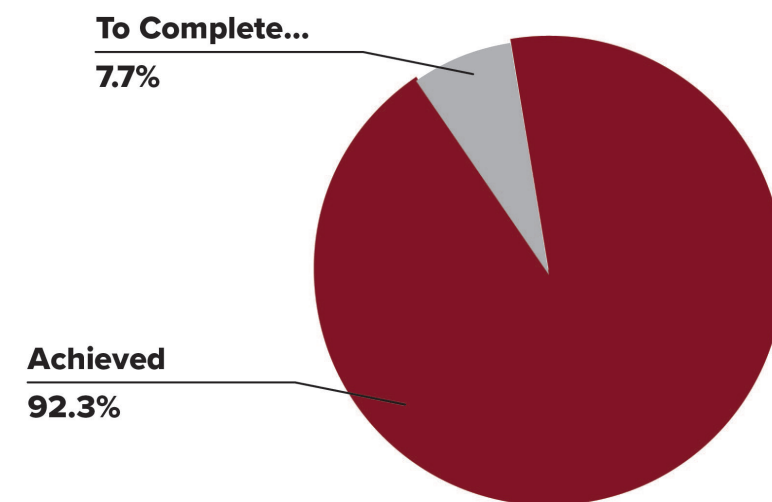
One way we assess our learning is by participating in MAP standardized testing for our students in 1st-7th grades. Even in the wake of disrupted learning environments due to COVID, we were encouraged by last year’s scores that put ICS **AVERAGE SCORES** at the following nationwide percentiles:



V. \$2.1M GIVING-DRIVEN STEP #2, 2016-2021

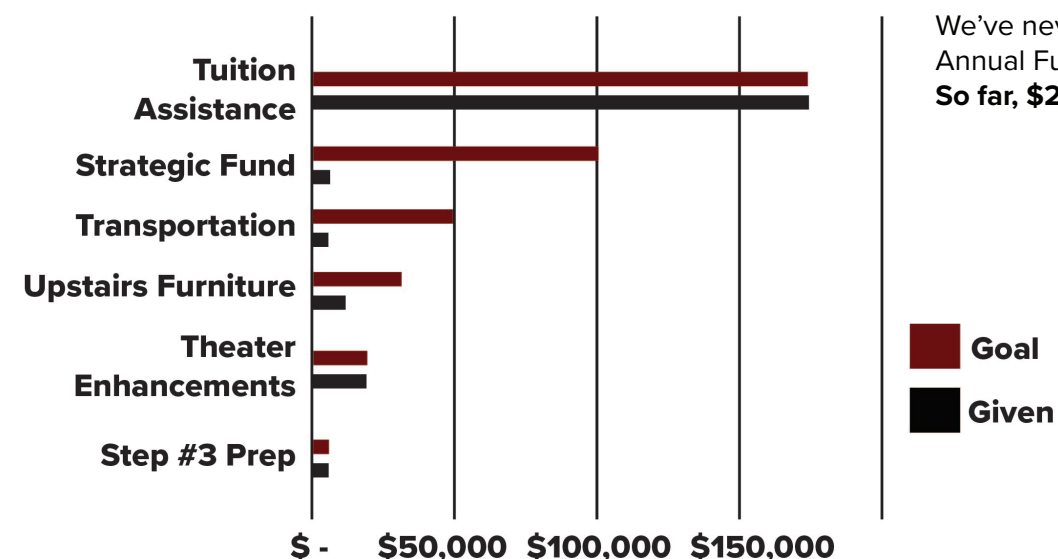
In a step of progress that coincides with our ‘16-21 strategic plan, the generosity of our community has been amazing and we hope to wrap this step up by the end of the calendar year. **We are currently 92.3% of the way there!** The \$1.93M that has already been given has provided for needs-based tuition assistance that approximately 30% of our families benefit from, new elementary furniture, completing HVAC in the building, marketing and enrollment improvements, commuter bus, educational technology, new gym bleachers, athletic equipment, school-wide 1-to-1 technology, bathroom remodels, weight room, cafeteria remodel, theater improvements, architecture work for Step #3, remodeled teachers’ lounge, summer program launch, board training and governance transition, and enhanced halls and outdoor areas.

We’re very excited to be so close to completing this step - only 7.7% and \$162,000 to go! As we complete that, hopefully by December, 2021, we look forward to putting ICS in the strongest position possible by replacing two aging buses, establishing a strategic fund to be provided for the next strategic plan, and completing the classroom furniture replacement plan for the MS and HS.



VI. 2021 ANNUAL FUND GOALS AND PROGRESS

As of September, 2021



We’ve never been so close to completing our Annual Fund goals for the year this early in the fall! So far, \$213K has been given to our \$375K goal.

VII. SCHOOL BOARD'S MESSAGE

Concerning ICS' Head of School Transition

While the announcement of Mr. Menning's last year at ICS was a surprise for us all, we know that the school is in God's hands and that He will lead us. First, we wanted to acknowledge and thank Mitch for the work that he has done over the last 9 years. He has laid a solid foundation on which the new leader will be able to build. Second, we wanted to let the community know that the school board has started a search for the next head of school. We will be conducting interviews with the administrative team, hiring a search firm and reaching out to contacts from other Christian schools.

The reason that Mitch graciously gave a full year notice is because he knows that finding this person will take time. We will continue to give updates to this community as we move through the process. Please be praying with us that God will give us wisdom. Thank you for your continued support.

ICS School Board

Grace Kunde, President
Jeremy Ferkin, Vice President
Mark Parrett, Treasurer
Corey Hodges
Nathan Wanner
Shannon Lusk



EXPLORING THE ARTS

By Denise Buckley, academic dean

A wonderful part of an ICS education is the opportunity to explore the arts. Whether a prekindergarten or high school student, our gifted teachers of the arts bring an inviting range of options to our students. As a community, we get to take part as well, as their artwork adorns the hallways. Dance, music, and theater productions are planned to showcase their talent as well.

We have a trifecta of talent in our music department! First, Mr. Rodriguez directs our middle school and high school band programs. Mr. Rodriguez brings a wealth of experience, including that of a professional trumpet player. We love that he has a background in Worship Theology, among other areas. He wrote a devotional for musicians called The Worshiping Musician which he is sharing with our students. We look forward to hearing them perform at our Christmas concert on December 2.

The next person in our music trio is Mrs. Hafemann, who is working across all levels of our school this year. She is teaching music and recorder classes to our 4th and 5th grade students and leading our middle and high school handbell choirs. Mrs. Hafemann is also leading our ensemble, getting them ready (along with HS handbells) for their first concert this November at the Sandy Expo Center. Mrs. Hafemann has had her own music business and leads worship at her church. When we interviewed her for this job last year, she first attended our spring concert at Abravanel Hall. She was so impressed with our students' abilities that she wanted to join our team...and we are grateful she did!

Mrs. Tally rounds out our music department, as she leads our prekindergarten through 3rd grade music classes along with our middle school choir. She is working with Mrs. Hafemann to prepare students for our elementary music concert on December 9. Mrs. Tally also directs our theater program. Middle school and high school students can take theater and conservatory classes, which give them acting, directing, and stage production experience. She tries to involve all ages in various productions, so our elementary students should be on the lookout for different opportunities throughout the year as well.

In addition to musical arts, we have dance teams and fine arts classes. Mrs. Lee leads two elementary dance teams and a middle school troupe. These ladies will perform at various times throughout the year and we encourage you to check them out. The students dance as a way to worship the Lord and it is beautiful to see. Mrs. Lee also teaches art classes, first grade through high school. While the art show is at the end of the school year, you can wander our halls any time to see student work displayed. She brings in speakers, takes students on field trips, and teaches students about various artists. The variety of skills our students are able to develop is incredible!






We serve a creative God! At ICS, our students are encouraged to explore their own creativity through art, dance, music, and theater. Whether a simple pleasure or an eventual career choice, we aim to partner with our students so they can uncover their own unique talents and share them in order to honor Him. Our arts program is another way to equip and inspire our students to thrive in God's world!



Calling all Intermountain Christian School Alumni! Check out our new alumni page on our website at intermountainchristian.org/alumni. This site is dedicated to you! We have big plans for the future of ICS' alumni website and program, but to stay informed, we need your information. We're excited to reconnect with you, as well as connect you with other alumni along the way.

ALSO, be on the lookout for exciting news regarding ICS' 40th anniversary in-person celebration in August 2022!

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