

## Dear VFCA Parents and Families,

The Lord has graciously blessed us with an excellent start to the new school year. We all had a sense of anticipation during the recent VFCA Parent Action Team (PAT) meeting that included many parents. For those who were unable to attend, I have included the meeting notes for your review.

In the meeting, I shared a devotional based on the book of Nehemiah. Nehemiah leads a group of people to face opposition and discouragement with perseverance. With hard work and team work, the people succeed in rebuilding the broken walls of Jerusalem. Through this book, God spoke to my heart about our mission here at VFCA. We are like Nehemiah and the workers on the wall, doing our part in repairing the brokenness of our culture, our families, our children and our destinies. Christian education struggles against the stream of the world's influences on our children and youth. The culture in our nation is so broken that many lives are overwhelmed. However, our students are called to lead, to make a difference and effect change. Our job, as families and as a school, is to teach them who they are in Christ and to develop their abilities to lead righteously in the face of a broken and lost world.

Though the walls had been in ruin for nearly eight decades, Nehemiah led the people to rebuild the walls, completing the job in only 52 days. Wow! Consider the power and potential of a united group of people in completing a common goal. In the PAT meeting, I shared more on this topic and I received many requests for my outline so I have attached the outline at the end of this letter. I encourage you to read it, study the book of Nehemiah and let the Lord speak to your heart about your part in building the future of your child(ren) as you partner with us at VFCA.

The PAT meeting highlighted many great strides at VFCA. Recent standardized testing results are evidence that our curricular program is outstanding. Our students' high scores are consistently in the top national percentiles. Check out the attached results concerning our ACT report from last spring. I am very proud of our students and teachers as their concerted planning and effort is truly paying off.

One target area discussed at the meeting was the VFCA sports program. Many parents of pre-school and elementary ages voiced a desire to see more sports offerings. In response to this interest, I am calling a meeting to create a parent coalition to further develop our sports program. This meeting will be Tuesday evening, October 18, at 6:30 in the church sanctuary.

Allowing our young student leaders to be touched with a compassion for the world has become a large part of who we are. VFCA is imparting a deep appreciation for the cultural differences of people as we participate in local and global mission outreaches with our students, staff and family members. Last year, our school provided Christmas for over 100 orphaned children, raised funds for a water purification system in the Amazon, fed homeless individuals numerous times, and assisted with numerous food distribution ministries throughout Huntsville. VFCA students are connecting an awareness of the needs with motivation to meet those needs in practical ways. God's love for the nations is being deposited in their hearts.

VFCA accomplished numerous goals that I want to make you aware of:

- Dual enrollment classes for 11-12 grades (English 101 and 102)
- New science equipment school wide
- New science curriculum for 2<sup>nd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades
- New math curriculum (Saxon Math) for grades 1-4
- Expanded on-line course offerings
- Built the outside trash receptacle
- Purchased a hot/cold bar for our kitchen (the cabinets are yet to be made)
- 22 new Dell computers for the pre-school and elementary computer lab
- New website with updates
- New K5 desks
- Facelift on our reception and business offices

These additions and improvements are wonderful. We are encouraged, but we are still motivated to attain even greater school-wide improvement goals. In November, our senior class will be going on a school sponsored mission trip to Guatemala. The senior class has set several goals for this mission outreach.

VFCA 2011 Mission Goals:

- Sponsor a child from a Guatemalan Orphanage (Casa Angelina and Casa Destineo) Christmas Project-\$50 per child ( Due Oct. 1) These funds will purchase needed items like clothing, shoes and a special gift-100 children-\$5,000 goal
- Play ground equipment for children at the Malnutrition Center-\$3,500 goal
- Money to help purchase a portable sound system for Vino Nuevo Ministries in Spain-\$3,000 goal

Our students are making an impact as they touch these precious children and ministries with the love and compassion of Christ. We are praying that you and your family will partner with VFCA in completing these worthwhile projects.

I thank the Lord for you and your partnership as we work together to raise our students to become Godly leaders in the world and in the Body of Christ. May the Lord bless you and your family and may the Lord continue to bless VFCA.

Sincerely,  
Patti Simon, Administrator

## **VFCA Parent Action Team Meeting Notes**

### **Box Tops & Campbell Labels**

Please collect and turn in your Box Tops and Campbell Labels. This is an easy way for the school to earn extra funds.

### **Publix Reward Card**

If you or any of your family & friends shops at Publix, please give them a Reward Card. They are available in the school office. The school earns a percentage of your purchase. This also is a very easy way to earn much needed funds for the school. There is not cost to you, just ask for your reward card at the school reception office.

### **Scripps (Gift Cards)**

Any gift card that you buy through the school Scripps program will benefit the school with a percentage of your purchase. There are several dozen participating merchants that you can buy gift cards from. Forms are available in the school office. So, plan ahead for Christmas, birthdays or any major purchases. Submit order by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Receive the gift cards by the end of the month. (ex: Wal-Mart, Publix, Target, Olive Garden, PF Changs, etc.-over 200 different businesses, stores and restaurants.) This is money we spend anyway, why not pre-purchase a gift card? This allows the school to receive anywhere from 2%-15% from the various cards.

### **Thursday Lunch Assistant**

We need several volunteers to help Mitzi with lunch duty between 8:30 - 10:30 or 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

### **Class Coordinators/Room Parent**

A Class Coordinator/Room Parent is needed for the 12<sup>th</sup> grade class.

### **Innisbrook**

Our Innisbrook Wraps Fundraiser was a big success! Students and parents sold over \$16,000 in product which brought in a profit of \$8,062. Our Friday Free Dress Fundraiser will continue for the remainder of September and the month of October. To date, we have raised \$350, so continue to pay \$1.00 each Friday for free dress. If you were not able to participate in the Innisbrook Fundraiser, you may make a tax deductible donation to VFCA. Payment envelopes are available in the main office. Honorary donations and general donations are received with gratitude at VFCA.

Thank you for the great response!

### **Family Fun Day – Monday, October 31, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

VFCA's next fundraising opportunity will be our Family Fun Day on October 31<sup>st</sup>. This is a really fun day for the kids and family members. In addition to the all day putt-putt golf, games and rides, we will also have two inflatables. This event will be open to K3-12<sup>th</sup> grades and their parents. Mrs. North still needs a few more volunteers to help.

### **Teacher's Christmas Banquet – Friday, December 9th, 5:30 – 9:00 p.m.**

Volunteer need is met. Thanks for your response!

### **Work Day – Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012**

We need help cleaning up the grounds and facilities for Open House. The work days will be Feb 25 and March 3, 2012 from 8am-4pm. Please email Mrs. North if you are interested in serving for any period of time on either of these work days.

### **Open House – Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.**

We need 5 volunteers to greet visitors, serve refreshments and answer questions.

### **Auction – Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup>**

We need 30 volunteers for this event to work auction tables, registration tables, water table, and various other duties. We also need people who are willing to go out and collect items for the auction.

### **Teacher Appreciation - May 7th - 11<sup>th</sup>**

I need volunteers for lunch duty daily for the Pre-school through 5<sup>th</sup> grade lunch periods.

If you have any questions about the above events or are willing to sign up as a volunteer, please call Brenda North at 852-0322 or email [gabby138@comcast.net](mailto:gabby138@comcast.net)

**Thank you Parents!! You are Awesome and are greatly appreciated!!!!**

## Nehemiah Bible Study Outline

Nehemiah was called at a time of great despair to lead the people of God to rebuild not only the wall of Jerusalem but the lives and identity of the people. Decades earlier, the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and burned and the people had been taken captive. The ruins reminded the people of their status – humiliated, defeated, disgraced, and displaced – and the people’s identity became interlinked with the symbol of the broken wall.

As Pastor Greg and I studied the book of Nehemiah, we noticed several strategies that Nehemiah used to complete an overwhelming job. I encourage you to read Nehemiah for yourself and see if the Lord speaks to you about strategies you can use to rebuild broken places in your life and the lives of others. As a Christian educator, I am deeply motivated to do all I can to develop healthy children and youth. Our children are growing up in a world that is increasingly broken-culturally, spiritually and morally. The task to rebuild these areas and raise our children to be Godly leaders is daunting. But, as we work together, we will successfully raise up Godly leaders. Here are some of the action strategies that we gleaned from Nehemiah’s struggle to rebuild the wall and the community of God’s people.

1. Have a compelling “don’t-come-down-off-the-wall” purpose.
  - a. “I am carrying on a great project...”(Neh. 6:3)
  - b. Great lives are produced by a commitment to a great cause. Achievers have purpose.
  - c. Rebuilding the walls is compelling. Three areas in which a believer needs to build walls:
    - i. in their personal life,
    - ii. for Kingdom of God, and
    - iii. in the local Church.
  - d. Nehemiah asks, “Why should I come down? (Neh. 6:3)
2. Maintain vision and priority (Neh. 6:3). Keep a clear perspective. Don’t let fear paralyze you from your calling (4:8).
  - a. Fear clouds perception. FEAR=False Evidence Appearing Real
  - b. Nehemiah maintains proper perspective, “I realized that God had not sent him” (Neh. 6:12).
  - c. 2 Corinthians 2: 10-11 “For we are not unaware of Satan’s schemes”
3. Remain constant in prayer. When the pressure is on, we either pray or panic.
  - a. Nehemiah prays, “Strengthen my hands” (Neh. 6:9).
  - b. We stand tallest when we are on our knees. God will give us the strength for which we are asking.
  - c. Jesus teaches, “Men ought always pray and not give up!” (Luke 18: 1)
  - d. Don’t be anxious, but pray (Philippians 4:6-7). “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful (Colossians 4:2).”
4. Exercise courageous persistence. Practice determination (Neh. 4:16-17).
  - a. “Let us not become weary in well doing for we will reap if we faint not.” (Galatians 6:9)
  - b. Courage moves ahead despite fear. The people worked in spite of danger and because Nehemiah refused to quit. “The Wall was built in FIFTY TWO DAYS” (Neh. 6:15).
  - c. If you miss it, don’t give up! Success is getting up one time more than you fall down. You don’t drown by falling in the water, you drown by staying there.
  - d. The call is higher than the fall – just think of all Joseph went through on his path to leader of Egypt.
  - e. We can have determination and confidence because He will complete what He has begun. Philippians 1:6 “being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you, will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” God does not quit. He will see us through every step of the way until we reach our ultimate destination.

5. Don't be surprised when you experience opposition. Can you recognize these common attacks to get you to come down off the wall?
  - a. Criticism (Neh. 4:1): Words will be spoken against you. If you fear criticism, you'll die doing nothing. We are not called to respond to criticism; we are called to respond to God.
  - b. Discouragement (Neh. 4:10): Results don't always show up right away.
  - c. Distraction (Neh. 6:2): The cares of this world can easily choke out the fruitfulness of our lives.
  - d. Intimidation (Neh. 6:13-14): Like Jezebel's threats to Elijah, the enemy will try to get you to run away.
  
6. Give encouragement (Neh. 4:14). Respond to opposition in a manner that helps keep everyone on the wall. Can you reinforce God's calling in others by doing the following?
  - a. Watch your vocabulary! What we say is important. Our words are seeds planted into other people's lives.
    - i. Matthew 12:34 "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."
    - ii. Speak words of life and light. Our speech should rise to the level of the Word.
  - b. Build your faith and the faith of others through the Word of God.
    - i. Romans 10:17 "consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through the Word of Christ"
    - ii. Galatians 6:9 assures us that we will reap – not might reap – if we do not give up!

## VFCA's Achievement of Graduates on the ACT

The ACT assessment is an indication of the extent to which students are prepared for college-level work. The ACT consists of curriculum-based tests of educational development in English, mathematics, reading, and science designed to measure the skills needed for success in first year college coursework.

ACT has established college readiness benchmark scores for designated college courses. A benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses. The benchmark scores set by ACT for the four curricular areas tested are as follows:

<b>English Composition:</b>	<b>score of 18 on the ACT English Test</b>
<b>Algebra:</b>	<b>score of 22 on the ACT Mathematics Test</b>
<b>Social Science:</b>	<b>score of 21 on the ACT Reading Test</b>
<b>Biology:</b>	<b>score of 24 on the ACT Science Test</b>

VFCA graduates have consistently scored higher than ACT's benchmark scores. Each year, ACT sends a report to school districts showing the achievement of that year's graduates and the previous four years graduates as well. The report reflects the five-year trend of our ACT-tested graduates. It also shows the five-year trend for our State, thus providing a comparison of our scores to State averages. Consistently, VFCA has scored significantly higher than the State. These scores demonstrate that VFCA graduates are well prepared to meet the demands of college coursework. A comparison of our 2011 graduates and graduates of the State for 2011 is reflected below:

<b><u>Subject –test</u></b>	<b><u>VFCA avg score</u></b>	<b><u>State avg score</u></b>
<b>English</b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>20.4</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>19.6</b>
<b>Reading</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>20.7</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>20.1</b>
<b>Composite (all 4)</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>20.3</b>

As clearly evidenced by the above scores, VFCA graduates far-exceed the academic achievement of the graduates of our State. Our students are out performing others and excelling in all subject areas. This is significant evidence demonstrating that our small, Christian school has a quality academic program and that VFCA graduates are fully equipped to be academically successful. The proof is undeniable. Our program is providing a platform for academic excellence and our student achievement is significant.

VFCA graduates are the best of the best and thoroughly prepared to meet the demands of college courses and are positioned to achieve excellence.