



#### OUR MISSION

*Covenant Academy exists to serve Christ and His Kingdom, by sharing the gospel and partnering with parents to train students by way of Scripture and the classical liberal arts.*

Dear Covenant Family,

A pandemic has a way of revealing our weak spots. As some of our juniors and seniors have pointed out in their theses, COVID-19 has revealed hidden problems within our culture: homelessness, domestic abuse, and poverty to name a few. It's also revealed how poorly our culture handles mutual respect. **Mutual respect and deference to one another was once a hallmark of Christian communities.** It's been concerning to see this erode so quickly in the last two years.

**Covenant has been a refuge in the chaos.** Our community has held firmly to the principles of unity and diversity. We uphold the unity we must have as a community that seeks to serve the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We uphold the diversity of opinions we hold without demanding that everyone in the community share the exact same perspective. As I talk with other heads of school around the country, I'm struck with the way that our school has weathered the storm of COVID-19 and the chaos of our culture with contrasted peace amid the storm. I'm truly honored to be part of this community with you and pray that God is pleased with our earnest commitment to love one another well.

**Your partnership in mitigating COVID-19 has been essential to our success.** We've had relatively few closures and we can see the results in our students. They are happy, healthy, and have experienced the full benefit of embodied learning. Test scores are only one vantage point, but they provide an objective perspective to add to our evaluation process. Soon you'll receive your child's standardized testing information so that you can see another perspective on their academic skills. Overall, our grammar school students are reading well, stronger than they have in several years. In August, you may remember that I expressed concern that if we didn't make this a priority, reading levels would fall which would make our Great Books Courses difficult. Your partnership has made this possible. **Overall, our students have done well, maintaining their studies and, even more importantly, maintaining their love for learning what is true, good, and beautiful.**

Thank you for your feedback through the parent survey on COVID-19 protocol for 2021-22. You shared an overwhelming desire for us to return to normalcy in August and to continue to remain data driven in our decisions. As we move forward to 2021-22, we will continue to be committed to data driven responses. **COVID-19 is by no means over, but the data supports a change in our protocols.** This data isn't limited to our COVID-19 count, it's also important in considering student success. We were designed for embodied learning. Students need to be in the classroom, on the playground and see teacher's faces to learn effectively. For this reason, **masks will be optional for all members of our community unless the data demands unified mitigation of the spread of COVID-19.** At that time, we will consider what protocols we will need to follow as we move forward.

In August, we will resume normal seating arrangements if the data continues to show that this is working. We will resume normal locations for activities if the data supports this. And parents will once again be a normal part of our campus activities. Educational research data supports these decisions as paramount to student success. Covenant is about partnering as a community to serve Christ and His Kingdom so that the whole child is equipped to learn to follow Christ. Body. Soul. Mind. May God continue to bless our school and our city for the sake of His Kingdom.

Grace and peace,

**Leslie Collins**

Head of School