

Emmaus Christian prepares students to excel, both in school and beyond

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By Tim Welch

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Located in the community of Cornelius, Emmaus Christian School is just a short distance from Forest Grove and Hillsboro. Emmaus offers programs for children that are in preschool through eighth grade. The school's modern buildings were completed in 2000 and rest on seven acres of generous playground and field space for student activities.

Emmaus believes that a great education is a combination of imparting knowledge, illuminating a child's spirit, and - as they mature - helping children to see beyond their own needs and wants to become caring, supportive members of their community.

All schools will teach your children facts. Emmaus Christian School's caring teachers go beyond the "whos and whats" and help your children understand the "whys" behind historic decisions and actions, behind the numbers and operations of math and behind the rules and forms of writing. Emmaus teachers, who shepherd our students from the youngest tads to our middle school pre-teens, believe that making learning personal reinforces the lessons and helps children learn to think on their own, ultimately preparing them for high school and beyond. In fact, Emmaus students consistently score 20-30 percent above national norms.

Additionally, Emmaus encourages a spiritual dimension to education. An emphasis on learning Biblical truth and applying it to everyday living is considered key to each child's development. Emmaus teachers model God's love through Bible lessons and their actions, helping students to honor God and each other through faith, honesty and respect.

Students are provided opportunities to serve within their community and to understand the importance of personal sacrifice to help others. Emmaus' students have volunteered at area nursing homes, helped flood-ravaged families recover in Vernonia, assisted the Salvation Army process donations and provided labor at local churches for improvements. Emmaus students have traveled to Japan to participate in missions trips. Emmaus parents often remark how their child was impacted by stepping out of their comfort zones and helping others in need.

Kindergarten classes are offered either all day or half-day for students. The all-day program runs during the normal school day and then extended care is offered until 5:30 p.m. Before-school care is available starting at 7:00 a.m. Half-day kindergarten is offered for families wanting a more traditional kindergarten schedule. Children are taught to read during the kindergarten year. The school uses the excellent Spalding method of teaching phonics. With both morning and afternoon classes, the preschool program offers age-appropriate learning experiences for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Emmaus elementary grades provide a graduated learning environment where each student is encouraged to achieve at a high level. Students are also provided opportunities to take art, computers and music performance.

Middle school students in grades 6 through 8, in addition to their core courses, can study Spanish and Japanese languages, as well as electives including chorus, community service, worship band, PE, drama, advanced computers, photography, art, public speaking and creative writing.

Emmaus also supports homeschool families by providing access to individual core and elective advanced classes like algebra and geometry, foreign languages, PE and sports teams.

Emmaus believes a school can be judged based on the results of its efforts and is justifiably proud of the spiritual, educational and community-minded efforts of its graduates who now excel in high school and beyond.

Tim Welch is principal of Emmaus Christian School.