

The Oregon Model

Aspirations for the Journey

A vision for our students in Adventist Education developed collaboratively with the principals of the Oregon Conference and the Oregon Conference Department of Education.

1. Christ-Centered Culture

- Worthiness, Belonging & Purpose
- Relationship with Jesus
- Self-Care: Mind, Body & Spirit
- Care for Others
- Knowing, Loving, Sharing & Serving Jesus and Others

2. Restoring Relationships through Positive Choice

- Respect
- Responsive Care
- Restorative Conflict Resolution
- Redemptive Discipline
- Purposeful Student Mentorship

3. Maximizing Individual Potential

- Body Brain Balance
- Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creativity
- Project-based Learning
- Personalized Learning
- Building Service Leaders

Three Core Aspiration

Each student is of infinite value as an exclusively created child of God with strengths to be developed for their designed purpose. The educational leaders of the Oregon Conference are dedicated to an educational ethos that fosters holistic student growth and development. To this end, we commit to implementing goals in three areas: Christ-Centered Culture, Positive Choice & Restorative Relationships, and Maximizing Individual Potential.

Aspiration 1: Christ-Centered Culture

Worthiness, Belonging, & Purpose

Students are introduced to God as the One who planned for them since the beginning of time, who designed each of them uniquely in His own image, and who loves them so much that He gave His only Son so that He could live forever with us in a brand new world. Students know that they are loved and accepted as they are within this great Love. Every part of the school program emphasizes this great Love so that students can recognize their value, feel their worthiness, understand their belonging as children and heirs, and discover their strengths and purpose within God's plan.

An understanding of the price that Jesus paid to buy them back when He died on the cross for them deepens the student's picture of the worth that God has placed on them. They accept themselves as being who God has made them to be and are content with the skills and strengths that He has given them. As a result, students use their gifts from God to lift up others instead of striving to prove themselves or spending time comparing themselves. They come to realize that God's love for them is unconditional and is not based on their behavior but rather on who He is. Experiencing God's embrace of them just as they are fills them with a great sense of peace and belonging.

Feeling freed from the power and baggage of sin, their lives are filled with meaning. Students are clear about whose they are and receive the support of those around them to flourish in their strengths. They spend their days pursuing the passions that God has placed deep within their hearts. Knowing their worthiness and belonging, they pursue their purpose.

Flanagan, K. S. (2017). *Loveable: Embracing what is truest about you, so you can truly embrace your life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Relationship with Jesus

As students grow in their understanding of God's great love for them in first creating them and then redeeming them, their natural response becomes a desire for a continually deepening friendship with Jesus. They take time daily to read His Word, pray, and meditate on what He has done for them. They choose to place themselves where Christ is being uplifted. As a response to Jesus' love for them, they come to love Him so much that they begin reflecting Him and can't resist sharing His love with others. This leads them to devote their life to Jesus and they choose to be baptized as a public expression of that decision.

They develop a prayer life as the means to praise God for His goodness, to ask forgiveness for their sin, to talk to Jesus as a friend, and to make requests for the intervention of the Holy Spirit in their lives. As students see evidence that God exists and is working in their lives, belief is followed by learning to trust

that God has only their best interest at heart. They stay connected to Him as they realize that it is Jesus living in them who works out His great purpose in them. They know that their salvation is based solely on Jesus' sacrifice for them and they lean into His Spirit for guidance and leadership in the decisions that they make in life.

Self-Care: Mind, Body, & Spirit

As students grow to understand their worth and belonging in Christ, they desire to take care of themselves spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially as a whole being. They make positive choices that will lead them to have optimum health to live life to the fullest. Students learn that caring for their spirit has a greater impact on outcomes in their lives than anything else they do. They develop habits that welcome His Spirit in them, and that savor the peace and confidence of resting in Jesus. Students preserve and increase their fitness through daily physical activity, and develop a physically active lifestyle. They make healthy choices about what goes into their bodies and protect their bodies from harmful risks. Students think positively about the future and understand that their daily choices influence their own well-being. They take responsibility to grow their mental capacity and to become creators and thinkers, and not merely reflectors. Students develop understanding of their emotions, how to express them, and how to self-regulate their responses. Students understand that they are not an island and that everything they do can have a profound and ongoing effect on others. They develop skills for social interaction and learn to not only work cooperatively with others, but lean into others for their greatest successes.

Care for Others

As students develop their purpose, they begin to see how Jesus gave us each other to care for. They understand that they are the hands and feet of Jesus, and what we do with our love is what we do for Jesus. Students are given the responsibility of becoming love to those around them. They allow the power of Love to live through them to lift others up. Students overcome their fear of differences or of feeling less than or greater than as they reach out to classmates who are learning their worthiness in Christ. Students accept that others will make mistakes just as they do, readily forgive as they expect forgiveness, and guard their dignity by protecting them from shaming and ridicule. Students care for others by weaving grace through all of their conversations, reaching out a helping hand, and using the strengths God gave them to enrich their lives.

Goff, B. (2018). *Everybody always: Becoming love in a world full of setbacks and difficult people: Study guide*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

Knowing, Loving, Sharing & Serving Jesus and Others

As their relationship with Jesus grows, students recognize that the church has been designed by God as a place where they can grow in their knowledge of Him, be strengthened by other believers, and develop their ability to share Jesus with others. Communal prayer and worship become valuable to them. Beyond attendance, students become involved in the church program by personally leading out in areas of their strengths. Leadership skills in all areas such as coordinating, speaking, and leading out in worship and music are developed in students. Students learn of the unique mission that God has given them to share His love and they eagerly become part of that mission. Students are given opportunities

to share their faith in their family, church, school and community. They do this by sharing their own faith story of what God has done in and for them.

The more students soak in the love that Christ has for them, the more they become loving and caring towards other people. They seek out opportunities to share with others what Jesus has done for them. Beyond sharing their faith, they look for opportunities to help and serve others with needs. The students' empathy for people who express different religious, political, physical, or socio-emotional perspectives leads them to want to help all people. They have a desire to safeguard human welfare wherever they find a need, which gives them both a local and global sense of mission. They become outward focused rather than inward and true selflessness develops. Rather than being focused on materialism, they become generous donors of what they have to benefit those in need. Students advocate social and political changes that benefit those who suffer from deprivation or inequality. They look to their church to also be involved in promoting such change. They love the world that God created for them and are active in efforts to protect the environment to benefit all peoples of the earth. Their gratitude for what God has given them and their understanding of the love that Jesus has for all mankind leads students to do whatever they can, wherever they are, to help others.

Moskala, J. (2018). The church school: Where churches and schools collaborate in mission. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 80(2), 4-8.

Aspiration 2: Restoring Relationships through Positive Choice

Respect

As a school system we acknowledge that the only way to follow Christ's challenge to love our fellow man and live peacefully with each other is to appreciate that all people are uniquely created in God's image and worthy of respect. This forms the basis of all relational interactions that occur within our schools, is actively modeled by the adults entrusted with guiding the educational process, and provides the framework for all efforts at conflict resolution.

Students learn that each one of us possesses pictures and ideas in our own minds of what a perfect world could or should be, and that our natural inclination is to direct our energies toward aligning our perceived world as much as possible with our perfect world. They actively seek to ensure in their quest for this personal sense of alignment that they are not consciously or unconsciously creating conflict in others' pursuit of alignment for themselves by engaging in mindfulness activities that foster self-reflection and self-awareness.

As their understanding of each person's God-given individuality and unique perspective of the world grows, students strive to learn as much as possible about other cultures for the purpose of breaking down the cultural assumptions and stereotypes that society creates and becoming more culturally responsive individuals. Students learn that language, customs, styles of dress, etc. are sources of pride and worthy of respect.

The recognition that those who live on the periphery of the community are often there not by choice but because of misunderstandings and misperceptions leads students to take a bold stand for marginalized peoples. They choose to become allies and, if necessary, bridges for the marginalized to achieve the standing and understanding within the community that they desire. Students realize that marginalization and bullying go hand-in-hand, and actively seek to identify and eliminate the root causes of bullying by engaging in restorative conflict resolution.

Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory in the classroom*. HarperCollins Publishers.

Glasser, W. (1992). *The quality school*. HarperCollins Publishers.

Responsive Care

Teachers and students respond to individuals as whole persons, practicing empathy and reserving judgement. They take into account past events and the resulting coping mechanisms that develop over time when attempting to understand others' actions and behaviors. They are aware of the range of unexpected potential reactions they might receive from others and consider that before responding. Adults and students in the school setting refrain from using dismissive statements and invest in each other more deeply for a broader understanding. Students who are immersed in an environment of responsive care learn to practice responsive care with others.

Restorative Conflict Resolution

Truly restorative results in conflict resolution are only achieved when it is understood that there is more to a conflict than the behaviors exhibited by those involved. Each party to the conflict comes as a whole

being. Conflict resolution that does not address the physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual elements of the individual will not have long-term success.

Students learn the language and behaviors necessary to de-escalate conflict, and guard against the intrusion of personal biases as they seek to understand the underlying contributing factors to conflict. Students recognize that true collaboration within the group will create the clearest path forward to restore involved parties into healthy relationship with each other and the rest of the group.

Smith, D., Fisher, D., Frey, N. (2015). *Better Than Carrots or Sticks: Restorative Practices for Positive Classroom Management*. ASCD.

Redemptive Discipline

Students learn how to ethically reflect on their actions. They experience grace, and are provided the opportunity to stand up for what is true, just, good, and beautiful. They are active participants in addressing and resolving conflict and develop a deeper empathy and love for others through being shown a broad range of perspectives. They understand that leaders strive to act compassionately and demonstrate a humble respect for others and the environment that others own.

Cone, Jesse A. (1998). Discipline for discipleship. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 61(01), 42-46.

Taylor V, J. W. (2011). Trial or trail? The path to redemptive discipline. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 73(3), 4-13.

Purposeful student mentorship

Mentoring, at its core, assures students that there is someone who cares about them, gives them hope as they deal with day-to-day challenges, and makes them feel that they matter. It provides students with avenues to access social and economic opportunity, attain personal and spiritual growth and development, and richly impact their families and communities. The development of positive qualities of character and decision-making within students fosters a desire to help others attain similarly positive qualities. Students participate in well-thought-out leadership activities and programs at the classroom, school, church, and conference level designed to identify leadership potential and develop it in ways that benefit both the individual student and the community at large.

Aspiration 3: Maximizing Individual Potential

God created each student with immeasurable value and limitless potential, and it is His desire that the student's best interest be given paramount consideration to holistically grow and maximize them to their fullest. Every support entity (home, school, church, and community) works collaboratively to provide encouragement and individual support for each student to be heard and valued. Every support entity works collaboratively to provide opportunities for each student to be a meaningful and impactful member of their community. The school staff is large-hearted and broad-minded as they empower students to recognize the values and attitudes of living a life fully alive in Jesus.

Students are viewed as active leaders of their own education with a learning climate that offers them possibilities for versatile development of their competence and reinforces their positive identity and strengths. Students learn to set goals and to solve problems both independently and together with others and learn to encounter pressures for change openly, to assess them critically, and to assume responsibility for making choices that build their future.

Physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual processes are inseparable for a student's success in learning. Acquiring new knowledge and skills demands multiple avenues personalized to student's needs and a reflection of their own learning, experiences, and emotions. The joy of learning and creative inquiries that promote learning and inspire mastery are at the center of academic excellence.

Body Brain Balance

Physical exercise and activity facilitate the brain's readiness and ability to learn and retain information. Students are provided adequate processing time for individual growth through body movement and aerobic activity. Students engaged in learning are immersed in body and spirit. Students are provided a variety of choices in the classroom and school so that they do not spend the majority of their day sitting. Students view physical activity as a benefit to their ability to learn and grow as an individual.

Ratey, John J. (2008). *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*. Little Brown.

Jensen, Eric. (2013). *Turnaround Tools for the Teenage Brain*. Jossey-Bass.

The 4 C's: Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creativity

Continuous and varied opportunities are provided for students to successfully communicate their own thoughts and ideas in many different ways. Essentials of polite conversation such as making introductions and carrying on a stimulating dialog, learning to listen thoughtfully before responding, and recognizing the advantages of inquisitive interactions are foundational to growing good communicators and are intentionally built into the learning process. Competent skills for versatile and competent use of language and expression are mastered through intentional instruction and practice. By embedding in their academic products many opportunities to present and perform publicly in various situations, students gain ample practice to express their thoughts and opinions constructively and eloquently.

Critical thinking skills allows for students to develop strategies and cultivate insight to understand and resolve complex issues. Outcomes resulting from the integration of critical thinking into learning processes provide students the ability to have a higher level of concentration, deeper analytical abilities,

and improved thought processing. Students use content independently and collaboratively for problem-solving, debate, reasoning, and ingenuity. Analyzing topics and discussing critically from various points of view builds innovative answers, open-mindedness, and ability to think using multiple perspectives. Many layers of critical thinking are intentionally included in all forms of academic pursuit.

Valuing individual contributions and practicing empathy while collaborating with diverse teams is key to student success in a global economy. Students discover the joy of working together while learning that collective effort produces smarter and better outcomes than any intelligent individual. Collaboration creates more holistic results and generates more knowledge. Collaboration brings multiple perspectives that benefit individual growth. Students practice collaboration during their learning with sister-schools within the conference and around the world. Projects are developed collaboratively between the church, school, and student for learning and service to the community.

Creativity and innovation are driving forces in today's global economy. Students must be creators, pattern recognizers, and meaning makers. Students are encouraged to use their imagination through creative means to express their emotions, views, thoughts, and ideas. Elaboration, refinement, and analytical skills are used to evaluate original ideas that improve and maximize creative efforts. Students demonstrate originality and inventiveness in their work and are provided opportunities to implement their innovations. Failure is viewed as an opportunity to learn, understanding that creativity and innovation are part of a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.

National Education Association (2010). Preparing 21st century students for a global society: an educator's guide to the "four c's". Retrieved from <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/A-Guide-to-Four-Cs.pdf>

Project-based Learning

Thinking and learning to learn is driven by how students see themselves as learners and how they interact with their learning environment. Learning to make observations and to seek, evaluate, edit, produce and share information and ideas is essential. Teachers as facilitators and mentors encourage students to initiate, question, listen, and search and in turn students are supported and encouraged to pursue their ideas and initiatives in content areas with an intentional focus on Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math for the purpose of Service (STREAMS). Students take part in planning, implementing, assessing and evaluating their own learning, while also learning time and project management skills. Students practice flexibility and adaptability as their project develops. They learn to anticipate difficulties, face failure and disappointment with hope, and demonstrate tenacity and appreciation for the work of creating and completing a project.

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Personalized Learning

Students are provided circumstances for learning based on our cultural belief in the unique design of every child. Because every brain is created differently, every student sees, learns, and performs differently. Planning, implementing, assessing, and communicating specific plans for each student becomes necessary to maximize each individual potential. Understanding the strengths, abilities, and aptitudes for each student begins the process of an individual plan where the student becomes the leader of their learning. Creating learning goals, tracking content standards, and reflecting and self-

assessing are all important pieces for students to individualize their learning. Developing time management, initiative, and follow-through as they reflect on who they are and who they are becoming within God's ideal are all essential components of their development skills. Communicating progress toward learning goals is no longer based on letters and numbers, but on a reflection of standards and skills.

Personalizing content and skills allows students to advance based on their ability to master a skill or competency at their own pace regardless of environment. Competency-based learning meets different learning abilities and leads to greater student success. Learning standards are constant, but time and placement becomes variable, equalizing opportunity to achieve successful mastery and establish meaningfulness. Instead of facing masses of endless information, students are provided opportunity to master foundational skills and become competent in power standards and areas of interest. Not all students are expected to achieve all learning standards, but students are provided as many opportunities as necessary to maximize their personal best. Competency-based learning provides iteration as a necessary part of work life. When a student achieves success, their confidence builds, and their motivation improves. Students learn perseverance, belief in their strengths, and that failure is a natural part of living abundantly.

White, E. G., & White, E. G. (2000). *True education: Adaptation of education by Ellen G. White*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Association.

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Building Service Leaders

Community-connected projects provide authentic working experience necessary to build service leaders. Understanding the importance of work and enterprising, the potential of entrepreneurship and their personal responsibility as members of their community, students practice working collaboratively and independently. Students are connected to businesses and industries so that real- world connections are made with their learning. They are provided key mentors in their local area as well as globally that enhance their content studies and projects. Students view work as a service to humanity. Exposure to many vocational ideas broadens the way a student thinks and plants seeds for students' hopes and dreams of how they can best participate in lifting up their community now and in the future.