

Foundations #3

Reflecting on God's provision for SWCS

By 1995, with the completion of the secondary building (current middle school), Southwest Covenant had finally become what its founders had envisioned—a full preK–12th grade school on one campus. Just one year later, in 1996, three students walked across the stage as the school's very first graduating class. In the years that followed, graduating classes would typically number between twelve and twenty students, each class adding to the story that was just beginning to unfold.



Enrollment rose and fell over time, but the mission remained steady. Southwest Covenant quietly began to establish itself within Christian education across Oklahoma. One thing never wavered: a deep commitment to a Biblical worldview as the foundation for everything.

The school board provided great leadership for this new high school and financial stability to the entire school. Most importantly were the teachers, men and women who felt called not just to educate, but to invest in students' lives. The strong academic foundation already established in the elementary years, carried into the high school. Secondary choir and band programs gave students new ways to express their talents and enrich school life. There were challenges, of course—every growing program had them but there was also momentum, and a great faculty.

Among so many outstanding Christian educators, three such are still honored today through awards bearing their names. Karen Woodward (Elementary Teacher of the Year Award) spent thirty years teaching second grade, shaping countless young learners and shepherding fellow teachers. Faith Braswell (Secondary Teacher of the Year Award), a sixth-grade teacher, set a powerful example of what it meant to blend academic rigor with a Biblical worldview, leaving a standard that continues to guide secondary teachers today. And then there was Don White—a coach, teacher, and mentor. He could be tough, but students always knew where they stood with him—and more importantly, that he cared. For over twenty years, he poured into students' lives, leaving a legacy strong enough that both an athletic service award and a senior scholarship now bear his name. When he passed away in 2015, that legacy was already deeply woven into the fabric of the school.

Athletics, too, told a story of humble beginnings. Competing in OCSAA gave students the chance to face other Christian schools, but resources were limited. There were no buses, no home field, and a very small gymnasium. What the school lacked in infrastructure, it made up for in community. Parents stepped in—driving athletes to games, supporting teams, and helping sustain the program in very practical ways.

In 1995, athletic director Roger Zuniga started an eight-man football program. Practices were held on church property just south of the oval entrance, and “home” games were anything but—played at borrowed fields and away locations for the first ten years. The Patriots would not get a home field until 2005 (see Foundations #4), and would compete in eight-man for thirty years. Alongside football, volleyball and basketball became mainstays, while other sports came and went depending on interest and resources.

What had once been just a vision was beginning to thrive. Southwest Covenant was becoming a place where students could grow from their earliest years through graduation, grounded in faith and prepared for what lay ahead. For Christian families in the Yukon area, it was becoming something more than a school; it was a community, and a story still being written.