

Foundations #4

Reflecting on God's provision for SWCS

The first decade of the new millennium became one of the most significant seasons in the history of Southwest Covenant through a strengthened partnership with Covenant Community Church and renewed commitment to Biblical truth.

As Southwest Covenant considered its future, questions emerged about the school's long-term connection to the church and the role of spiritual authority. Some believed the school should relocate from the church campus, while others questioned whether spiritual oversight from the church was even necessary.

Despite differing perspectives, both ministries remained committed to seeking God's direction above personal preference. To help guide the process, a ministry from Colorado Springs called Peacemakers was invited to provide biblical consultation and mediation.

Those who served on the church and school boards during that season witnessed a depth of reconciliation and clarity that could not have been accomplished through human effort alone. Through that process, both ministries gained a renewed understanding of the blessing and protection found in the school remaining under the spiritual authority of Covenant Community Church. That commitment has since become one of the defining strengths of SWCS.

A few weeks ago, I stood outside the gates of Harvard University, where remnants of the school's original motto can still be found: "Truth, Christ and the Church." Harvard began with a deeply Christian mission, yet over time that foundation eroded. History shows how quickly institutions can drift when shaped primarily by cultural pressures or the vision of a single influential leader.

Southwest Covenant's structure provides an important safeguard against that drift. No individual or isolated group can redirect the mission of the school apart from biblical accountability and spiritual oversight.

At the same time, Covenant Community Church has consistently understood the distinction between spiritual authority and operational control. The church has allowed the school to operate independently while still providing spiritual leadership, encouragement, support, and protection.

While the church's spiritual leadership has been foundational, its practical support over the past forty-five years has also been immeasurable. The daily use of church buildings and parking lots, along with the provision of land and campus space, has enabled SWCS to flourish.

Over the years, accreditation teams from Christian Schools International have repeatedly commended the strength of our board, and the relationship between the church and school. I have met many Christian school leaders who wish their schools had meaningful spiritual accountability, while others describe churches becoming too involved in daily management.

The Peacemakers consultation also helped shape the governance structure that remains in place today. A church elder serves on the school board, a church pastor participates as a non-voting member, and the church elder board approves new board members and the hiring of the Head of School. As I often say, "The church does not want to run the school, but it does want to ensure that Bible-believing Christians are leading the school."

In later years, when the church conveyed land and buildings on the north side of campus to the school, a long-standing practice was formally clarified: a majority of school board members were to be members of Covenant Community Church, providing further assurance that SWCS would remain firmly committed to its biblical mission for generations to come.

By God's grace Southwest Covenant continues to experience the blessing of both operational independence and faithful spiritual accountability.

