

Foundations #6

Reflecting on God's Provision for SWCS

There are many words that might describe the last 13 years at Southwest Covenant, but **growth** seems to define this time period well. SWCS experienced growth through a significant increase in student population and through the hiring of teachers, staff, and new administrators. That growth also necessitated new buildings and facilities. Spiritual growth has certainly not been the least of the ways God has manifested Himself. We have experienced great joys and successes, and we have experienced great losses and tragedies. Through each of these, our Lord has walked with us, giving guidance and wisdom to our school board and administration. He has sustained us through the most difficult times and drawn us closer to Him. The following is a broad look at God's faithfulness during our time of growth at SWCS.

Mr. Steve Lessman was hired as the new Head of School in 2013. He would lead us through the next 13 years of expansion. For the Harvest began as the elementary school was physically growing beyond the walls of Covenant Community Church. By December 2015, the new elementary school was completed, and Mrs. Amy Holley became the new Elementary principal. She and her teachers used their Christmas break to prepare to welcome students back in January 2016. By 2017, all elementary grades had doubled, and this could only mean one thing: the secondary school had to expand as well. The Big Vision campaign began with the goal of building a campus to accommodate grades 9–12, along with a large, state-of-the-art gymnasium. Ground was broken quickly; however, there were setbacks due to COVID that slowed the process. In February 2022, the doors opened to the new high school. In addition to the new high school, multiple improvements were made to the middle school. Clay Henderson joined SWCS as the middle school principal and led our first 8th-grade Washington, D.C., trip in the spring of 2023.

The growth of SWCS brought opportunities for our students to pursue their gifts through art, drama, music, STEM, and athletics, while also advancing our academic program with advanced math and science courses. We also expanded to two sections in every secondary grade. OSSAA informed us that we were large enough to move to 11-man football. The No Place Like Home campaign provided a beautiful 100-yard field and stadium for our Patriots. That campaign continues, as the current goal is to provide new fine arts classrooms and a new baseball field. God's goodness, along with the faithfulness of those contributing to these campaigns, has allowed SWCS to grow to a current enrollment of 560 students.

While God has given us great successes and advancements over the past 13 years, we have also experienced great tragedy and deep sorrow. In 2015, Don White, a beloved teacher and coach, passed away. We have also lost five young men who are still remembered by their friends and teachers: Avery Pittman (2016), Luke Ross and Sean Tucker (2017), Peter Webb (2019), and Aiden Aldridge (2024). We grieved together as we leaned into the Lord's arms to carry us through those difficult times. We also dealt with a loss of trust in 2025 that left us stunned and seeking wisdom. Once again, the Lord showed His faithfulness and provision. Mr. Clay Henderson moved into the High School principal position, Mr. Grant Potter was hired as the Middle School principal, and a new administrative position was added when Dr. Dana Darby was hired as Associate Head of School. She continues to serve as Interim Head of School while the school board leads the search for Mr. Steve Lessman's replacement.

While this is certainly a broad overview of the past 13 years, and many details are undoubtedly missing, our hope is that as you read, you too will reflect on God's faithfulness in the past and His continued goodness as we move into the 2026–27 school year. Our story has been one of growth, not simply in numbers or facilities, but in our knowledge of and dependence on God. All Glory to Him!

Written by Cathie Houts