



Questions and Answers Concerning the Departure of Vicki Vaughn

We understand that Mrs. Vicki Vaughn's departure as Principal of Bethesda Christian School was unexpected to many. And, we understand that communication to our community about Mrs. Vaughn's employment omitted details, which contributed to confusion within our community. Our efforts were always in good faith, and we went to great lengths to protect Mrs. Vaughn as well as the best interest of BCS. Those efforts may have caused a lack of clarity or understanding within our stakeholder community, and for that, we are truly sorry and ask for your understanding and forgiveness.

The following is a compilation of some of the most frequently asked questions and corresponding answers in an effort to provide clarity and transparency surrounding this sensitive and difficult situation.

While we expect that emotions are varied, we ask above all else that you continue to pray for our administration, faculty, staff and students as they fix their eyes upon Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith and move forward from this moment, trusting His grace to cover us all ... for the glory of the name of Jesus. We also ask for you to earnestly pray for Mrs. Vaughn during this time.

1. Did the decision to end the employment of Mrs. Vaughn immediately after the school year started have anything to do with ensuring enrollment numbers?

No, absolutely not.

In April of 2018, Pastor Dan communicated with the BCS community that the church had no plans to be without Principal Vaughn for the 2018-2019 school year. Indeed, BCS and BCC were confident moving forward. Over time, however, that confidence faded. Ultimately, BCS and Mrs. Vaughn were not able to arrive at an amicable and workable solution. Be assured, the decision was not done in a vacuum, nor with haste, but with prayerful consideration.

2. Is this decision to end Mrs. Vaughn's employment with BCS a power play by the church leadership?

The decision to end Mrs. Vaughn's employment with BCS was a decision reached by both the School and Church Boards separately after motions were brought before the Boards, seconded, discussed and voted on by each Board. The Church Board voted unanimously to end her employment with the school and the school board voted nine to three to end her professional relationship with the school.

3. Has there been a mass exodus of teachers from BCS?

No. At this point, two staff members have submitted a resignation due to the separation between the school and Mrs. Vaughn. Any staff vacancies will be managed and filled with quality professionals in accordance with standard BCS protocol and ACSI standards.

4. Is BCS's accreditation with ACSI in jeopardy of being lost because of the separation between the school and Mrs. Vaughn?

BCS is fully accredited by ACSI and is currently staffed and run by credentialed Christian educators who are fully certified by the Association. BCS is a member in good standing of ACSI and is approaching its regular five-year evaluation and recertification process. A change in administration does not jeopardize this process. Additionally, ACSI has a protocol in place that will extend our certification process until a new Principal is in place and has had adequate time to assimilate into the education program.

5. What is the relationship between the church and school?

Bethesda Christian School was founded as a ministry and critical part of Bethesda Community Church in 1980. To this day, the church continues to support this ministry, providing Bethesda Christian School sizeable financial support annually, which allows affordable tuition for our families.

Governmentally, our church is pastor-led, with a Board of Deacons serving in a role of oversight and service to our congregation and educational branches. Our Senior Pastor, who has served our congregation for over 40 years, is accountable to the Lord and to the Board of Deacons. Additionally, there are pastors and leaders outside of Bethesda to whom Pastor Dan is accountable.

The School has a Board, which, as a ministry of the church, is accountable to and under the authority of our Church Board. The position of Chief Administrator and Principal of BCS is under the authority of our Senior Pastor, Church Board, and School Board.

This authority structure has been in place from the beginning of the school in 1980 and is detailed in our Constitution and By-Laws, the governing documents of our church.

The leadership of Bethesda is committed to a shared and collaborative relationship as a church and school family, one body of Christ focused on educating children acting as engaged supporters of the spiritual formation of its students with our prayer that all students leave this campus loving Jesus more than when they started here.

6. Who is Freda Chadwick, Interim Principal of Bethesda Christian School?

Mrs. Freda Chadwick is a highly qualified and dearly loved academic leader who previously served as Vice Principal of Bethesda Christian School for 26 years. Prior to serving at BCS, she spent twelve years as an administrator in West Virginia. She holds a B.A. in Mathematics and an M.A. in Education from Marshall University, as well as an Administrator's Certificate.

7. Why was leadership not clear in their communications?

We confess to communication challenges regarding the announcement of the departure of Mrs. Vaughn. It was our intention to provide as much information as we could, while respecting Mrs. Vaughn and our leadership teams. Our goal was to communicate to our community in a way that informed and respected our community and leadership obligations. If we failed in this, we are truly sorry and ask your forgiveness.

While we cannot share all details related to a private personnel matter, it is our desire to provide clarity, when possible, and communicate with transparency.

8. Can you please clarify what students were told in regard to Mrs. Vaughn's departure?

High school students gathered in the Youth Hall at 8 a.m. on Tuesday morning for a meeting regarding Mrs. Vaughn's employment status. Students heard first from Kym Bergstrom, our church Board Chairman, next from Mike Mattocks, school and church Board member, and finally from Pastor Dan. The same statement that parents received in the Tuesday morning email was read in its entirety to the students. Students were told "Mrs. Vaughn was completing her tenure here as Chief Administrator and Principal of Bethesda Christian School."

Unfortunately, there was confusion among students, and we believe two things contributed to this. First, there was some misunderstanding regarding the word "tenure." Secondly, students were called to a meeting that was conducted outside of their normal routine. Once we realized students were confused, BCS leaders returned to each classroom to clarify the situation, consistent with the statement that was read.

9. Why were comments removed on the BCS Facebook social media page?

We allowed comments on our original social media post about Mrs. Vaughn's departure; however, as time passed on Tuesday, we realized various comments were becoming hateful and vitriolic in tone. We, therefore, made the decision to remove all comments. We have since posted a clear Facebook comment policy, and we will remove comments that violate this policy.

10. Was it a necessary step to shut off her school email account?

It is a normal business practice to end an employee's access to electronic systems once a person is separated from an organization or business. BCS followed standard personnel policies and protocol in regard to these business practices.

11. Why was she escorted out of the building by an armed security guard?

Please know that Mrs. Vaughn presented no threat to BCS or any student or staff member. Standard personnel policies and protocol were followed during each step of the separation process. It is a personnel practice to use security when escorting someone through a separation process. Two board members accompanied Mrs. Vaughn and her husband through the exit steps.

12. What are the plans for hiring a new principal?

At this time, we are beginning the search process to find a qualified, discerning and Godly leader for our beloved Bethesda Christian School to fulfill our vision for the future. Understanding this will be a year of transition, we are committed to keeping you abreast through emails and announcements as this search progresses.

13. What is the vision and plan for the school going forward?

Since its founding as a ministry and critical part of Bethesda Community Church in 1980, the goal of Bethesda Christian School has always been to provide a quality Christ-centered education preparing students for their God-given purposes. Our church and school leadership has remained committed to this mission and shared vision for nearly 40 years, assisting thousands of students in increasing in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man.

As stewards and partners in your children's academic and spiritual formation, we are consistently looking for ways to enhance every student's education and experience at Bethesda Christian School. Part of this responsibility includes implementing a positive and affirming multi-track educational program, which, while maintaining our current level of rigorous academic excellence, will separately provide a path of educational success for those needing other methods of academic development. We believe this is an integral part of the Bethesda Christian School and church community and should be available to those children and families at different academic levels and stages of academic development willing to work in order to graduate every student who attends.

Additionally, we seek to be a community full of grace and truth and have incorporated a redemptive discipline policy to aid in our effort to develop both the heart and mind of each student striving to heal and restore a child through the love and redemptive forgiveness God shows all of us. All of this comes with the understanding that the academic integrity and Godly character for which our school stands will not be compromised. We continue to see tremendous growth for our school, staff and

students, both academically and personally, and look forward to God's constant favor on our school.

14. Is the new vision and plan for the academic direction of the school to “dumb down” our curriculum to accommodate children who cannot handle BCS’s challenging curriculum?

No, absolutely not.

As stewards, partners, and stakeholders in your child's academic and spiritual formation, we never stop looking for ways to enhance every student's education and experience at BCS. This endeavor now includes the implementation of a positive and affirming multi-track educational program, which, while fully maintaining our current level of uncompromised academic rigor, will also provide a path of educational success for those needing other methods of academic development. It is our desire to offer quality education to every student willing to work to his or her maximum potential and to graduate every student who discovers our fine school.

Additionally, we seek to be a community full of grace and truth, particularly when a student comes in need of any disciplinary measure. Inasmuch, we have incorporated a redemptive discipline policy to focus on heart transformation. Confident that the Honorable Character program has proven its redemptive effectiveness in the lower grades, our desire is to project a compatible disciplinary structure in the upper grades as needed, albeit age appropriate. This is not to be an obliteration of rules, but rather a re-examination of school rules and how they can best be administered redemptively for the benefits of our students. For more information on redemptive discipline, please visit: <http://bit.ly/bcs-philosophy-of-discipline>

These changes come with the understanding that there will be no compromise to the academic integrity and Godly character for which our school has always stood. Therefore, we continue to seek the Lord for tremendous growth of our school, staff and students, both academically and spiritually, even as we anticipate God's continuing favor upon our school.

15. Is BCS compromising its highest level of academic achievement?

Absolutely not.

The leadership of Bethesda Community Church and Bethesda Christian School are committed to offering a high level of academic education for our students. Additionally, we are consistently looking for ways to enhance our student's education and experience at Bethesda Christian School. Part of this responsibility includes implementing a positive and affirming multi-track educational program, which, while maintaining our current level of rigorous academic excellence, will separately provide a path of success to a broader group of students. We believe this is an integral part of

the Bethesda Christian School and church community and should be available to those children and families at different academic levels and stages of academic development willing to work in order to graduate every student who attends.

16. Do the combined boards of the school and church have a solid plan in place for moving forward?

For the immediate future, the broad spectrum of leadership at Bethesda has full confidence in Mrs. Freda Chadwick to lead our school. She is not only highly qualified, but she is also highly respected and dearly loved. As a member of the Bethesda community for over 26 years, Mrs. Chadwick has proven herself to be a person of wisdom, integrity, and Christlike character. There is perhaps no one greater to lead our school during this season.

Within the coming days, Bethesda leadership will begin the search process to find a highly qualified, discerning and godly leader for our beloved Christian School to fulfill our vision for the future. The lens through which we will examine potential candidates will be that of character, competence and chemistry. Knowing this will be a transition year, we are committed to keeping you abreast through emails and announcements as this search progresses and God gives grace.

17. How can I reach Mrs. Vaughn?

We know many parents, alumni, students and church members are grateful for Mrs. Vaughn's contributions over the years developing and leading our school. We understand that her departure was unexpected and regret that our communication about this to our community lacked clarity and details. For that, we apologize and ask your forgiveness.

Should you wish to write your acknowledgements of Mrs. Vaughn's service, please feel free to drop them off with Ms. Courtney Thornton in the front office. We will collect each one, while keeping your communication private, and ensure Mrs. Vaughn receives them. Or, you may reach out to Mrs. Vaughn privately.

18. Will BCS host a Town Hall meeting in order to address further concerns?

We are working diligently to listen to questions and concerns. While this remains a personnel matter and therefore not every question can be answered, this Q&A is a step in seeking to provide additional clarity and transparency. **We encourage anyone who has further questions to contact us via questions@bcsfw.org or via phone to schedule a one-on-one meeting with leadership.**

It is our desire to keep our community informed of future updates related to the search process and vision for a new leader, and as we have that information, additional updates and/or parent meetings will be scheduled.