

CENTRAL CABLE

CENTRAL MINNESOTA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

CENTRALBLUEJAYS.ORG



STRATEGIC PLANNING

This month, we are launching an initiative to develop a 5-year strategic plan. We will use research-based methods to gather feedback and identify 3–5 focus goals that reflect the needs and desires of our school community. This work will take place over the coming year and will include focus groups, a SWOT analysis, and survey feedback. We believe that God has purposes and plans for our school and that he works through the hearts and minds of his people. You can support this project by prayerfully sharing your perspective on what you believe is the best direction for our school as we navigate the next chapter.

Don't we already have a plan? To be sure, the Board and leadership team are continually considering the future of the school and evaluating our programs and processes. We have academic goals, discipleship goals, and financial goals, but we are seeking greater cohesion through a unified strategic plan. Our spirit of “Being Transformed” assumes continued growth and improvement. The Board is also in the process of refining our key performance indicators (KPIs). Using the Word of God as our foundation, the vision and mission of the school as our destination, our accreditation agencies as guardrails, and constituency feedback as our dashboard indicators, we will faithfully forge ahead.

I have heard concerns such as, “Does my voice even matter?” or “Aren’t you going to do your own thing anyway?” We have done a lot of work as a school community, and we are not interested in abandoning that work simply in pursuit of novel initiatives. We believe God will affirm much of what we have been doing as confirmation to continue, but we also welcome course corrections or adjustments that will help us better execute our mission and reach our vision. Because our resources, time, talents, and treasures are limited, the strategic plan will ultimately ask: *God, what do you want us to prioritize, and where do you want us to place our energy in this season?*

Jon De Groot, Superintendent



KNOWN PERSONALLY



DISCIPLED INTENTIONALLY



CHALLENGED ACADEMICALLY

STUDENT DISCIPLESHIP

"...These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also..." Acts 17:6

ELEMENTARY UPDATE:

Grace and love were a big part of our discussions in elementary chapel and small groups this month. In chapel, we read 1 Peter 4:8-11, where Peter calls the believers to love one another and show grace to others in the ways God has called each one to. A group of students helped display for us what it looks like, practically, to build a community or kingdom from the world's perspective and in God's "upside down" perspective. In small groups, we read some more verses to dig a little deeper into the meaning of grace and love and worked through practical examples of what it looks like to show these qualities.

There are some exciting events coming up in October! We look forward to welcoming area pastors to participate in an elementary chapel, hearing a special presentation by speaker Luke Winger, gathering for our first Flock day of the year, and celebrating the Reformation to close out the month. We appreciate your prayers that all of us will seek to build communities of grace and love!

— *Mrs. Becky Berry, Academic Support Coordinator & Elementary Student Discipleship Coordinator*



Elementary students displaying what it looks like to build a kingdom in God's perspective.



Students gathered together for See You at the Pole.

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE:

What a great month of faith formation for the students: chapels, retreats, See You at the Pole, and a podcast recording. The month was full! Landon Groen started us off this month with a motivating testimony talking about his mission trip to New Zealand. He encouraged us to think about God's heart for the world and consider if we are called to be "goers" (going out into the world to share the good news) or "senders" (supporting and encouraging those called to go).

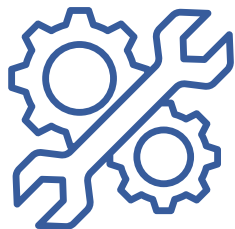
Then the students were blessed with the opportunity to spend some time away at the middle school and high school retreats. Both retreats were an uplifting time of fun, worship, and being fed on the Word by our speakers: Todd Henker (middle school) and Case Mulder (high school).

Another chapel was led by Tony Krossman, who spoke on how we are the 'salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world' based on Matthew 5:13-16. He encouraged the students to live their faith right now where they are, notice the people around them who need hope, and be careful what they say so that it reflects Christ in them. He shared that you don't have to know everything to share Jesus, you just have to be willing to let your light shine.

See You at the Pole brought the students together in a time of worship and prayer. We prayed over our school, community, state, nation, and the broader church family.

We ended the month with a special chapel; Evan TeBrake, president of Truck Transport, recorded an episode of his podcast, Chapter 23, right here in the Central Event Center. Evan interviewed Jordan Smith, who shared his testimony of all the ways God showed up to direct his path. He encouraged the students not to be afraid to be bold in their faith and to plant seeds, and then God may send others to water and grow them.

— *Mrs. Katy Vogel, Faith Formation Coordinator*



HELP SUPPORT OUR SMALL ENGINES CLASS

Do you have a small engine, such as a push mower, riding lawn mower, snowblower, log splitter, or weed trimmer, that you no longer need? Consider donating it to our Small Engines class. Your donation helps provide hands-on learning opportunities for our students and helps keep the class running. Donors can also receive a donation receipt for tax purposes. If you're interested in donating, please reach out to Mr. Rothstein at brandonr@centralbluejays.org for more information.

HOLIDAY GREENS & POINSETTIA SALES

Our high school students are selling Christmas greens and poinsettias! If you'd like to place an order, you can do so [here](#) or through the school website under Central Resources. The order deadline is Monday, October 19. There will be two pickup dates, and items will be available for pickup after 3:30pm:

- Tuesday, November 17 – Items from Stacy's Nursery
- Thursday, December 3 – Items from Bachman's Nursery



NOTHING BUNDT CAKES SALES

Central Volleyball is hosting a Serving Up a Cure game on Thursday, October 22, in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Ahead of the game, players are selling Nothing Bundt Cake "bundlets" for \$8 each. Proceeds from the sale will go to support the Willmar Cancer Center. Order from any high school player or [here](#) by 12:00pm on Wednesday, October 14. A limited number will also be available at the game.

LEAF RAKING

Our high school students will be serving the Prinsburg community by raking leaves on Friday, October 30. If someone you know could benefit from a helping hand, please let us know.

We're also in need of trucks, trailers, and large tarps to help our student groups throughout the day. Have a lawn for us to rake or supplies we can borrow? Please contact the high school office at 320-978-8700 to sign up.



HARVEST FESTIVAL 2026

We are welcoming community donations for our annual Harvest Festival on Saturday, November 21. Contributions can be brought to the high school by the following dates:

October 20: Live and Silent Auction items and items for the Market - canned goods/preserves, blankets, embroidered towels, etc.

November 21 (by 3:00pm): Baked goods for the International Bakery.

VETERANS DAY SERVICE



The community is invited to a special Veterans Day Assembly on Wednesday, November 11, at 9:00am. Join us as the students of Central say THANK YOU to the Veterans in our community. This year's guest speaker is Orvis Pattison.

Orvis Pattison is a longtime Willmar-area businessman, community leader, and United States Air Force veteran. After graduating from high school, Orvis served in the U.S. Air Force from 1951 to 1955 during the years following World War II and the Korean War. His military service was an important early chapter in a life marked by hard work, leadership, and commitment to his community.

Following his time in the Air Force, Orvis returned to Minnesota and went on to build a successful career in business. In 1972, he and Delbert Allinder purchased a local steel company that eventually became West Central Steel, helping grow it into a significant regional business. He is also regionally known for building and owning the Kandi Entertainment (Bowling) Center of Willmar.

We are grateful to welcome Orvis to Central for Veterans Day and to hear firsthand about his experience serving our country and the lessons he has carried with him throughout his life.

1,000 & Counting!



Congratulations to these three volleyball players on reaching impressive career milestones. These accomplishments reflect not only their talent on the court, but also the countless hours of hard work, teamwork, and dedication they have given to Bluejay volleyball.



Sienna Duinick

1,000
SET ASSISTS



Aurora Rosen

1,000
DIGS



Maddy Vander Ark

1,000
DIGS

Welcome KRISTEN BARKSDALE

Family:

My husband Brett and I have four children: Eli, Micah, Josie and Eden.

Position:

School Health Professional

Church:

Roseland Reformed Church

Hobbies:

I enjoy playing board games with my family, making family photo books, baking, reading, and being outside, especially in the summer and fall months.

How will you use your relationship with Jesus in your position at Central?

I pray that the fruits of the Spirit are evident in each interaction I have with the students, staff, and families at Central. Serving each student with joy, kindness, and gentleness is an honor. I love being the hands and feet of Jesus, in His power, to comfort, help, and heal.



JOIN US IN WELCOMING KRISTEN TO BLUEJAY NATION

Welcome KEN NORMAN

**Family:**

I have been married to Cheryl for 38 years, she is the President of Ridgewater College. I have 4 children. Alexis is married to Taylor Jones, and she is a Professor of History and Education at Crown College. They have 3 sons, Isaiah (9), Leo (7), and Rhett (1), who are all awesome. My 2nd daughter is Shelby, she is married to Clake Mossman, and they are the Directors of the YWAM Missions base in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. They have 3 amazing daughters, Esther (7), Joy (5), and Olivia (2). My son Jericho is married to Allie, and he works on housing for Native Americans in Minneapolis with the American Indian Community Development Corporation. My youngest daughter is Abbi, and she teaches 4th grade at Hope Academy in Minneapolis.

Position:

Officially, I am a School Support Specialist. I drive a Bus Route, teach PE classes, supervise Study Halls, and try to serve wherever else I can.

Church:

Refuge Church in Willmar

Hobbies:

Sports, especially the NFL. Playing all kinds of indoor and outdoor sports/games. I read. My favorite of all is being with my family. They are a wonderful blessing in my life.

How will you use your relationship with Jesus in your position at Central?

My desire is to point everyone I meet toward knowing how much Jesus loves them. I want them to know that God wants to use each of us in special ways that He has gifted us for. It doesn't matter what failures, weaknesses, successes, or accomplishments you have, God allows you to do important things if you let Him. My life is a testimony to that. Listen to Him and be willing to obey, He will take care of the rest.

JOIN US IN WELCOMING KEN TO BLUEJAY NATION



HARVEST FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21

- 4:30-6:30p **Ham Dinner**
*Old-fashioned ham dinner with all the trimmings.
Free-will donation. Located in the Event Center.*
- 4:30-6:30p **Silent Auction**
Closing times at 6:00p & 6:30p
- 4:30-7:30p **The Market**
*Shop local and homemade goods, home decor,
Bluejay gear, and more!*
- 4:30-8:00p **Kids Carnival**
*Inflatables, games, prizes, and more!
\$5 admission. Located in the Elementary Gym.*
- 4:30-7:30p **Teen Scene**
\$5 admission. Located in the Elementary & Middle School.
- 4:30-6:30p **Golf Challenge**
*Closest to the pin challenge. Ages 6th grade and up.
Prizes for both student and adult divisions. Located in
the Golf Simulator Room.*
- 4:30-8:00p **International Bakery**
*A variety of home baked goods such as pies,
popcorn cakes, breads, cookies, blanket, and more!*
- 4:30-8:00p **Snack Shack**
*Serving pizza, nachos, hot dogs, apple dumplings,
sundaes, and more! Located near the Concession Stand.*
- 4:30-8:00p **Sweet Shoppe**
*Satisfy your sweet tooth with traditional favorites
and other treats such as fudge, caramel apples,
and freshly spun cotton candy.*
- 6:30-8:00p **Live Auction**
*Bid on a variety of vacation packages, services,
and goods!*

**Cash & checks accepted at all booths.
Credit & debit cards also accepted at live & silent auction.**

MEET THE STAFF

Get to Know Nate Duininck

Family: Wife - Tolli, Kids - Sidney and Bo

Why did you choose to work at Central, and what do you enjoy most?

I felt a calling to lead others and make change in a different way than in my previous role.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Fishing, target shooting, or just relaxing.

What is something people might be surprised to learn about your job?

That it requires a wide range of duties: licensed boiler operator, transportation manager, lots of maintenance and troubleshooting from HVAC to helping kindergarteners learn to open their milk cartons, and everything in between.

Prayer requests?

Safety and protection for all our students, staff, and drivers this year.



Nate Duininck
Buildings and
Grounds Manager &
Transportation Manager

This or That?

Coffee or Tea - Tea

Movie or Book - Movie

Beach or Mountains - Beach

Pencil & Paper or Electronic -

Comfortable with either

Cats or Dogs - Dogs

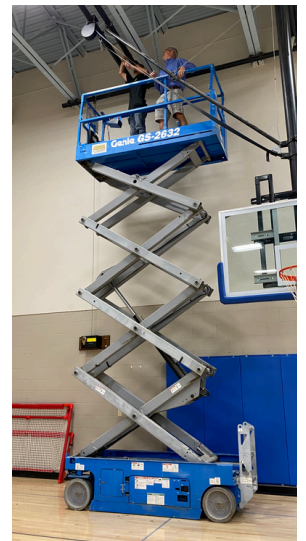
Fruits or Vegetables - Vegetables

Sweet or Salty - Salty

Farm or City - Farm

Weekends or Weekdays - Weekends

Morning Person or Night Owl - Night Owl



Alumni Spotlight

where are they now. . . **Tamara (Mulder) Fynaardt**



Family:

My husband, Keith, sons, Kit and Gideon, and daughters-in-law, Schuyler and Naomi.

What year did you graduate from Central?

1986

What makes you proud to be an alumni of Central?

I still have many connections to Central, including nieces and nephews who attended. When I hear and see how Central is flourishing—how the school has remained focused on its Christ-centered mission while also opening its doors to increasing numbers of families who are newly attracted to Christian education, I feel very proud of the place where I first experienced the integration of faith with learning.

What advice would you give to current students about preparing for life after graduation?

If college is part of your plans after high school, choose a Christian college. It's a significant investment, yes, but the return on that investment is a faith-integrated experience that prepares you for more than just a career. It prepares you to be a thoughtful, wise Christian influence in your profession, your family, your community, and your church. And the world today needs more of those.

Where has life taken you since graduation, and what did you study or major in college?

After graduation, I attended Dordt College, where I met my husband, a fellow English major. After graduating from Dordt, I attended graduate school at Iowa State University and Northern Illinois University, graduating with a master's degree in English Literature in 1992. We lived in Ames, Iowa, and DeKalb, Illinois, before moving to northwest Iowa, where we have lived since 1995. In addition to working in Christian higher education marketing and raising my sons, my husband and I moved to an abandoned acreage in the early 2000s and have been restoring it to a place where plants and people, ideas, and imaginations flourish.

What is your career or current focus?

I am the vice president for enrollment and marketing at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, one of just two intentionally Christian colleges in Iowa. (Dordt is the other one.)

What are some of your favorite memories from your time at Central?

A favorite memory happened in sixth grade, when Mr. DeGroot read a story I wrote to the class, and they all laughed at the funny parts. That was my first experience writing for an appreciative audience, and it made me want to be a writer/storyteller—which is essentially what I do as a marketing professional every day. I also have many, many favorite memories from my two years as a Bluejays cheerleader with Jill (Bonnema '85) Blom, Lois (Bohlsen '86) Coatney, Gail Meyer '86, Kris (Roelofs '86) Meyer, and Renae (Zondervan '86) Satre.

How did your experience at Central shape who you are today?

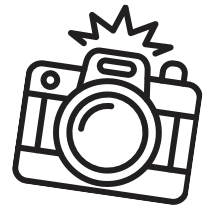
The sacrifice my parents (and their parents) made so I and my siblings could experience Christian education inspired me to send my own sons to Christian schools and colleges. I've devoted much of my professional life to promoting the value and blessing of Christian higher education because I believe the world is desperate for smart, strong, brave and faithful graduates of our Christian institutions.

Senior
Picture



The Studio

STUDENT LIFE



A. Second grade wrapped up their Fairy Tales & Tall Tales unit in Paul Bunyan style for flapjacks and flannels.

B. Eighth grade students visited the Renville SWCD farm plot to learn about soil conservation, agricultural practices, and the importance of protecting our natural resources.

C. Students in Ecology class helped care for our community by cleaning up ditches along our Adopt-a-Highway route.

D. Students gathered together for See You at the Pole, taking time to pray for our school, community, and nation.

E. For Fire Prevention Week, the Prinsburg Fire Department stopped by to teach our elementary students about fire safety.

F. Our elementary students celebrated Pastor Appreciation Month by inviting their pastors to a special chapel. Thank you to the 22 pastors who attended worship with their students.

Central Minnesota Christian School **BOARD MINUTES**

August 31, 2026

Members Present: Jon De Groot, Ryan Moorlag, Matt Hoekstra, Mitch Schwindt, Josh Mulder, Paul Leverington, Heidi Graves, Christy Groen, Joe Vander Ark, Sarah Van Beek

Members Absent: Chris Schlegel

- **Devotions & Prayer Initiative:** Led by Ryan M
- **Approval of Consent Agenda:** MSP
 - Motion: Mitch S
 - Second: Joe VA
- **Director of Advancement Report:**
 - Received operational updates regarding volunteering sign-ups, enrollment (373 students), fundraising performance, and donor events.
 - Total fundraising for 25/26 exceeded the goal for the year. Many thanks to all who continue to support our annual fundraising campaigns.
- **Committee Work Plans & Rosters:**
 - Reviewed submitted work plans and committee rosters. Committees are finalizing rosters this month and aligning teams on mandates for the year.
- **4K Program Review:**
 - Reviewed state licensing requirements, program guidelines, and potential facility/schedule adjustments needed for long-term compliance.
- **Strategic Planning:**
 - Discussed next steps, including: facilitator engagement, timeline, and the importance of school board members ensuring broad community and constituency participation and engagement throughout the process.
- **CESA Accreditation Process:**
 - Reviewed team composition, schedule, logistics, and framework differences between CESA and CSI accreditation.
- **New to You Oversight & Governance:**
 - Evaluated transitioning oversight from a task force to an advisory committee. The recommendation is being sent to the Governance Committee for review.
- **Foundation Development Support:**
 - Discussed a potential foundation development support role and how it may assist in stewarding the resources that are received and managed between the foundation and school.
- **Governance Manual Review:**
 - Continued section-by-section review of Section B, addressing committee structures, constitutional alignment, voting procedures, and operational vs. governance boundaries.
- **General Updates & School Highlights:**
 - Shared updates on recent events, community comments/feedback, facilities/security grant applications, and Annual Meeting set for April 13, 2027.
- **Adjournment:** MSP
 - Motion: Josh M
 - Second: Paul L



STORE UPDATE

Although we've experienced some delays, we are happy to report that we finally have our occupancy permit. Our GRAND OPENING is rescheduled for Saturday, October 24.

As soon as we are ready, we will go ahead with a soft opening.

Please give us a call or email if you are willing to help with setting up the store: dusting, vacuuming, stocking, hanging/tagging/steaming clothing.

Store: 320-231-1850

Email: newtoyou@centralbluejays.org

— Kristin Poortvliet; Director of Thrift Store Operations

September Monthly Report:

Total Sales: **\$100,800** Last Year: **\$94,179** Contribution to Central: **\$15,000**

Number of Donations: **1,271** Last Year: **1,151**

Number of Processed Items: **29,096** Last Year: **29,475** Volunteer Hours: **746**

TRIP Schedule

TRIP Schedule	
October	12 & 26
November	9 & 30
December	7 & 14
January	4 & 18

SAVE THE DATE

October 22-23	Quarter 1 HS Exams
October 23	End of Q1/Noon Dismissal
October 27	HS Fall Concert
November 5-6	Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 6	No School
November 11	Veterans Day Assembly
November 21	Harvest Festival
November 25	Noon Dismissal
November 26-29	No School/Thanksgiving Break
December 8	6-12 Christmas Concert
December 11	K-5 Christmas Concert

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MISSION

To provide a Christ-centered, quality education to equip students for a life of service.

VISION

Surrounded by our community of believers where God's presence is evident, our students will find their calling in God's world through an exceptional education, delivered from Biblical worldview. Students will be known personally, disciplined intentionally, and challenged academically.

VALUES



Better Together: God created us in his image to live in Community. Therefore, we honor and care for the well-being and success of all. We value encouragement and helpful communications while speaking the truth in love. We celebrate the individual gifts and character of each member and provide an environment for them to struggle and grow. (Rom 12:4-5; Gen 1:27; Col 3:12-14)



Building Trust: We strive for Excellence in our character and proven-ness in our work. We do our best to earn respect by exceeding expectations, maintaining high standards, challenging complacency, and aiming for full potential. (Matt 12:12; Titus 2:7)



Being Transformed: We value whole-person Growth and practice continuous improvement through learning, personal reflection, and Christian development. We are open to new ideas and seek God's kingdom dream for our lives and the world. (Rom 12:2; II Cor 5:17; Ps 51:10)



Bridging the Gap: Through Service, we identify needs and address them. We see God-possibilities and obediently follow the Spirit to make them our reality. In humility we give of ourselves, investing in the cause of Christian education and thus, the future. (I Peter 4:10; Col 3:23; Is 58:10)