
Spiritual Formation Audit

Christian School

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SAMPLE REPORT

I. Overview of the Instrument and the Sample

In September and October, 20***, students, parents and staff of **** Christian School (***) completed an online “spiritual formation audit.” The audit consisted of three parts: the Christian Character Index (CCI), the Love for God Scale (LGS), and the Worldview Index. The CCI measures seven character virtues (joy, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion); the Love for God Scale measures three dimensions of one’s spiritual condition (relationship with God, fearlessness of one’s faith, and humility before God); the Worldview Index examines the extent to which one’s worldview is Biblical or secular.

In all, I collected usable surveys¹ from *** students (*** boys and *** girls), ** staff members (** male and ** female), *** parents (** male and ** female).² The student breakdown is as follows: ** eighth graders, ** ninth graders, ** tenth graders, ** eleventh graders, and ** twelfth graders.

II. Analysis of Students’ Character

The Christian Character Index estimates seven character qualities, as described in Appendix A, using a scale to 90. In qualitative terms, a score of 90 corresponds to “always,” a score of 70 corresponds to “often,” a score of 50 corresponds to “sometimes,” a score of 30 corresponds to “rarely,” and a score of 10 corresponds to “never.”

Table 1 indicates where *** students are strongest and weakest in character.

Table 1: Student Character Scores

Character Quality	Score (maximum possible score of 90)
Joy	67.1
Faithfulness	61.4
Compassion	59.4
Kindness	59.1
Forgiveness	56.6
Patience	55.1
Gratitude	49.4

¹ Using the question “Please tell us whether you have ever completed this survey before,” we were able to minimize the likelihood that a respondent shows up more than once in this database.

² There is some overlap in these groups insofar as some parents are also staff members.

Looking at the character scores in Table 1, it's clear that students report experiencing more of some virtues than of others,³ with virtues like joy and faithfulness excelling virtues like patience and gratitude. Similarly, as shown in Table 2 where the data are stratified by grade level, those differences in character qualities appear to remain relatively consistent during these five years (with the possible exception of “faithfulness” and “compassion,” where there are statistically significant differences from eighth grade to twelfth grade).

Table 2: Student Character Scores by Grade Level

	N	Average Character Score	Joy	Patience	Kindness	Faithfulness	Gratitude	Forgiveness	Compassion
All Students	***	58.3	67.1	55.1	59.1	61.4	49.4	56.6	59.4
Grade 8	**	60.4	68.2	54.2	61.3	65.7	51.3	57.8	64.1
Grade 9	**	58.0	68.8	54.1	57.1	63.0	49.6	55.1	58.2
Grade 10	**	57.7	65.0	55.9	58.4	61.1	48.3	57.2	58.1
Grade 11	**	58.1	67.2	56.2	58.4	60.0	47.8	56.2	61.1
Grade 12	**	57.2	66.4	55.8	59.7	56.9	49.6	56.6	55.7

Gender differences: This is not shown in Tables 1 or 2, but when we aggregate the student data (i.e., when we analyze all *** students in the sample), there are statistically significant differences between the genders. Boys excel the girls in the areas of joy, patience, and gratitude and girls excel boys in areas of kindness, faithfulness and compassion. There are no statistical differences in the area of forgiveness.

The gender differences are most pronounced in grade 8 (for gratitude and compassion), grade 9 (for joy and compassion), grade 10 (for kindness, faithfulness and compassion), grade 11 (for kindness, faithfulness and compassion), and grade 12 (for compassion).

³ Differences across most means are statistically significant at the five percent level.

III. Analysis of Students’ “Love for God”

On a scale of zero to ten, the Love for God Scale estimates three aspects of one’s faith: relationship with God, fearlessness of faith, and humility before God. Appendix B describes the theology behind the Love for God Scale (LGS).

Table 3 displays the “Love for God” scores of students, by grade level.⁴ Typically, scores of 5.1 to 8.0 on the LGS (where most *** students appear to be, though near the lower end) suggest that one is living in a daily tension between knowing what’s right and doing what’s right. Accordingly, love for God may be intermittent or cyclical for students—something that they are trying to grow, but struggling to make a reality.

More specifically, “Humility before God” in this range suggests students are resisting full, daily surrender to God, giving up some parts of their lives to Him, but not others. “Relationship with God” in this range suggests that relationship is important to these students, but it may be a discontinuous relationship—one that is sometimes or often interrupted by other life priorities. “Fearless faith” in this range suggests that the typical student is trying to be a living witness, but may be sometimes sidetracked by concerns about his or her reputation or image.

Table 3: Student “Love for God” Scores

	N	Average “Love for God” Score	Relationship with God	Fearless Faith	Humility before God
All students	***	5.2	5.1	4.9	5.6
Grade 8	**	5.7	6.0	5.2	6.0
Grade 9	**	5.1	4.9	4.7	5.8
Grade 10	**	5.0	4.8	5.0	5.2
Grade 11	**	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.4
Grade 12	**	5.0	4.8	4.7	5.5

Grade level differences: The results are relatively consistent across grades, with the exception of the eighth grade, which reports a stronger “relationship with God.” In plain English, this means there’s little evidence that some grades are higher than others on most dimensions assessed here.

Gender differences: This is not shown in Table 3, but when we combine the data from all grade levels, girls report higher scores in all three components of “Love for God”: relationship with God (5.5 vs. 4.8 for boys), humility before God (5.9 vs. 5.3 for boys), and fearless faith (5.2 vs. 4.6 for boys). Accordingly, *** boys may be somewhat less

⁴ The scale of the LGS is 0 to 10. Also, “Average Love for God” is simply the average of the three dimensions of the instrument.

God-centered and obedient to God, and somewhat more concerned about their reputation than are *** girls.

IV. Analysis of Students' Worldview

On a scale of zero to ten, the Worldview Index estimates the extent to which one's worldview is secular or Biblical. The theology and design of the Worldview Index is included below as Appendix C.

Grade level differences: A 10.0 on the Worldview Index suggests a worldview in perfect alignment with the Biblical ideal, and as shown in Table 4, the typical *** student is close to this maximum. These students have a strong set of Biblically-consistent beliefs. And though there seems to be slight variation in these scores across grades, there's no evidence of statistical or practical differences from eighth through twelfth grade.

Gender differences: This is not shown in Table 4, but combining all data across grades, girls report stronger belief on the traditional pillars of the faith; that is, their "worldview" scores are statistically higher than those of the boys (9.6 vs. 9.2).

Table 4: Student Worldview Scores

	Average Worldview Score
All Students	9.4
Grade 8	9.4
Grade 9	9.7
Grade 10	9.2
Grade 11	9.6
Grade 12	9.1

V. Analysis of Staff and Parents

Table 5 displays (in descending order for the staff) the average scores for staff and parents for the CCI, the LGS and the Worldview Index.

Character Scores: In the area of Christian character, it appears that both the staff and the parents are stronger in the areas of “faithfulness,” “joy,” and “kindness” than they are in areas like “forgiveness,” “patience,” and “gratitude.”

Love for God Scores: Staff and parents report being relatively strong in “Humility before God” and “Relationship with God,” and a bit weaker in “Fearless Faith.” All of these are opportunity areas for development, but *** may want to consider focusing especially on the issue of living more fearlessly.

Worldview Scores: On a scale to 10, staff and parent scores of 9.8+ are encouraging, but perhaps not surprising. It appears that in both groups, beliefs are aligned with Biblical norms.

Table 5: Staff and Parent Scores

	Staff (n = **)	Parents (n = ***)
Average Character	66.0	64.6
Faithfulness	72.1	71.0
Joy	71.0	67.7
Kindness	68.3	68.4
Compassion	64.2	64.5
Forgiveness	64.2	62.6
Patience	63.9	60.7
Gratitude	58.3	57.3
Average Love for God	7.0	6.5
Humility before God	7.7	7.1
Relationship with God	7.6	7.0
Fearless Faith	5.8	5.4
Average Worldview Score	9.9	9.8

Gender differences: For the staff, it is difficult to assess statistically significant differences because there are so few male staff members in the data set. However, there is

evidence to suggest that female staff excel male staff in the areas of compassion, humility before God, and worldview.

For the parents, there is statistical evidence to infer that women excel men in the areas of faithfulness, compassion, relationship with God, humility before God, and overall Christian character.

VI. A Few Tentative Recommendations

It's imprudent for me to make too many suggestions, based on these numbers alone. I have not analyzed the context of the environment, and I've done no qualitative analysis (e.g., interviews, focus groups) whatsoever.

Accordingly, my primary recommendation is for *** to drill down deeper on its own into whatever it finds suggestive in these statistics. For example, it may be worth exploring the issue of gratitude—the area where students reports the least success—and whether curricular objectives should be modified to address the issue. It's a critically important virtue. The same may be true with some of the other relatively weak areas, like patience, forgiveness, and boldly sharing of one's faith.

It may also be wise to examine further why boys are lagging girls in so many areas of spiritual health (kindness, faithfulness, compassion, relationship with God, humility before God, fearless faith, and worldview). This may be typical in most of Christendom, but it's nonetheless an opportunity area for the school. If I were headmaster, I might make a higher priority of pedagogical / discipleship approaches that are more transformational for boys, including mentorship by strong, spiritually-mature male role models in the school, whether they are adults or peers.

However, indicative of the potential problem may be this: only ** of the ** “staff” members who completed this survey were men. A further concern is that students' fathers tend to report less spiritual maturity than students' mothers. Overall, then, it might be worth exploring whether boys enrolled at *** benefit from a school and home culture that nurtures them as effectively as possible.

Similarly, it would be worthwhile to work with the girls more in areas where they tend to lag the boys—joy, patience and gratitude. According to the data, this may be particularly important for eighth and ninth grade girls.

Lastly, it's interesting to note that the hierarchy of virtues is almost the same for students, parents and staff alike. Consequently, whatever discipleship-enhancing methods *** chooses for students may also serve well its other stakeholders. In other words, a careful study of, say, patience and forgiveness for the students may also benefit their parents and teachers. All may learn together since at ***, most in the community appear stronger and weaker in the same areas.

I applaud ***** for taking seriously the issue of measuring spiritual health. Although the above estimates are somewhat crude approximations of the heart, they may provide a starting place for deeper examination of how to disciple students more effectively. In a Christian school, few things matter more than that.

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