

Rosslyn Academy: *Core Tenets*



Brief History: Rosslyn Academy began as Mara Hills School in northern Tanzania in 1947, as a school for children of Mennonite missionaries. In 1967, the school was moved to its present location in Nairobi, and the name was changed to Rosslyn Academy. The Baptist Mission became co-owners and managers in 1976, and the Assemblies of God Mission became the third sponsoring agency in 1988. After moving to a full K-12 program, the school celebrated its first graduating class in 1991. Today, Rosslyn is home to approximately 650 students from over 50 different nationalities.

Purpose: Rosslyn Academy provides a North American-curriculum, Christian educational program (preschool to 12) to families in Kenya, giving first priority for enrollment to families employed by the Owner Agencies, and then other Christian missionary agencies. We welcome other students who are in harmony with Rosslyn values and who show evidence of potential for academic success and future leadership.

Mission: Rosslyn Academy inspires and equips each student to develop their God-given gifts for Christ-like service in the world community.

Core Values: Christ-likeness, Community, Service, Intellectual Virtue, and Excellence

Christ-likeness – Imitating Jesus Christ in all that we do and say as individuals and as a school. (Philippians 2:1-5 NIV).

Community – Cultivating a welcoming and supportive family of diverse members united behind the school’s mission. (Ecclesiastes 4:9; 1 Peter 4:10; Psalm 133:1).

Service – Modeling Christ’s example of selfless support of others. (Romans 12: 9 & 13; Matthew 20:28; 1 John 3:16-18).

Intellectual Virtue – Developing God-honoring thinking habits that result from an earnest pursuit of truth consistent with Scripture. (Philippians 4:8; Matthew 22:37).

Excellence – Pursuing, both individually and collectively, a maximization of our God-given gifts and talents to His honor. (Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:23-24).

Institutional Philosophy: Rosslyn Academy’s philosophy is enthusiastically and unapologetically Christian. This Christian educational philosophy is strengthened and enriched by a variety of Christian traditions that build upon core Christian beliefs and theology (see ‘Core Christian Beliefs’ below). Rosslyn has forged an intentional philosophy of openness, acceptance, sensitivity toward others, and an appreciation for the cultural differences that each brings to this community. As the Apostle Paul stated, “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body..., and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (I Corinthians 12:12-13 NIV).

Educational Philosophy: Rosslyn Academy believes that each person is divinely equipped, uniquely gifted, and worthy of respect and dignity. Rosslyn Academy is concerned for the whole person and strives to develop each aspect of life: spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical. The school helps students to become disciplined, creative learners who learn to balance the pursuit of personal development with service-oriented values within the home, church and society.

Core Christian Beliefs: Because of the various cultures and Christian traditions represented among our staff and community, it is important to define, and then adhere to, core Christian beliefs as an institution. Rosslyn Academy seeks to attract staff who agree with these core Christian beliefs and who are excited about integrating this core theology into their work and personal lives. Together, we believe:

- in The One Living God who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and is at work in the world today;
- in the Bible as the Spirit-breathed Word of God, sacred and authoritative, divinely revealed through select servants of God's work, fully reliable and trustworthy;
- that out of love, God gave His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, to be born of a virgin and to live on this earth as a human being and to be subjected to the same pressures and temptations that we face today;
- that although Jesus Christ lived a perfect life, God allowed Him to be crucified to fulfill the Scriptures and offer atonement for our sins;
- that Christ rose from the dead after three days, and revealed Himself to many people who bore witness to this fact;
- in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as the everlasting Trinity of God;
- that the only way to salvation and to fellowship with God is through His Son, Jesus Christ; and
- that salvation is a free gift received by understanding the gospel, repenting from sin, turning to Christ, and accepting him as Savior and Lord--resulting in a transforming, Christ-like lifestyle.

Further, we believe that in Jesus Christ, the message of redemption and reconciliation is expressed in both word and deed. We rejoice in the movement of the Holy Spirit, who renews our spiritual lives and calls us to evangelism, peace building, and bringing justice in the world. Education in this context prepares students to develop these concerns as well as the skills and tools necessary to contribute responsibly as ambassadors of Christ in a changing world. We testify to a bond of love that transcends denominational, ethnic, racial, and cultural distinctions.

Rosslyn Academy: Core Tenets Applied

Faithful Learning at Rosslyn Academy

Vision Statement:

As faithful teachers and learners, we seek to glorify the triune God, the creator and redeemer of the universe, and the author of all Truth, by infusing our learning with opportunities to discover, explore, and apply the intimate relationship which exists between our faith, our academic subjects, and the rest of our lives.

Rationale:

At Rosslyn we believe that we are called to be faithful stewards of all that God has given us, including our intellect. We see a well-rounded, liberal arts education as a natural expression and extension of our Christian faith. We believe that all truth is God's truth, whether it be found in the special revelation of Scripture, the general revelation of the natural world, or the insights of history's poets, philosophers, sages, and artists. In our intellectual pursuits, we seek to identify, admire, and give thanks for truth wherever it is found, as well as to thoughtfully explore its implications in the subjects we teach. In this way, we hope not only to foster within our academic culture a sense of awe and gratitude for God's creative and redemptive work in the world, but also to encourage our students to join in that work in whatever context they may find themselves.

Practice:

Teachers, administrators and support staff at Rosslyn are active Christians who, in addition to professing the school's core Christian beliefs, also value and appreciate the wide range of Christian and cultural traditions at the school. In this diverse environment, we seek to respect, learn from and share with others. The Christian faith is thereby modeled and taught to all students in a loving and supportive community, providing them with opportunities to see, know, and deepen their faith in the triune God through engagement in their academic pursuits.

Rosslyn's Christian Religious Education (CRE) curriculum is based on the study of Scripture. For its general educational programs, Rosslyn does not use a prescribed or preformatted Christian curriculum. Instead, Rosslyn recruits thoughtful Christian teachers who seek to demonstrate and bear witness to the Christian faith in all of life through their words, actions, and instruction. Teachers are encouraged to explore and articulate the myriad facets of God's truth that underlie, interpenetrate, and inform the subjects they teach.

In addition, Rosslyn believes that faithful learning does not just encompass *what* we think about (content) but *how* we think (the character of the thinking process and habits). As a result, throughout our learning community, we aim to develop in ourselves and our students thinking habits that are consistent with Christian character and the pursuit of truth, including intellectual virtues such as courage, curiosity, carefulness, honesty, humility, fair-mindedness, and tenacity.

Finally, due to the wide range of Christian experience and tradition that makes up the Rosslyn community and the many subject areas that modern education engages, specific parts of course curricula may be deemed controversial. Faculty, staff and substitute teachers are trusted to handle such subjects in a professional and age-appropriate manner with wisdom,

humility, balance, and sensitivity. Engagement of controversial subjects in the classroom provides not only the opportunity for substantive discussion and debate under the direction of the teacher but also the chance to listen to one another and pursue truth in a fair-minded, humble, and respectful way. It gives students knowledge and literacy to engage similar issues later in life, and it gives the teacher the opportunity to share from a perspective grounded in the school's core values and beliefs.

Co-Curricular Faith Opportunities:

We seek to integrate our Christian faith into our daily schedule and practice in a variety of ways. For example, current practice includes the following. School begins each morning with Christian devotions in the classrooms facilitated by the teacher. Chapel services are planned weekly and are attended by all students, providing a space for corporate worship and Christian teaching, discipleship, spiritual growth and development. This gives opportunity, in large public gatherings, for a diversity of formats to be used in responding to the moving of the Holy Spirit in our midst. The school chaplains assist in maintaining an appropriate balance of such formats based upon the present needs of our students. Spiritual Emphasis Week seeks to foster Christian commitment and growth as students are challenged to examine their faith. Additional opportunities for Christian witness, outreach, and service at Rosslyn include the Cultural Field Studies (CFS) program, school-wide service days, clubs, and extend to extra-curriculars like athletics and the performing arts.

Furthermore, student relationships with peers and teachers can provide unique opportunities for faith development. Rosslyn Academy directs, encourages and facilitates many voluntary student groups and events that are designed for youth fellowship, Christian teaching, and the opportunity to respond to God's call. Through these programs, Christian students are challenged to renew and strengthen their faith, while those who have yet to do so are given an opportunity to welcome Christ into their lives.

We desire Rosslyn Academy to be a loving and caring community that provides for students the freedom to dialogue, debate, and learn about the Christian faith. Our hope is that every student might receive the gift of salvation and commit himself/herself to serving God and sharing Christ throughout the world.

Staff Expectations (applies to all those representing Rosslyn Academy):

All persons serving with or for Rosslyn Academy (including board members, staff, substitutes, private music lesson teachers, etc.) are expected to be: (a) committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Scripture; (b) actively involved in a congregation in Kenya; (c) adaptable to different cultural and social environments; (d) committed to a life of service; (e) seeking emotional, social, and spiritual growth, (f) committed to a lifestyle consistent with Biblical teaching; and (g) in agreement with the Core Christian Beliefs of Rosslyn Academy.

Rosslyn Academy's Christian community is a group closely knit in both purpose and proximity. Within that closeness, however, individuals represent viewpoints that are diverse, and at times contradictory. Still, we are all bound together in our goal of sharing with others the good news of Jesus Christ. We are also drawn together for the common purpose of providing a quality Christian educational program to shape tomorrow's leaders.

Living and working in this environment can be exciting and stimulating, but it also has the

potential to be frustrating and divisive. We believe that we can keep our relationships positive and healthy by close adherence to what Christ describes as the greatest commandments; that we love the Lord God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. Loving our neighbor in this context means respecting each other as worthy individuals, appreciating and understanding our differences, and listening and learning from each other.

Staff members and those who represent Rosslyn Academy work in partnership with parents in the great responsibility of molding young lives. Because of the closeness of our community, many of our actions are seen and/or heard. Rosslyn seeks staff, volunteers and substitutes who are prepared to provide a positive role model for the students and their families. Staff, substitutes and volunteers should be sensitive to local cultural understandings as it relates to our effective witness in the community.

One of the most critical aspects of our lives, which may impact the effectiveness of our witness to others, is how we relate with people around us. Respecting, supporting and encouraging each other will display God's love. We expect families to demonstrate authentic love and respect between spouses, and in parenting children.

In addition, we believe God calls us to a life of sexual purity. Because sexual purity begins with purity of heart and mind, any use of pornography is inconsistent with this call. Furthermore, we understand Biblical teaching on God's design for human sexuality to mean abstinence before marriage, and monogamous, heterosexual, marital relations.

Rosslyn Academy expects all staff, substitutes, and volunteers to provide a positive role model and to treat their bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit. The issue of substance abuse among young people is a major concern of this institution. Staff, substitutes, and volunteers, as Christian models, are to refrain from the use of tobacco and harmful or illegal drugs. They are to exercise extreme caution as to any use of alcoholic beverages following the spirit of I Corinthians 8:9 "But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak."

Our aim to honor Christ, to live well within community, to be culturally sensitive, and to be Christ-like role models for our students and the community at large, includes our "on-line" life. Staff social media postings and other public online self-representations are expected to be consistent with the school's "Core Tenets", expressed and applied above.

In summary, we ask that staff, substitutes, and volunteers commit to live a Christ-like life, 'for it is God who works in them to will and act according to His good purpose'. (Phil. 2:13 NIV)

I have read, support, and am willing to abide by the Rosslyn Academy Core Tenets, and their application, as described above:

Signed: _____

Date: _____