



# Westminster Christian Academy

## Watkinsville, Georgia

Dana James, Headmaster



### Project Objective

Westminster defines excellence as a process that is measured by individual and corporate improvement. Striving for excellence (i.e. improvement) naturally leads to success. Using this approach, we believe that a Westminster student should be prepared spiritually, socially, and academically to succeed at the next level. Therefore, our teachers were challenged to examine the school's total program and develop at least three clearly defined criteria for determining student success at each level in the areas of spiritual growth, social skills, and academics.

We divided the school into five levels:

PK3 to Kindergarten

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades (Primary School)

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade (Elementary School)

6<sup>th</sup> Grade to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade (Middle School)

9<sup>th</sup> Grade to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade (High School)



### Project Results

#### Westminster's Plan for Student Success

For several weeks, the teachers in each level met together to define the criteria for student success. They were instructed to identify specific criteria that were clear and measurable. What resulted was a plan for student success developed by the entire faculty. In January, we presented the plan to our parents at the annual State of the School Address.

#### Example Plan for the Primary School

When students finish primary school at Westminster, they should be prepared to succeed spiritually, socially, and academically in their transition to elementary school. We define success as follows:

##### Spiritually

1. Understand that God loves and forgives us
2. Understand that prayer is conversation with God
3. Understand the meaning of faithfulness, and that God is faithful and wants us to be faithful

##### Socially

1. Use conflict management skills
2. Include others in activities
3. Speak respectfully to adults

##### Academically

1. Be able to read fluently
2. Write a three-point paragraph using correct spelling and punctuation
3. Know addition and subtraction facts to 18



### What We Have Learned

The nature of the project required that all of the faculty contribute input. We found it a challenge, especially in the high school where the scope of the curriculum is much broader, to get the faculty to move away from vague, general statements and to develop concrete, measurable criteria.

It became clear to everyone that by defining success we were also defining failure. We are now keenly aware that we have placed before our parents a measurable definition of success. This makes us accountable for the education we have promised.

We consider it an honor when a family chooses Westminster as their partner in the education of their children. One way we honor that choice is by clearly setting and communicating the goals for their children.

May God's grace be with us.

