

# **Community and Student Profile Information**

## **Community Profile**

Ripon Christian High School (RCHS) was established in 1946. The high school provides a God-centered, liberal arts education for children from Christian families. The school is located in the city of Ripon, a major agricultural center, which has a population of approximately 15,000. Ripon is located in San Joaquin County, which is approximately 90 miles east of San Francisco, 65 miles south of Sacramento, and 75 miles from the beautiful Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Ripon Christian High School is a Christian Schools International (CSI) institution that is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Ripon Christian Schools bases its educational philosophy upon the Word of God, the Bible, as interpreted in the Reformed doctrines. Designed to assist in the education of the children of Christian parents, the school is a parent-run institution with eight churches forming the nucleus of school board and committee representation. The school is owned by the Society for Christian Instruction, which is composed of approximately 2,000 school parents, staff, and alumni in the community. Members of the Society for Christian Instruction meet annually to review the budget and to elect a school board. There are 12 voting members on the school board that serve a four-year term. They meet once a month including the summer. There are three School Board sub-committees that also meet once a month: Education, Foundation, and Finance/Operations. The school board hires the K-12 administrators, sets policy, and approves the budget.

The RCHS staff consists of 30 teachers, administrators, and support personnel who strive to reflect their love of Christ in their work with His children. Thankfully, we have very little turnover, maybe one to two per year. The average length of employment by our current teachers and staff is 13 years. Our average class size is 24 and the professional teacher/student ratio is 17 to 1.

The high school is part of a K-12 school system. The campus is comprised of approximately 34 acres with 25 acres available for use by the high school. At this point, the high school campus adequately meets the needs of our students. The main high school campus consists of 14 classrooms, library, computer lab, science lab, art room, academic support classroom, personnel offices and two meeting rooms. The high school campus includes several other buildings including a gymnasium that also includes a weight room, aerobics room and locker rooms, a performing arts center that includes dressing rooms and a costume closet along with other storage closets, a music building, a new industrial arts complex that consists of two large work areas for woodworking and metalworking, two classrooms, office space, restrooms, and storage. The outdoor athletic facilities include two baseball fields, two softball fields, two soccer fields, a football practice field, a track, and parking for over 200 cars. The tennis courts were removed to create room for the new industrial arts complex. The students play competitive tennis at the nearby community center. The high school campus has grown in the last three years with the addition of an industrial arts complex as well as an art room, academic support room, and additional offices in the main high school building. The addition of offices in the high school has enabled much of the superintendent and his support staff to move into the high school complex.

Enrollment for the 2007 - 2008 year is 258 students. With tuition at \$6,885 per year, most students come from middle-class families and represent over 98 Bible believing churches. Approximately 90% of the students are white with the remaining 10% being Hispanic, Asian, or African-American. It was anticipated that there would be moderate growth over the past three years as the Ripon community grew. However, the majority of incoming population consists of households that have children over school age or are retired, thus reducing the number of eligible school-age children. Exit interviews also reflect that economic factors played a role in the ability of parents to enroll their children in Ripon Christian. As a result, Ripon Christian has seen a slight decrease in enrollment over the past three years (see attached chart). As to projected growth, we are hopeful that our enrollment will grow steadily upward as our community becomes familiar with the mission and academic excellence at Ripon Christian School. In other words, if Ripon Christian establishes and maintains quality Christian education, we fully anticipate parents being willing to make the financial sacrifice necessary to enroll their children at Ripon Christian.

Enrollment from Ripon Christian School's eighth grade to high school remains consistent. The majority of the eighth grade class continues on to high school with a net loss of approximately seven students. These students usually continue on to other high schools that carry specialized programs such as the IB program, lower level AP programs, and independent study.

Ripon Christian Schools' admission requirements include:

- a completed application
- a pastor's recommendation indicating a family's active participation in an evangelical Christian church
- a favorable interview with the student, his/her family, principal, and a member of the school board
- the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Second Edition, or KTEA-II achievement test for admission and class placement
- a reference check with the previous school the student attended.
- student's academic records

The administration of the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Second Edition, or KTEA-II, as well as the in-depth interview with the families seeking admission, was initiated in the spring of 2006 and administered to all new students for the 2007 - 2008 school year as a result of the School-wide Action Plan #2.4: *Consider an entrance testing program to better serve students that may require academic help.* The KTEA-II is an individually administered battery that gives a flexible and thorough assessment of the key academic skills in reading, math, written language, and oral language. The KTEA-II is easy to administer, score, and interpret. The purpose of the KTEA test is to achieve two objectives. First, the KTEA is designed as a screening tool for admission eligibility. Second, the KTEA test is helpful in identifying particular individual weaknesses and strengths of each prospective student. Once the student has been identified with learning needs and has been admitted to RCHS, he or she is placed in the academic support program. The academic support program assists students with learning disabilities or gaps in their educational process.

Ripon Christian High School has 20 faculty members, a librarian, an athletic director, a director of admissions and advancement, a bookkeeper, two part-time office staff, two guidance counselors, and one principal. RCHS faculty teaching and educational experience are as follows:

- 0 – 5 years experience – 7 teachers
- 6+ years experience – 13 teachers
- Masters degrees – 12 teachers

RCHS has been accredited by the Western Association of Schools and College (WASC) since 1971 and is a member of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), Christian Schools International (CSI), California Association of Private Schools and Organizations (CAPSO), and California Scholarship Federation (CSF).

## **Student Profile**

Standardized test scores generally indicate that the “average” RCHS student scores significantly above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally on the following tests: the EXPLORE (9<sup>th</sup> grade), PLAN (10<sup>th</sup> grade), PSAT (11<sup>th</sup> grade) and the SAT or ACT (optional for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades). RCHS initiated a change from the NEDT test to the EXPLORE test beginning with academic year 2007-2008. One highlight is that in the past year, we have achieved noticeably better results on our standardized tests. This one-year snapshot is encouraging news. Summaries of test results may be found at the end of this profile.

An average of ninety-three percent of each graduating class continues their education at the post-secondary level. Approximately 58% of graduates attend four-year colleges and 35% attend two-year colleges with many of them continuing on to a four-year college. The counseling department has implemented several programs to encourage and educate students about college. Counselors meet with freshmen to put together a four-year academic plan for the student. Sophomores and juniors receive counseling on career choice, testing, and college options. Seniors are encouraged to apply to many colleges and universities. Within the attendance system of the school is a built-in component to allow juniors and seniors four days to visit different college campuses and compete for scholarships. Many scholarship options are made available to the students. This past school year we also had a college awareness month. College information was displayed throughout the school. This comprehensive counseling plan was developed by our counselors and administration to make students aware of available college choices. In the past few years, we have seen our students attend a variety of different colleges and universities (see attached chart at the end of report).

RCHS is currently offering courses that meet the UC a-g requirements, making students eligible for admission to University of California and California State University schools. Students also have the opportunity to enroll concurrently at Modesto Junior College under the Early College Program or take online classes during high school as independent study. RCHS also offers several honors and advanced placement classes. All advanced placement classes have recently gone through an audit and have been approved by the AP Audit from CollegeBoard. RCHS also offers academic support for students that need learning assistance.

Students are encouraged in leadership skills as they serve God throughout the community. One of our graduation requirements is that each student complete ten (10) service hours each semester. This requirement helps students to understand and appreciate the importance of sharing God's love through meaningful service. We offer many avenues of service to develop habits and patterns of servant-hood that are important Christian virtues.

Administration continues to review curriculum needs for our students so that they will experience a high degree of success in further education as well as employment.

## **School-wide Student Goals**

At RCHS, we strive to develop students with character, students who both grow and mature in their knowledge of Jesus Christ. The goal at RCHS is for our students to live out their faith in their academic, personal and professional lives in ways that honor and please God, thus encouraging each student to be deeply rooted in Christ so as to equip them to make a difference in the world. Therefore, RCHS believes that academic excellence and spiritual development go hand in hand. With God as the source of all truth, education becomes an exciting adventure. By challenging students to excellence in all ways - intellectually, spiritually, physically, and emotionally - RCHS is preparing leaders for tomorrow.

The third revised School-wide Action Plan following the WASC visit of March 9, 2005 stated: *Encourage students to connect faith and learning and life choices.* In carrying out this action plan, RCHS developed assessment tools for evaluating *ESLR 2* (Connecting faith and learning) and *ESLR 3* (Serving God and others in His world). These assessment tools are discussed in a later portion of this document. In the past three years, a culture of spirituality has been fostered and nurtured at the high school. A committee of faculty, parents, youth pastors, and students meet regularly to discuss how to improve the spiritual climate of RCHS. This committee organizes Spiritual Emphasis Week and the service project day that culminates the end of this special week on our campus. Weekly chapels are organized by a teacher who serves as the chapel coordinator and another faculty member who serves as the chapel band coordinator. Teachers have become intentional in instilling *ESLR's 2* and *3* in their classrooms. As a result, RCHS has seen a change in attitude and behavior among the student body. There is a growing respect for adults and peers among the students as well as fewer discipline issues.

At RCHS, students experience an academically challenging environment where they are encouraged to reach high standards. Students are provided a rich, broad curriculum which is carefully planned at all grade levels to provide the best in science, math, language arts, history, literature, art, music, and culture. At RCHS, the students learn to understand, analyze and articulate the central truths of Christianity based on our belief that our Christian faith need not be separated from secular subjects. The reformed biblical worldview is integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

Our small class sizes allow the faculty to know students as individuals and to nurture their academic, spiritual, and social growth. As a result, the faculty can make plans for academic improvement or challenge students as appropriate. Faculty and students have many opportunities to fellowship, worship, and study the Word of God together. RCHS provides a warm, loving, and

caring environment. Because the student to teacher ratio is low, accountability and encouragement are high.

Ripon Christian High School values student achievement both inside and outside of the classroom. Within the classroom, our staff encourages and guides students to successfully fulfill the objectives that are outlined within the school's *ESLR*'s (stated below) that promote the following:

**The Ripon Christian school board, administration, faculty, and parents work together and expect the following “learning results” from Ripon Christian High School graduates.**

### 1) **R**eaching for academic excellence

- A. Comprehend and discern both expository and creative material including the written word, music, art, and drama.
- B. Think creatively and competently with numbers and ideas and to use reasoning for problem solving and decision-making.
- C. Communicate with clarity, creativity, confidence, and integrity in writing, speaking, and other forms of expression.
- D. Use modern technology for research and to function efficiently in our society.

### 2) **C**onnecting faith and learning

- A. Recognize that each person is a unique, but fallen, image bearer of God who has need for redemption in Christ.
- B. Recognize the creative and sustaining hand of God in nature and in human history.
- C. Be aware of the difference between the Reformed Christian worldviews and other worldviews.
- D. Understand what is important for physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

### 3) **S**erving God and others in His world

- A. Recognize their responsibility to be managers of God's world using Biblical principles to care for it and to learn to be responsible citizens.
- B. Accept responsibility to serve God by serving others in a multi-cultural society.
- C. Develop social skills for positive human relationships.

These adopted *ESLR*'s encourage students to achieve excellence throughout the curriculum. They also empower students to succeed in arenas outside the classroom, such as athletics, work experience, and community involvement. With the integration of our *ESLR*'s throughout the curriculum, RCHS is preparing our students and graduates to become tomorrow's leaders and assist them as they encounter the worlds of higher education and employment.