

Tri-Cities Christian Schools opened enrollment to elementary students for the 1976-1977 school year. Two of the students who enrolled were Alan Sanders, sixth grade and Rita Meade, fifth grade. Their parents enrolled them because they were dedicated and committed to providing their children with a Christian Education. They knew many sacrifices would have to be made to do so but knew this was God's will for their children.

Rita rode the bus from Bristol, a good fifty minute ride one way, to Center Street in down town Kingsport where TCCS's first building was located. Alan's family lived in Kingsport and his mother worked in the TCCS office throughout his TCCS years.

Rita and Alan were both active in choir, band and sports. They had teachers and coaches that daily reiterated the biblical truths already being taught by their parents. These teachers and coaches guided them in their Christian walk, taught them to stand against sin, and to love God with all their heart, soul and mind. They share a vivid memory from their school days of teachers sharing on a regular basis how God was working in their lives. These same teachers were excellent role models because they lived what they taught. Rita and Alan were surrounded by biblical truths that would remain in their hearts for a lifetime. The many years of sacrifice their parents made to provide them with a Christian Education are treasured by Alan, class of 1983 and Rita, a 1984 graduate.

After being friends in elementary, junior high and high school, Alan and Rita began dating during Rita's Senior Year and married in 1986. Their first son, Josh, was born in 1988; Cory in 1990; Blake in 1996. In 2007, the Sander's family were blessed with a little baby girl from Guatemala, little Meka Rose.

Realizing the effect a Christian education had on their lives, they became committed as their parents were to provide their children the same awesome privilege that they had; to grow up with a Christ-centered, Biblically directed Christian Education. Josh and Cory began their education at TCCS in elementary school and just as their parents, love music and sports. TCCS provided opportunities from early elementary to capitalize on their interests. Alan and Rita are so thankful for the Godly mentors Josh and Cory had that confirmed the truths they as parents were teaching in their home as well as at church.

"Our family deems it an honor that Josh is a 2006 graduate and Cory is a 2008 TCCS graduate, states Rita. Our son, Blake, is an upcoming TCCS high school freshman and he too will soon be a TCCS graduate. Blake enjoys sports as his parents and older brothers do. He also enjoys spending time with friends and other co-curricular activities. Meka Rose, a four- year- old, began her education with TCCS at the Gray Campus Preschool at age two. She will join big brother Blake at the Blountville Campus this fall as a Jr. Eaglet. Rita further states, "TCCS has brought many blessings to our family and I believe it will do the same for you."