

Faculty Highlight

Brett Schmidt



Music & Theatre K - 8th grade

What do you teach at James L. Collins Catholic School and how long have you been teaching here?

I teach Musical Theatre K-8 at James L. Collins Catholic School. I began teaching in 2014.

What college did you attend and what degree do you hold? Specializations?

I received my Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Communications and Journalism from Texas A&M University. I also have a Master of Arts in Drama with a focus in Directing and Cultural Travel.

What motivates you each morning when you come to work?

I love watching my students create, especially when we are getting ready for our spring musical. We get to join together with God through creation. I love watching them have fun taking characters that are just words on a page and bringing them to life as flesh and blood. To see their acting ability and confidence growth from August to May is wonderful!

Do you advise any extracurricular activities at the our school (including coaching)? If so, what? And why do you enjoy that activity?

I help put together the Advent Program, organize the spring break trip, and direct and choreograph the spring musical. Travel and theatre are my passions. I love putting on a spectacle show for students and the community to enjoy as a family. Students feel such a sense of empowerment when they put on a Broadway show. It is a huge confidence boost, and I believe it truly helps their social development with each other and with their audiences.

How do you incorporate the 4 cornerstones into your daily classroom setting?

My one classroom rule is respect. It covers all things that might come up. Respect the space, respect yourself, respect each other. The rest just falls into the balance quite easily. Through faith in God, respect for each other, and involvement in our class and school, our students develop integrity.

What would your students be surprised to find out about you?

I have delivered a goat with my bare hands, helped harvest a steer and cuts of meat, and I also have a very extensive background in farming, ranching, and animal science.

What is one thing that sets your teaching method apart from other teachers at other schools?

I give the students respect, just as they respect me. They might be children, but they are still human beings who deserve respect in their own right. I have found that treating them with that deserved respect, has given me the opportunity to become more involved in their lives and school development. With mutual respect, comes trust, and with trust, there are endless possibilities.

What is your favorite aspect about teaching at a Christian school?

Freedom. If there is a world issue such as abortion, racism, terrorism, etc. we can stop class, and talk about it from a Christian point of view. We can ask those questions, "Is this right? Is this wrong? Why do you think that? What would you do in this situation?" Finally, when the conversation is finished, we can pray for God to enlighten us with His wisdom.

Which event at the school do you look forward to and why?

Our spring musical is the highlight of my year. Many plays out there now are political, dry, or just plain boring. I love to show students that performing can be the joy of their lives, and each year even more students audition. My hope is that younger students will grow up in this culture with a love of the arts in all of its forms, and when they hear someone say that theatre is boring, they say, "Come and see our show! You will change your mind!"

What advice would you give to your students to help them be more successful?

First, travel as much as possible. Travel is the one purchase you can make in life that will never depreciate in value. Second, in the words of Albus Dumbledore, "Soon we will all be faced with the choice between what is right, and what is easy." Pray for the courage and strength to always make the choice that is right. Third, always, always, always be kind to everyone.