

Character Requirements

Or, What It Means to Act Like a Raggant

Here is our mission at ECS:

We commend the works of the Lord to another generation with the tools of classical education, weaponized laughter, and sacrificial labors so that they will carry and advance Christ-honoring culture.

Because our mission concentrates on transferring *culture* we are concerned about more than giving our students a diploma or preparing them for college or equipping them for a particular job. While our society has devised graduation requirements that involve studying a certain number of subjects for a certain number of hours with a certain degree of proficiency as proven on certain standardized tests, we want our students to be certain sorts of *persons*. ECS exists for more than (though not less than) academics, or even excelling at academic achievements. We desire graduates who leave with more than skills and content but who are developing *character*. We understand that it is a process, and that the school is only one contributor, but we're committed to identify if progress is being made. So here are six descriptions of what it means to act like a Raggant.

1. STOUT Image-bearers

We want graduates who are strong—not anemic, who are thick—not flat, who are firm—not flabby. A lion is stout. A kitten after a bath is not. We want people in the community to remember running into a Raggant, and not just because his or her uniform is cute. In order to become stout, a Raggant must believe that he is made in the image of a happy, sovereign, good Creator. He will meditate on the law of the Lord and be steadfast and fruitful like a tree planted by streams of living water. He will know who he is and stand where he should because he knows and trusts God Almighty who made heaven and earth.

2. GENEROUS Disciples of Christ

We want graduates who are ready to give more than is necessary or expected. They will give what they have like a farmer gives his seed to the ground. They will lavish gifts of time, kindness, and knowledge. They will give *themselves*, even their own bodies as living sacrifices. Life is a weapon, an investment to be used up rather than hoarded. We will watch them serve their family and other students, especially those that need to be served but don't deserve it. They will be like Jesus and embody the *evangel*, the good news that death brings life. They will adorn the truth that it is more blessed to give than to receive, let alone to take.

3. COPIOUS Producers

We want graduates with a broad field of knowledge and baskets full of fruitfulness. The Latin word *copia* means “plenty” (so a cornucopia is a horn of plenty), and the Trivium fills up our Raggants’ horns. All the phonograms and grammar jingles and history cards and science sound-offs, the algebra proofs and logic formulas and Omnibus texts and progymnasmata, fertilize the soil of our students’ minds with nutrients so that those minds are ready to produce. They will have acquired skills to read quickly, weed the weeds of weak or false arguments, and then use cursive or keyboard (or microphone) to make their point. They will *build* worldview, not buy the world’s view.

4. PRODIGIOUS Learners

We want graduates with large and fruitful fields who also aren’t afraid to go into different fields. They will have learned so much and so well, not so that they have nothing else to learn, but so that they are excited and able to learn whatever they want for the rest of their lives. There are a lot of thumb’s-widths in the world that Jesus cares about. Our graduates should be able to do more than search google.com. Many fields could use Kuyperian Christians with a bent to investigate how the world works: the medical field, the scientific field, the legal field, the political field, the artistic field, and many business fields.

5. THANKFUL Stewards

We want graduates who translate everything into the language of gift. They will “give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). They will “give thanks always and for everything to God the Father” (Ephesians 5:20). They will be the anti-fussers. They will recognize the investment of their parents and of those throughout (church) history. They will thank God for the tall shoulders they stand on. They will also thank God for their responsibility to labor for following generations, including their own kids, as the Lord wills. They will not despise their blessings or devour them.

6. JOVIAL Warriors

We want graduates who will work hard because they know how, because they know what needs to be done, because they know what the stakes are against the ancient serpent, and who *laugh* and *sing* while doing battle. They will wear our school motto loudly: **Laughter is war**. They will fight without freaking out. They will stand up for truth, goodness, and beauty but without being shrill. They will rejoice always as they destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.