COMMON CORE’S FIVE-WAY POWER PLAY p. 10

• Fact and Fiction about the CC
• Cracking the CC Mission
• CC and Your Child’s Love of Learning

ALSO...

• The Amanda Watson Story p. 28
• The Fair Market Value of Classical Ed p. 24
• Goals for the First 100 Days of School p. 7

ClassicalDifference.com
In this information age, it’s sometimes hard to know how to choose from the sea of options and resources that present themselves at every turn. When you are choosing what books your children will read, the stakes are especially high. That is why we have put years of research into The Classical Reader, collecting and analyzing the K–12 reading recommendations of classical educators from around the country, seeking those readings that have been important and pleasurable to generations of students. This pithy book includes recommendations for reading at each grade level, noting each selection’s level of difficulty and genre. The Classical Reader provides a way to keep a record of what your student has read and will also help you to plan future reading. This book is a valuable resource for every school and family for everything from book reports to reading for pleasure.

The Classical Reader is a veritable cave of dragon loot, an embarrassment of riches that will provide years of instruction and delight and help to instill a lifelong love of reading.

A sortable online version of The Classical Reader is available at ClassicalReader.com
The Unfortunate “Liberal Arts Education”

What’s in a word?

Dig up a treasure, and you have to clean off some mud.

The first words I heard when I asked, “What is classical Christian education?” were, “It’s like a liberal arts education.” My mind locked immediately on an unfortunate image: “liberal” as opposed to conservative, “arts” as a euphemism for joblessness, and “education”—a hoop-jumping, time-passing exercise that consumes the first quarter of your life. I even knew better, but it didn’t help with my first impression.

My loves in high school were history and chemistry. I chose chemistry in college because it seemed more practical. When it turned out not to be practical enough, I pursued business. When I found “classical Christian education” (CCE), the sound of its close relative, “liberal arts education,” made me assume that it must be as impractical as you can get. Even today, though I have learned what the words really mean, I struggle with the term because I know that newcomers have to shovel past the name itself.

If we were to analyze the phrase “liberal arts education,” “liberal” is the word furthest from the mark. Today, it refers to left-leaning progressives, socialists, and those who think “protest” is a profession. Wherever you stand politically, none of these are related to the original term. Originally, “liberal” referred to the education of free-thinking people. This was opposed to “slavery.” Servants, slaves, merchants, soldiers, and guildsmen practiced the “servile [service] arts.” You didn’t want any of these guys to think for themselves. That kind of thing was just asking for a revolt. Back then, those who were educated “liberally” were leaders and thinkers who needed to be wise, and needed to persuade others to follow them.

Enter the Protestant Reformation. If every man is liberated in Christ, we have a new responsibility. When America was founded, our Protestant fathers realized that farmers, brewers, cloggers, and bankers also moonlighted as the king. So, everyone needed to have liberal (think-for-themselves) minds. In those days, it simply wouldn’t do to have a population of sheep in a democracy. Come to think of it, it doesn’t work very well now, either.

“Art” is the most deeply corrupted word of the three. “Starving artists,” “art for art’s sake,” and
"modern art museums" come to mind. Savor the impractical! Two hundred years ago, art was simply anything created by a human for a purpose—very useful and beautiful stuff. Those who created paintings, sculptures, and lithographs were artisans who decorated things. Other artisans made carriages, barrels, or bound books. Engineering, medicine, computer programming, and high finance are some of today's "arts." But the specific category of "liberal arts," then and now, speaks of the set of tools used by free men to lead and live wisely.

"Education" as a word was simply hijacked. What we call education today is really just data and skill transfer. Solve this equation, factor that polynomial, name the U.S. presidents, read and report on this, do that worksheet .... Education was once much bigger. It involved the cultivation of wisdom and virtue. There were plenty of skills to be learned in school, but those skills became knowledge that was put to use in the exercise of the mind. It was an active process that involved Socratic discussions, deeply important literature, trained logic, debates, philosophy—most of all, it was formative in the souls of the students.

But the Eustace Scrubb problem gets worse. Because nearly all collegiate education was liberal arts education until a century ago, the "Liberal Arts" name has been infected by the progressive takeover of higher education.

How do we know ultimate or transcendent things? Nowadays, it's through reason only, with no place for moral discussions which must, in the end, involve divine revelation. What is an author saying? Enter "higher criticism" and "deconstructionism." Is it true? Who knows, since truth is a personal thing. Even most Christian universities, which have long hired professors educated in progressive systems, have liberal arts programs that fail to represent the classical understanding of liberal arts.

Unfortunately we can't choose our names. And, unfortunately for Eustace and the liberal arts education, you just have to make the best of it. So now that you've bought the field and dug past the mud that is the "liberal arts" name, I think you'll look into the box, as I did, and find something well worth pursuing.

—David Goodwin

"Education" as a word was simply hijacked.

—John Adams
Bacon Is My Beatrice

Teaching the *Divine Comedy* to his students at Petra Academy in Bozeman, MT, Sam Koenen was trying to convey how the pilgrim Dante sees Beatrice sacramentally. Struggling for a way to explain to them how sacramentalism works, he drew on the Jim Gaffigan routine about bacon (“the most beautiful thing on earth”). This:

The pig is an amazing animal. You feed it an apple, it makes bacon. The pig is turning an apple, essentially garbage, into bacon. That’s magic …!

One of the students said, “Mr. Koenen, it sounds like bacon is your Beatrice.”

“Well, yeah,” the teacher said.

So they made him a bumper sticker. And they made one for the author of *How Dante Can Save Your Life*. It will be on the bumper of a certain 2007 Honda Accord before sunrise Monday. Thanks, y’all!


—Angie Brennan
Rockbridge Academy, Annapolis, MD

Submissions
To submit a story or quote, go to ClassicalDifference.com/submissions. Published submissions in the “Set Apart” section are worth $25 in lunch money.
Century Watch
This year in history: 1516

“Novum Instrumentum Omne” or “The Entire New Testament” is the name Deciderius Erasmus gives to the first published Greek New Testament, printed in 1516. And according to Erasmus, the best way to ensure accurate understanding is to go back to the source. Ad fontes. It’s an important component of classical thought. Ad Fontes Academy in Centreville, VA, gets an honorable mention here for naming their school after it. (And for again proving that Latin just sounds good.)

Erasmus, a Roman Catholic, spent countless hours assembling the new translation. The Vulgate, translated from Greek to Latin, was the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. Pieces of original Greek manuscripts were scattered throughout the Eastern and Western world, each with varying degrees of accuracy and wear. Erasmus contributed to the Reformation by finding and researching Greek manuscripts.

[Continues on page 8 ...]

DIY Parenting
Goals for the First 100 Days of School

Within the first three months of school, there’s a good chance you’ll be called on to bring treats, monitor recess, help in the pickup line, or man concessions at the big game. But just what kind of support can parents provide that makes the biggest difference? After serving thousands of parents and students in my career as a headmaster, and visiting dozens of classical Christian schools, here are my observations.

YOUR TUITION DOLLARS CAN BE AMPLIFIED BY THESE 5 SIMPLE STEPS.

Students whose families provided the right kind of support were almost always at the top of the class.

[Continues on page 8 ...]
Those students whose families provided the right kind of support were almost always at the top of the class in character, responsibility, and often academics. So, I challenge parents to support their student at school in these five simple ways:

1. **Find a good church where the whole family worships together and attend every week.**

   Deep teaching, sincere Christ-focused worship (as opposed to simply entertaining), and participation in Sunday school, catechism, or other family-oriented Bible training helps greatly. It’s best if the whole family worships during the service together. (Of course, nursery aged children may be an exception.) Over time, even though you may not think so, the rhythm of regular, weekly church attendance tells your children “Christ is important to us, just like He is at your school.”

   Remember, Christ’s bride is the church, not the school. If your church has membership, JOIN! If you don’t think your church is deepening you spiritually, look around and find one that does.

   Everything you do affects how your kids view the world. Church hopping says “church is just a Sunday theater experience, not a community.” You may not notice the difference in the short term. But over 10 years, I saw this make all the difference in the success of our graduates. Your tuition dollars will be amplified by this simple contribution.

2. **Eat dinner together every night.**

   Establish small, simple traditions: for example, a bell to ring everyone to the table and a job rotation setting the table. Setting the table with all of the utensils may seem unnecessary on pizza night, but the habit forms a love of family in its own small way. Find a liturgy (a regular habit) in your prayer for the meal. For example, in our house I always say the prayer, but the kids each get a turn to thank God for at least one thing.

   It’s easy to let busyness disrupt normalcy in our homes. The correlation between intentional stability in the practices at home and steady kids is clear. If your schedule is too hectic with all the sports, music lessons, etc.—simplify.

3. **Model a love of great things.**

   Parents who enroll their students in a classical school but shrug and say, “That stuff is too complicated for me; I’m a regular Joe,” send a mixed message. Be honest. If you don’t love Shakespeare, Dickens, or Milton, tell your kids you are working toward loving it. And show that you are.

   Some tips: Have a family reading time where everyone sits in the family room and reads their book. (Any book, it doesn’t have to be a classic.) Simple. If someone wants to comment now and again, great. But silently reading together models a love of the right things. If Dad only reads the [Continues on page 21...]

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Scholars no longer had to rely on only those fragments of text they could access, and hope they were reliable. Luther would use the second edition of Erasmus’s translation, published in 1519, to write the German Bible. That was illegal (translating the Bible, that is) and it was one of the first things Luther did when he was excommunicated. The third edition, published in 1522, would be used by Tyndale for the first English New Testament, which later became the Geneva Bible and the King James.

Erasmus was a classicist. Because he valued going directly to the source, he played a vital role in giving us what we now know as Scripture, and was not content with using only the manuscripts at his disposal.

At its root, the idea of *ad fontes* means we, like Erasmus, value the privilege of investigating ideas on our own. It means we read the Bible and the commentary, the manuscript along with the textbook, the original book before the movie. Our kids might struggle with the work of parsing through original sources, especially in Latin or Greek, but a privilege this important should never be laid aside. The ideas in many of these texts often cannot be translated by our modern language, and it’s difficult to imagine a world where those ideas are lost. 

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In the dedication to Pope Leo X, Erasmus writes:

I perceived that that teaching which is our salvation was to be had in a much purer and more lively form if sought at the fountain-head and drawn from the actual sources than from pools and runnels. And so I have revised the whole New Testament (as they call it) against the standard of the Greek original …

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From around the world and assembling a complete and accurate Greek New Testament.

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By Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/1498-1543)

Letters & Notes

2016 Repairing the Ruins Conference

Teachers, administrators, parents, and students joined us for teaching, learning, and fellowship June 22-25 in Atlanta, Georgia. Amazing speakers, uplifting entertainment, and the energy of shared ideas combined to make this year’s event even more beneficial for those who carry these lessons home to our students. This year’s conference welcomed almost 1300 attendees and registration had to be closed before many people could register.

The more we come together, the more effective we will be.

■ WORDS
“Be a hunter, a harpooner of words, but bring them back alive ...”
—N.D. WILSON, bestselling author and Fellow of Literature at New Saint Andrews College

■ WORSHIP
The Gettys and band entertain and uplift with their “Facing a Task Unfinished” tour.

We, who rejoice to know Thee,
renew before Thy throne
the solemn pledge we owe Thee—
to go and make Thee known.

■ CHURCH HISTORY
“In the Roman Catholic Church, they begin with bread and wine and, during the mass, it is mystically transformed into the body and blood of Christ. In my Baptist church, we also begin with bread and wine, but the bread stays bread, and the wine is mystically transformed ... into grape juice!”
—DR. LOUIS MARKOS, Robert H. Ray Chair in Humanities and professor of English, Houston Baptist University

■ MUSIC
Who knows what will happen in music class this year?

■ STUDENT VIEW
“I was thoroughly inspired by the presentations and I hope to attend next year's conference in Pittsburgh!”
—LEAH MARCH, Class of 2016, The Ambrose School, Meridian, ID

Don’t Miss Out...
...on next year’s conference!

Whitefield helps fallen serviceman’s family

Tun Tavern is a ministry dedicated to Marine Corps missions. They know the need is great, and the best missionaries are soldiers and officers—those on the front lines, in more ways than one.

Shawn Campbell was part of Tun Tavern. On January 14, 2016, during a routine night training mission in his CH 53 Marine helicopter along with 11 other Marines, two aircraft collided and went missing just off the north shore of Oahu. The search and investigation continue today.

Kelli Campbell and her four children left Hawaii and their classical Christian homeschooling co-op to be near family. When they heard the news, Whitefield Academy in Kansas City, MO, contacted them, offering free tuition for the remainder of the year and opening their uniform closet to the kids. Kelli and Shawn’s dream of classically educating their children is now upheld by an entire community of like-minded people as the Lord uses this body to heal their hearts.

If you would like to help Kelli and her children, Tristan, Kenna, Kate, and Donovan, financially with day-to-day costs and tuition for the coming years, you can send your tax-deductible contribution to:

Tun Tavern Fellowship: www.tuntavernfellowship.org > The Deuteronomy 10:18 Fund

In the memo line you may write: In memory of Shawn Campbell—CHRISTY KAISER (on behalf of the Campbell family)

Deuteronomy 10:18: “The Lord defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow...”
THE COMMON CORE’S FIVE-WAY POWER PLAY

COMMON CORE CAME OUT WITH A BANG—over 40 states adopted it. What few realize is that the Common Core’s impact is not limited to educational standards. The real story is in the widening net the Common Core is casting.

ADVANCED ACCREDITATION—CONSOLIDATED POWER IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS

At the same time Common Core was rewriting standards, the most significant K–12 accrediting change in over 50 years emerged. Accreditors visit state and private K–12 schools to verify that they meet certain standards and then typically grant recognition so students can transfer between schools, play in state athletic leagues, apply for grants from some organizations, and meet public graduation requirements. In 2006, AdvancED, a private accrediting body for K–12, was formed by merging most of the nation’s K–12 regional accrediting organizations to form one massive accrediting powerhouse, officially recognized in over 37 states and through reciprocity agreements in all 50 states.

While private, AdvancED carries the power of law in most states because state statutes specifically refer to the regional accreditors that AdvancED acquired. AdvancED includes Common Core in its standards—if not officially, through the accreditation instruments and the enforcement of state standards. One classical Christian educator who underwent AdvancED accreditation put it this way: “AdvancED desires to standardize teaching and learning and is a natural partner with other standardization efforts like the controversial Common Core Curriculum. By definition, classical Christian education rejects the progressive model of education used in the vast majority of public and private schools today.”

IMPOSING COMMON CORE THROUGH THE SAT & STRINGS-ATTACHED FEDERAL GRANTS

In 2016, the nation’s oldest and most accepted college entrance exam, the SAT, was redesigned from the ground up with the Common Core in mind. The College Board (publisher of the SAT) is now headed by David Coleman, the former pioneer of the Common Core. Finally, the federal government, which spends $154 billion on education through local district and state grants, now makes it clear that the money will follow the Common Core. This alignment of accreditation, common core...
Common Core: Facts & Fiction

In 2008, Janet Napolitano, who later served in the Obama Administration and as the president of the University of California system, launched the Common Core initiative. In its early years, Napolitano worked to build a coalition of states to sign on to the standards. The Obama Administration officially backed the standards in 2012. His “Race to the Top” program earmarked $4.35 billion, in part, to promote Common Core. The U.S. Department of Education, which controls billions more in educational funding, encourages states to adopt the Common Core. The U.S. Department of Education runs programs that influence 99,000 public schools and 34,000 private schools, and the 56 million students who attend them.

The Common Core covers reading and math, but not science or other subjects. However, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are a companion set of standards, provided by another organization, that dovetail with the Common Core to provide standards in science and social studies. We believe these will roll into the Common Core eventually.

The primary sponsor of the organization that governs the Common Core is the National Governors Association—a non-government agency. The standards are copyrighted and controlled by this group and another, the Counsel of Chief State School Officers. This non-government status is important because a number of U.S. laws prohibit the federal government from directly implementing standards in schools.

David Coleman, successor to Napolitano at the Common Core, became the shepherd of the organization. He will form the beliefs and attitudes of tomorrow’s leaders, and a nation of citizens.

THE TEXTBOOK COMMON CORE GOLDRUSH

With about 35 states implementing Common Core and about the same in AdvancED, we will see nearly the entire textbook industry follow. Even Christian private schools that traditionally conformed to state standards will be impacted by the textbooks. Several major textbook publishers aligned to the Common Core early. Pearson announced its support in 2012.

Common Core, and we are confident the Standards will make a profound contribution to equity and excellence, and serve to level the playing field for all students to have access to college and career readiness.”

—Paul W. Sechrist, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the College Board (SAT)

Cutting to the Core

WHAT THE PLAYERS ARE SAYING

To understand the direction that Common Core will likely take, we can look at the careful language in their mission.

The standards were created to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life, regardless of where they live.

—From the Common Core

The College Board has played an active role in the development of the Common Core standards, college entrance exams, and federal dollars will inevitably reshape the face of American education.

Conventional standardized tests used in K–12 are also feeling the pinch. The storied Stanford Achievement Test, published since 1926, is being retired. The equally well-accepted Iowa Basics Test now aligns to the Common Core. Terra Nova, used by many Christian schools, is aligning to the Common Core. Because states are adopting the Common Core, they are adopting tests that test to the Common Core. This will shape the curriculum of thousands of Christian schools.

[Continues on page 13 ...]
would have significance far beyond the control of schools… It would hold the key to the achievement of the most fundamental political aspirations—in effect, the key to the American Paideia.

Once a single set of standards—governed by a progressive organization—becomes widely accepted, the future will lead to new standards, politically imposed.

The Common Core organization has protected the standards using copyright law so that they may not be altered or edited without permission. One unelected, unchecked organization will soon have the power to enforce standards in K–12 education nationwide. This will inevitably lead to more controversial enforced standards in the future once the standards are embedded in America's educational fabric. Never before in American education has one organization had so wide an influence and control over standards, federal funding, accreditation, and college entrance testing. They will form the beliefs and attitudes of tomorrow's leaders, and a nation of citizens.

We believe that neutrality in educational content has proven impossible. In the spring of 2016, we saw the Obama Administration’s willingness to force school districts across the U.S. to broaden non-discrimination requirements, originally meant to apply only to gender, to include LGBT protections. This "force" was applied through billions of dollars in federal grants to state and local educational districts.

The U.S. Constitution impedes direct federal control over what is taught in America’s schools. Architects of the Common Core, using a five-way power play, have circumvented the law and positioned the Common Core as the single controlling force in American education through money, testing, accreditation, and textbook control. We encourage Christian parents to be vigilant. Now, more than ever, parents should think twice before sending their students to public or charter (which are also influenced through the federal earmarked dollars) schools.

Why textbooks fail...

...about Paideia at about.ClassicalDifference.com/the-paideia-factor
LET ME OFFER FROM THE ONSET WHAT I think describes the entire exercise of the Common Core (CC) in our national schools: educational fatigue and weakness. The entire proposal betrays our lack of vision, health, and confidence to educate our children. Why do I think this?

The CC focus is almost entirely on efficiency—the sure sign of weakness.

When everything about a people is for the time growing weak and ineffective, it begins to talk about efficiency. So it is that when a man’s body is a wreck he begins, for the first time, to talk about health. Vigorous organisms talk not about their processes, but about their aims.

—G.K. Chesterton

The extent of our Common Core vision of educational health is “career and college readiness.” This, frankly, spells the end. With no robust vision for the end of education, education ends. What do we have in its place? Technical training. Technical training never was, and never will be, an education. I recall a friend of mine, a physician, standing up before a group of parents joining together to start a classical school and saying, “I am very highly trained and very poorly educated.”

The Common Core program is likely the largest “process program” in the history of education. Are standards evil? No, they are not. Some standards are worth articulating to guide teachers who are masters of their art or discipline (best set by the master teachers themselves). But without a vision for education, standards are all that’s left; they become our focus, and thus they subdivide and multiply. You have scholastic anesthesia. Watch the teachers become technicians. Watch the students go to sleep.

In another vein, Chesterton said, “When you break the big laws you do not get freedom. You do not even get anarchy. You get small laws.” We have broken one big law of education. The big law says “you shall cultivate and nourish a human being on truth, goodness, and beauty.” We have said “we shall train workers for the global economy” (career readiness) and “we shall train them to get further training” (college readiness). What do we get? Many, many small laws that we call “standards.” Clipboard ready?

You have scholastic anesthesia. Watch the teachers become technicians. Watch the students go to sleep.

Whatever else CC is, it certainly is an attempt to institute a national and consistent set of standards amounting to a national curriculum. It is all legal, despite the fact that various acts of Congress expressly prohibit the enactment of a federal curriculum (see in particular the Department of Education Organization Act of 1979). How is this possible? It is possible because it was the states (via the states’ Departments of Education) that adopted the standards. All this has been meticulously documented and hotly contested, with “Stop Common Core” organizations
The Classical Christian SAT Advantage

WILL IT CONTINUE?

About a quarter of ACCS graduates attend the Top Colleges in U.S. News and World Report's list. Our graduates are sought after, particularly at the finest Christian institutions. In part, this has been due to our “incredible” averages on the PSAT and SAT. The word “incredible” is used carefully here. At first blush, the ACCS averages seem so good, they are statistically unlikely. But they have been consistent over time. ACCS SAT averages in 2015 were 85 points higher than independent schools. “Independent schools” are made up of some of the finest private prep schools in the country. By comparison, these independent prep schools outscore public schools by about this same margin—86 points. So, the ACCS is 171 points above public schools, and 85 points higher than independent schools. If you add in the writing component, the numbers are even more impressive for the ACCS. Put another way, if we believe the test score statistics, ACCS graduates are twice as advanced as those who attend schools that, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics, charge around $20,000 per year. Our average tuition is around $7500. Our college readiness index seems equally improbable: our students average 237 points above the benchmark. Independent schools? 99 points above the benchmark. Religious schools? 46 points above the benchmark. Our students also disproportionately earn National Merit Scholar status. Dollar for dollar, it’s hard to beat the value of classical Christian education for college preparation.

While the SAT has been radically changed from a test that measured a student’s reasoning ability to a test that measures their knowledge of Common Core standards, our students will likely continue to have an advantage. Reasoning and language skills will continue to help our students succeed on the tests and in college. For example, even though the ACT is more of a content (achievement) test, our students still score an average of 26.2 (vs. 21 nationally) on the test.

• Implementation of CC will produce less of what it seeks. The great irony: while this response to increase learning and accountability seems rational and understandable, I believe it will produce precisely the opposite effect. Why? Because teachers as dissectors and inspectors cannot inspire learning, and without inspiration, students cease being students. More and more students must be compelled to academic work, because they lack an internal drive to seek after truth, goodness, beauty, and knowledge.

Again, why? Because the CC architects do not understand what education truly is. To them education is a science—the right application of a tested method to produce predictable results. We don’t need a “master”—we just need someone who can apply the tested techniques consistently upon a group of humans. The CC organization responds that they do not specify HOW teachers teach just WHAT they are to teach. But that is verbal gobbledygook.

The classical conception of education holds true, and is a rock that the tide and waves cannot diminish. Human beings are above the animals as conscious beings capable of apprehending and knowing truth, goodness, and beauty as eternal realities. They are best taught by wise, eloquent and virtuous teachers who have themselves been cultivated by a study of language, history, literature, mathematics, music, natural philosophy, moral philosophy, and theology.

[Continues on page 16 ...]
Teaching is an art and relationship (of love and kindness) in which teachers impart themselves to their students, so that after being fully trained, students will become like their teacher. Is CC the roar of a tide coming in or going out? I am not sure, but classical education will remain steadfast and intact, as it has for 2000 years.

CHRISTOPHER A. PERRIN, PhD, president of Classical Academic Press

The Good News...

YOUR SCHOOL AND THE COMMON CORE

IF YOU RECEIVE THIS MAGAZINE, you’re probably already enrolled in an ACCS (Association of Classical Christian Schools) member school. The ACCS, the accrediting body for classical Christian schools, is joining with other organizations to provide an alternative to the Common Core:

1. ACCS accreditation does not require conformance to state standards, and therefore the Common Core. We deliberately avoid “regional accreditation” reciprocity agreements that would require our schools to compromise their independence by conforming to state graduation standards. Our schools will remain free to practice classical Christian education independent of the Common Core.

2. The ACCS recently joined forces with the Classical Learning Test (CLT), an alternative to the SAT that is rapidly gaining acceptance as a wide range of educators join forces to support excellence in collegiate education. While we anticipate that ACCS students will continue to do very well on the SAT, we’re excited to see the development of an alternative to the Common Core test, and it is already available. We’re also encouraging our members to take the ACT as an alternative to the SAT. While both are achievement tests (they test knowledge more than reasoning), the ACT has not fully aligned to the Common Core.

3. ACCS member schools annually confirm that they do not accept government funds in such a way that their educational independence is compromised. This helps protect our schools from “strings attached” Common Core requirements by the federal government.

4. Teachers in classical Christian schools are insulated from the Common Core. Education colleges, which are involved in licensing nearly all public and many Christian school teachers, are beginning to train to the Common Core. Member schools within the ACCS are independent of these licensing requirements. As an alternative, we have a teacher certification program for accredited member schools.

5. Textbooks in classical Christian schools are generally original works from the past, or they are written by classical Christian publishers. In either case, the Common Core, directly or indirectly, has no impact on these books. In fact, most of our textbook authors purposely reject the Common Core.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR STUDENTS AT ACCS CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS?

We reject the Common Core because it distracts from true education. Without too much detail, it emphasizes modern, data-driven learning work rather than well-rounded studies to promote logic, analysis, depth, and wisdom—classical literature, history, philosophy and theology are silenced. Thus, the Common Core standards drive priorities and content that are incompatible with Christianity and with classical education as a whole. (See “Common Core and the Classical Tradition” by Dr. Chris Perrin in this issue.) For these reasons, ACCS member schools are among the most independent schools in the nation.

ACCS graduates are twice as advanced as those who attend schools that charge around $20,000 per year.
ACCORDING TO U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT,*
“AS MANY AS 1 IN 3 FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS WON’T MAKE IT BACK FOR SOPHOMORE YEAR.”

DON’T BE A STATISTIC.

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*http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/ranking/regional-universities-south/freshmen-least-most-likely-return
MOCK TRIAL

Real Judges, Real Courtrooms, Real Life
"I’ll take that under advisement," a magistrate judge from the State of Colorado responded after a quick objection by a tall, sharply dressed student-attorney from Duchesne Girls School, the reigning national champion. Another Duchesne witness continued, angry and desperate. “I know that rancher killed my sheep!”

Spectators wondered if she would break out of her accent as the cross-examining attorney pressed. “Yes or no, Ms. Zaballa? Did you see the defendant anywhere near your sheep?” The Ambrose School’s attorney held her gaze until a quiet ‘no’ reluctantly came. He turned to the jury. “No further questions.”

In a courtroom in Texas, the witness on the stand sobbed loudly, his head in his hands, his shoulders shaking. His pet, Pixel Poo Poo, had been killed when an angry neighbor shot a drone out of the sky and it crashed onto the dog. The attorney directing the questions at the witness gently asked, “Do you need a minute, Mr. Barkley?” The audience snickered. The judge stifled a laugh. This witness was good. Really good.

In Tennessee, homeschooled teenagers wearing suits sat nervously behind the counsel table at the front of the courtroom awaiting the verdict. When the judge announced their victory, they jumped from their seats and hugged each other in relief and elation—it was a well argued case, and the victory was deserved.

In the sometimes bizarre world of high school mock trial competitions, 9th–12th grade students take on the roles of witnesses and attorneys in fictitious court cases. They spend countless hours over the course of several months preparing their roles. Witnesses memorize witness statements (or affidavits)—they must “become” their character if they are to withstand the grueling cross examination from an opposing team’s attorneys. Teen attorneys write compelling, persuasive opening and closing statements, prepare their own witnesses for direct examination, and craft strategic questions for the cross examination of their opponent’s witnesses.

At regional competitions each winter, in more than 40 states and U.S. territories, teenagers wearing power suits and brandishing exhibits take sides and argue their cases in front of a judge and jury of volunteer real attorneys. The jury rates the individual students on their performances, and ultimately awards each round to one team. The winners of the local competitions go on to compete in their state’s competition, and the state winners battle it out at the national competition each May.

At these competitions, you can see high school students doing things you didn’t know humans could do, says Chris Schlect, head of the mock trial program at Logos School in Moscow, Idaho. Schlect has coached more teams to nationals than any other coach. He became the coach when he was a teacher at Logos, but even when he left Logos to become a Fellow of History at New Saint Andrews College, he could not leave coaching mock trial behind. Logos has qualified for the national competition 14 times, ranking as high as 5th in the nation. This year they placed 7th, just behind their sister classical Christian school, The Ambrose School in Meridian, ID, who placed 6th.

Mock trial is an extra-curricular activity that classical students are particularly well-suited to, says Schlect, because you can see high school students doing things you didn’t know humans could do.
they have been trained to think logically, to make eloquent, persuasive arguments, and to work hard. It is a practice in excellence.

“The ability to parse and to break down something as complicated as a mock trial problem, and to identify its most meaningful, significant, and relevant aspects, is an incredible life skill,” Schlect says. “And I think classical schools inculcate that throughout their entire program.”

Maggie Church was part of the 2005–2008 mock trial teams at Logos, and in 2008 she received an award at the national tournament for the best all-around mock trial participant. Church teaches at Logos now and helps coach their mock trial teams. She says mock trial encompasses all of the trivium, fitting perfectly in the rhetoric stage of a classical education.

“My education taught me how to learn, and that really is the most helpful when attacking a 90-page case in six weeks at the national level,” says Church. “You memorize the building blocks of law, rules of evidence, and the case materials. You analyze arguments and build them yourself. Then you have to present it all winsomely in a way that makes sense to a jury member.”

Being part of a mock trial team requires hard work and long hours. “It means an entire season of sleep deprivation, of sweat, of getting ruthlessly criticized by the coaches and knowing that that’s just how it is,” says Chris Schlect. But the intensity of the criticism is balanced by equal intensity of laughter and camaraderie, for he continues, “You can’t take yourself too seriously in mock trial.”

For Maggie Church, mock trial has created some of her strongest, most lasting friendships. “When you are working side by side for six months, through edits, revisions, early mornings, late nights, stress, laughter, and all the craziness, you really have a deep bond,” Church says. “My mock trial teammates saw me at my worst and my best. You have to be there for each other at counsel table—you have to trust them and rely on them for everything.”

Mock trial. It’s all about the things we want for our kids—intelligence, grit, wisdom, leadership, community—and at a level almost impossible to reach in any other school activity.

As anyone who’s been involved with mock trial will tell you, it is addictive.

—Minnesota State Bar Association

... You need to think on your feet…. [In college] I’ll be surrounded by people who don’t have the same assumptions I do about the world, and I’ll have to think then and there what words will come out of my mouth that will be helpful to this person.

—Victor Fontenot, Covenant Classical School, Fort Worth, TX

Through mock trial, I have advanced in my knowledge of courtroom skills, etiquette, and procedures. I have also greatly improved my public speaking. Mock trial has provided me with incredible friends and experiences that are among the best that I have ever had. I would not give up mock trial season for anything.

—Colin Post, Providence Classical, Houston, TX

Auditioning for a spot on the mock trial team is undoubtedly one of the best decisions I’ve made. [Mock trial] has improved my public speaking, sharpened my critical thinking skills, and allowed me to compete with some of the smartest people I know.

—Mary Liz Overcash, Providence Classical, Houston, TX
news on his iPad, his kids will absorb that value.

On the musical side, with an Amazon Echo and Prime, stations that play great top-100 classical, jazz, blues, and other genres are one voice command away. Ease makes it happen. Other technologies are probably equally good at this. Long-term exposure to great music over 10 years will change who your kids become because it will cultivate what they love. One family I know cultivated this love in their two sons. The oldest son, now at West Point, still admits, “Bach is my music.”

4 Invest in your marriage.
I’ve seen some single parent situations produce some of our best graduates. But, I have to be honest: Sound marriages generally correlate with sound children. When students go through tough times in 7th–10th grade, mom and dad, united and steady, provide the keel and anchor for the storms. Dad: Be the spiritual leader. Drive the family to get ready for church, lead the prayers, read scripture at the table. Get together with other dads for book clubs, or Bible studies. And, love your wife. God honors generationally, so your love for Him will be reflected in your kids. Mom: Establish a household that reflects the order, goodness, gentleness, and beauty of God.

5 Love the way Christ loves.
Remember, our Father encourages and chastens those whom He loves. Parents should, too. Demanding parents, balanced with grace, turn out the best kids. It’s hard these days. Every model we have says, “Turn them loose and encourage them.” “Chasten them” is not popular. The best families I encounter demand much of their kids, and they love them greatly.

I saw close relationships between fathers, sons, daughters, and mothers that were intimate and very loving. But, if that was matched with parents who let their kids make important decisions—too important for their age—then the students never reached their potential.

For example, if parents want to consider other educational options, that is within God’s calling. But students should not be contributing to that decision. The most successful graduates we’ve had would say, “My parents never really gave me a choice.” They would go on to say, “The classical Christian education I received fundamentally changed who I am.” (See our Alumni Profile on page 24.)

Of course, each of these has probably been in a sermon you’ve heard. But my background is in the business world, often analyzing the correlations that make a product or service successful. Amplify your investment in classical Christian education. After 11 years of working with families and graduating many students, I believe these five principles are among the most important for nurturing students who love and worship the Lord.
Good at finding the perfect gift?
The rest of us need your help.

Teacher (noun): a person who helps you solve problems you would never have without them.
—imfunny.net

TEACHER GIFTS ON ETSY:

“Being a teacher is easy. It’s like riding a bike. Except the bike is on fire. You’re on fire. Everything is on fire.”
—Mug, etsy.com/shop/TheHoldFastery

“I’m a teacher. To save time, let’s just assume I’m never wrong.”
—T-shirt, etsy.com/shop/SilkRoadTees

“Yes Maddie, I know your lawyer parents could sue me for unlawful restraint, but you still need to go to your seat.”
—Pin, etsy.com/shop/SmirkingGoddess

Poll: Music Lessons
The results are in!

Do you require your kids to take music lessons? 100% of respondents said “Yes.” Apparently, if you can’t say something nice about music, don’t say anything at all. Still not sure? These thoughts from our survey participants might change your mind.

… Math is the language of the universe and music is how that language is spoken …

Music should be considered essential for brain development, lays neural groundwork for mathematical skills, and is a universal language …

Playing an instrument is like having a super power. It allows something deep inside of you to speak to something deep inside of others without uttering a word.

… By God’s grace, we’ve given our children an inestimable gift … their whole framework is reinforced with a sense of beauty and order that harmoniously embodies the classical Christian vision …

… So that later, when they wish they could play, they can!

What are the BEST GIFTS for classical Christian teachers? Weigh in:
Submit your suggestions at ClassicalDifference.com/poll.
RESULTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE NEXT ISSUE—JUST IN TIME FOR BLACK FRIDAY!
I Heard It in the Pickup Line

“How do you get your kids to do their homework?” one mom asked another as they waited for their kids to arrive at the car next to mine.

“I keep all their uniform socks in the freezer. When their homework’s done, they can get out a pair to thaw. It works! Plus, it offers valuable incentive to get homework done the night before and not wait until morning.”

Of course, my first thought was one of surprise. I said to myself, “But what if you don’t have freezer space because of all the prepared meals you purchase so you can help your kids with their homework instead of cooking?”

The homework topic is hotter than August in Idaho, where Chris Browne, upper school dean for The Ambrose School, believes one helpful resource is Ending the Homework Hassle by John Rosemond.

Another general parenting resource is the Ambleside blog: www.ClassicalDifference.com > Blogs.

DO YOU HAVE HELPFUL ADVICE FOR GETTING THROUGH THE HOMEWORK HOURS?

Let us know at ClassicalDifference.com/submissions. We’d like to share your ideas in the next issue.

NOTE: Most parents we surveyed have already tried junk food deprivation, screen time restrictions, and speaking more loudly than usual.

I Wish I Had More Time to Read …

… LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

Beth ceased to fear him from that moment, and sat there talking to him as cozily as if she had known him all her life, for love casts out fear, and gratitude can conquer pride. When she went home, he walked with her to her own gate, shook hands cordially, and touched his hat as he marched back again, looking very stately and erect, like a handsome, soldierly old gentleman, as he was.

—Little Women

… A. A. MILNE

“Sometimes,” said Pooh, “the smallest things take up the most room in your heart.”

Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.

—Winnie the Pooh

… G. K. CHESTERTON

[Modernity may say] “Salvation, like other good things, must not come from outside…” … But if our subject of study is mediæval and not modern … we must put ourselves in the posture of men who thought that almost every good thing came from outside … I do not, in my private capacity, believe that a baby gets his best physical food by sucking his thumb; nor that a man gets his best moral food by sucking his soul, and denying its dependence on God or other good things. I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought; and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder.

—A Short History of England

… CICERO

Being and appearing grateful is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others.

—M. TVLLI CICERonis PRo CN. PLANCIO ORATIo

… JOHN MILTON

The debt immense of endless gratitude,/ So burdensome, still paying, still to owe,/ Forgetful what from Him I still received:/ And understood not that a grateful mind/By owing owes not, but still pays, at once/Indebted and discharged,—what burden then?

—Paradise Lost
What is the fair market value of classical Christian education?
Will Frazier is still finding out

Fair market value, as defined by the IRS, is the "price at which an asset would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller when the former is not under any compulsion to buy and the latter is not under any compulsion to sell, both parties having reasonable knowledge of relevant facts."

After graduating from Wheaton College with a degree in English and philosophy, I took the next, most logical step, and began working in finance. I’ve spent the better part of my first two years in the throes of capital markets trying to discover and build a case for a company’s “fair market value.” Although in this case the variables are seemingly as endless as the conclusions are elusive, the criteria are universal and the results are measurable; if I am right, and I buy a share below its fair market value, then we profit. Also, no matter the outcome, we can easily look back and see why and how it was valued.

With education, the variables are equally as endless, the conclusions even more elusive, and the criteria as unique as the results are intangible. This collision of ideas about the telos of education results in as many ways to value and measure its success/failure as there are curriculums for how to do it.

Westminster Academy’s stated purpose is to train young minds to love that which is worth loving. Well, let’s say you’ve somehow discovered a way to test the degree to which one does, as a result of a Westminster education, love that which is worth loving. How does this translate to “value?” The value proposition for many schools is great test scores and admissions to top colleges, which will ultimately position the individual for the best possible job, money, success, etc.

This is measurable. And this is not Westminster’s value proposition.

As I reflect back on my Westminster education, I frankly find nothing conclusive. Are there practical benefits that I see every day—in my job and in my relationships—on which I could build a case for Westminster’s value? Is there value in the facts I learned or even the very way I think? Absolutely there are.

But ultimately, I sit today at 27, 11 years removed from Westminster with very few criteria on which to build a case for its success or failure. As I review all the slips and falls, mistakes and failures since Westminster, the one thing I’ve just recently come to realize is that I was in no way a completed product after graduation.

In my youthful foolishness I thought commencement was the “end” of my Westminster education. Sure, it meant I wouldn’t write any more papers for Mrs.
When I wander off the map, as I have and will likely continue to do, I am not lost forever.
The ACCS offers this contest annually. They welcome entries from all ACCS-accredited schools. Check with your school to find out more.

"I composed my piece as part of a seven-month master study in Flemish oil painting. Painting this still life of a cow and deer skull using Flemish technique involved three distinct layers. By using repeated layers of paint and a series of thin oil glazes, Flemish painting aims at a high degree of detail and realism while maintaining smoothness and subtlety. I have endeavored to capture the elegant structure of God’s design within these creatures.”
Fill our frames

We like to fill our hallway with student art, poetry, essays, short stories and other good works. Send your submissions to ClassicalDifference.com/submissions. Published student works earn a $10 Amazon gift card for purchasing classic books. Or crayons.

Painting: Second Prize
A Walk in Fredericksburg
Samantha Wilmot
Annapolis Christian Academy
(Corpus Christi, TX)
22” x 18”, watercolor on paper

“Walking around Fredericksburg, I came across this staircase and was immediately drawn to the charm. My painting technique was influenced heavily by John Singer Sargent’s vibrant colors and the blurring of hard and soft edges he used often in his watercolor paintings. The wall, too, has an assortment of bright color, but underneath lies a unifying blue-brown tone that lends coherence to the painting, modeled after Sargent’s technique when painting non-human subjects.”

Drawing: First Prize
To Have and To Hold
Emily Jordan
Westminster Academy (Memphis, TN)
20” x 14”, graphite on paper

“This piece is a graphite representation of a photograph that I took of my grandparents. First and foremost, it was inspired by the subjects themselves, who have consistently demonstrated through their lives and character what it means to live and grow in love and virtue with the Lord and with one another. The concept employed within my reference photograph was drawn from the work of the Italian photographer, Gianfranco Meloni, whose unique and moving portraiture is well suited to my own artistic style.”

Drawing: Second Prize
Joy
Lia VanderPloeg
Cedar Tree Classical School
(Vancouver, WA)
14” x 11”, graphite on paper

“This piece is drawn with graphite pencil. It, and all my portraits, are inspired by Michelangelo’s sculptures, but more specifically, their faces. Through art and art history classes, I’ve been drawn to the amazing accuracy of proportion and expression in his sculptures. Because his sculptures have no color—only value—they reminded me of graphite sketches. This particular piece incorporates variety in value, unusual facial expression and angle, just as seen in Michelangelo’s sculptures.”

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LIFELONG LEARNING
Amanda Watson’s Story
When we made the decision for our children to attend a classical Christian school, we understood that the rigor of this education would raise the bar for their education and challenge them, both academically and spiritually. We never expected a night like the one on February 27, 2013.

To say our world turned upside-down with one, short sentence is an understatement. Amanda, our nine-year-old daughter, had begun having difficulty using her left leg 14 days earlier. Initially, we thought little of it. But in two short weeks, her symptoms progressed so rapidly that we took her to Dell Children’s Hospital in Austin about 30 miles south of our hometown. We went in on Wednesday. On Friday, Amanda had brain surgery to remove a portion of the tumor from her brain stem.

The morning Amanda had brain surgery, I received a text from our director of student affairs at Grace Academy showing us a picture of the teachers, administrators, and even students gathering to pray for our family. That day, two girls from the log-ic school put up sticky notes all over campus with messages like “We love Amanda” or “Pray for Amanda” written on them. Those two small acts that day were only a brief glimpse of what was to come as we experienced in new ways the body of Christ in action. Our family felt such an incredible peace while Amanda was in surgery that we can only attribute to the extraordinary power of prayer.

While we were at the hospital those nine days, a member of the school administration and a board member both referenced the story of Moses holding up his arms while the Israelites were in battle. When he became weary, Aaron and Hur sat him on a rock and supported his arms. This powerful story was used as a beautiful image of what Grace Academy would do for our family. Our school family would support us during our battle.

THE LONG ROAD

Amanda’s diagnosis with a grade three brain tumor quickly catapulted us into the public eye. At that time, Amanda was in the third grade and our son, Brandon, was in the fifth grade at Grace Academy of Georgetown. I work in administration at Grace and my husband, Thomas, is a paramedic.

The summer before, our family had started down the path of a new commitment to our faith. We were living life with an excitement to see what God was going to call us to next. We were planning a family foreign mission trip that very summer, but instead it turned out that our mission field would be our own community, and our story would spread farther than we ever imagined.

Together, we drew strength from Scriptures our children had been memorizing since kindergarten. Thomas and I didn’t need to spoon-feed our children...
Scriptures and truths from God’s word—they already had that understanding, and much more. Their knowledge, based on the Christian worldview learned at church, home, and school, provided them with the unique understanding that all things are from God and He uses them for His good (Romans 8:28). The one constant we clung to was our faith in God’s sovereignty in all things, even in the number of days our daughter had on this earth. We would rest in that.

Throughout the 17 months following Amanda’s diagnosis—the most challenging and painful experience of our lives—we relied on God’s strength to carry us through. The wonderful memories we carry of those months will stay with us all our lives.

**THE VIEW FROM BEHIND AND BEFORE**

The day that Amanda left this earth to live in eternity with our Heavenly Father, God blessed us with a gift for us to cherish until we join Him in glory. That morning my husband and I, along with

Out of the blue, our ten-year-old daughter told us she was dying. Amanda wasn’t scared, but instead her voice was full of awe, wonder, and amazement.
my mom and dad, were with her. Our son, Brandon, was on his way home with Thomas’ parents.

Out of the blue, our ten-year-old daughter told us she was dying. Amanda wasn’t scared but instead her voice was full of awe, wonder, and amazement. As she lay in bed, she gave us instructions—what to do on her birthday and Christmas each year, to tell her cousins about her as they grow up, not to forget or quit talking about her, and many more directions. It was a steady stream of instructions until she paused and said, “It’s getting whiter.” She began to describe what she was seeing. “I can see the pearly gates,” she said next. She looked up at my dad and said, “Don’t cry, Papa. It’s not good-bye, but see ya later, alligator.”

All during this time, she told us over and over that we shouldn’t be sad but that we should be singing and rejoicing because that is what they were doing there. She then said, “The gates, they’re opening! It’s beautiful. It’s just like you said, Dad.” At that point she said, “They’re green.” I asked, “What’s green?” She told us there were grapes everywhere and that they were green and tasted so sweet. She said, “That’s what it means, that’s what it means: I am the vine and you are the branches!” She saw a big table set with food on it. I asked her, “Like a feast?” and she said, “Yeah, like a feast.” She again added, “And they’re rejoicing!”

She then said she was seeing a book, that it was a Bible, and to read it every day. It was at this point she was beginning to drift asleep and as her eyes closed, and her breathing slowed, the last thing she mentioned seeing was a big white book.

That day, Amanda peacefully went to be with the Lord, surrounded by family. As the weeks, months, and years have passed, we are still surrounded by love and encouragement from our community.

As I look at our son, who is now 14, and how he not only handled that painful time but also how his faith and knowledge of our omniscient God sustained him, I realize that the education and teachers at Grace Academy were incredibly influential in making him the young man he is today. So, when asked by someone considering classical education if the rigor is really worth it, I can answer with a strong, passionate, “Yes!” You see, when it comes to my children, I desire nothing short of the best education possible, but also I want them to know how to articulate, defend, and share their faith in a winsome manner and with a bold assurance. The past nine years at Grace Academy have molded our entire family and helped lay a foundation in our children that enabled them to weather one of life’s most painful storms.

Only our God could allow us to walk daily in the combination of two extremes—extreme pain and extreme joy. It is through Him that we are able to proclaim, “To live is Christ, to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

Don’t ever question whether a classical Christian education is worth it, but instead realize that as we commit to this education and to lifelong learning, the fruits from our dedication and perseverance will reap eternal benefits we will not fully see on this earth. Almost daily I am reminded of Amanda’s incredibly strong faith when she comforted us only hours before her death. She confidently told us that our parting is not goodbye, it’s simply “see ya later, alligator.” So while we still live here on earth by faith, our sweet Amanda lives by sight.

SANDY WATSON lives in Texas. She and her husband, Thomas, are the proud parents of two children, Brandon and Amanda.
School Snapshots

Sandhills Classical Christian School
SOUTHERN PINES AND PINEHEARST, NC

Dr. Alan Marshall came down to earth to serve as the head of Sandhills Classical Christian School, literally. After years of flying high-altitude U-2 aircraft, Colonel Marshall became Mr. Marshall to more than 300 students at the school. Throughout the classical Christian movement, a wide array of leaders from many different industries have left their former careers to support the potential of classical Christian education.

Tall Oaks Classical School
NEW CASTLE, DE

With around 200 students, Tall Oaks was humming along as one of the model ACCS-accredited schools when Dr. Tim Dernlan, the school’s headmaster, was approached by Red Lion Schools to take on a new challenge. The nearby established conventional Christian school with over 600 students sought a partnership with Tall Oaks. Now, both schools operate under Dr. Dernlan’s leadership. The schools remain academically distinct, but share athletics and other extracurriculars. The arrangement has introduced many new Christian families to classical Christian education.

Evangel Classical Christian School
ALABASTER, AL

This year, Evangel had their first winning entries in the ACCS annual visual arts and rhetorical speech contests. Another first: The same student, Heather Thompson, won them both! Her piece entitled “Composition in Light” (see page 26) earned first place in the “Painting” category of the ACCS Blakey Prize in Fine Art. Her speech won the 2016 Chrysostom Oratory Contest and was presented at the ACCS Annual Conference this past June in Atlanta, Georgia.

Veritas Christian School
LAWRENCE, KS

G-r-o-w-i-n-g. In Mrs. Fischer’s class, first graders recite the words as they spell them in shaving cream. It certainly helps with spelling, and the room smells like Dad. But, cleanup is a chore. Good thing the students think that’s the best part.
Our promise is not unlike that biblical cord of three strands. For nearly 140 years, Grove City College remains unsurpassed in the strength of its intellectual and spiritual community.

**FAST FACTS**
- 2,500 students from 42 states across 50 majors
- Beautiful residential campus one hour north of Pittsburgh
- Male/Female ratio 50/50
- Student/Faculty ratio 15:1
- Average GPA 3.71 / SAT 1212 / ACT 27
- Scholarship, research and internship opportunities
- 19 NCAA Division III sports; extensive intramural programs
- Marching band, orchestra, touring choir, ensembles
- 95% job placement or graduate school within six months

**HOW WE RANK**
- America’s Top Colleges – Forbes
- Best National Liberal Arts College – US News
- Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs – US News
- Top Value Private Liberal Arts – Consumer Digest
- Best 379 Colleges – Princeton Review
- Best Colleges for your Money – Money Magazine
- Smartest Liberal Arts Colleges in America – Business Insider
- 2015 Christian College of Distinction
- 2015 Pennsylvania College of Distinction

**RICH ACADEMIC TRADITION. AMAZING VALUE. CHRIST-CENTERED LEARNING COMMUNITY.**

**A CORD OF THREE STRANDS IS NOT EASILY BROKEN**

Ecclesiastes 4:12

Learn more and apply today.
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Baldwin, WI
Bayshore Christian School
Fairhope, AL
Beacon Hill Classical Academy
Cambridge, MA
Bethel American International School
St. Paul, MN
Bloomfield Christian School
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Bradford Academy
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Calvary Classical School
Hampton, VA
Candies Creek Academy
Charleston, TN
Cary Christian School
Cary, NC
Cedar Tree Classical Christian School
Ridgefield, WA
Charis Classical Academy
Madison, WI
Christ Church Academy
Lafayette, LA
Christ Classical School
San Luis Obispo, CA
Christian Presbytery Christian School
Baron Rouge, LA
Christian Heritage School
Longview, TX
Christ’s Legacy Academy
Athens, TN
Clapham School
Weston, FL
Clear Lake Classical
Clear Lake, IA
Colquitt Christian School
Moultrie, GA
Coram Deo Academy
Flower Mound, TX
Coram Deo Academy
Carmel, IN
Coram Deo Academy
Richland, WA
Coram Deo Preparatory Academy
Houston, TX
Cornerstone Academy
Morristown, TN
Cornerstone Academy
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Covenant Classical School
Naperville, IL
Covenant School
Huntington, WV
Covington Christian School
Brentwood, TN
Dominion Christian School
Oakton, VA
Dominion Classical Christian Academy
Dacula, GA
Eastwood Christian School
Naperville, IL
Eukarya Christian Academy
Mannheim, MO
Faith Christian Academy
Knoxville, TN
Faith Christian School
Knoxville, TN
First Classical Academy
Cary, NC
First Presbyterian Church School
Tampa, FL
Franklin Classical School
Franklin, TN
Genesis Classical Academy
Winnebago, IL
Geneva Academy
Monroe, LA
Geneva Academy
Roseburg, OR
Geneva Academy
Lincoln, NE
Geneva Classical Academy
Lakeland, FL
Geneva School of Boerne
Boerne, TX
Gloria Deo Academy
Spring Branch, TX
Good Shepherd School
Tyler, TX
Grace Academy
Springfield, MA
Grace Academy of Georgetown
Georgetown, TX
Grace Academy of North Texas
Prosper, TX
Grace Christian Academy
Merrick, NY
Grace Classical Academy
Laguna Niguel, CA
Grace Classical Academy
Springfield, MO
Grace Classical Christian Academy
Granbury, TX
Grace Classical School
Jacksonville, NC
Great Books Honors College
Montgomery, AL
Greenville Classical Academy
Simpsonville, SC
Grove City Christian Academy
Grove City, PA
Harvest Christian School
Petaluma, CA
Haw River Christian Academy
Pittsboro, NC
Heritage Oak School
Tehachapi, CA
Heritage Preparatory School
Atlanta, GA
Heritage School
Fredericksburg, TX
Hickory Christian Academy
Hickory, NC
Highland Rim Academy
Cookeville, TN
Horizon Prep School
Rancho Santa Fe, CA
Hunter Country Day School
Manakin-Sabot, VA
Imago Dei Academy
Ames, IA
Immanuel Lutheran School
Alexandria, VA
Coram Deo Classical Academy
Brownsville, TX
Island Christian Academy
Langley, WA
Jonathan Edwards Classical Academy
Whitehorse, CA
Kings Way Classical Academy
Clackamas, OR
Legacy Academy
De Queen, AR
Legacy Classical Christian Academy
Chesilhurst, NJ
Legacy Classical Christian Academy
Haslet, TX
Libertas Academy
Tampa, FL
Liberty Classical Academy
White Bear Lake, MN
Lighthouse Christian Academy
Stevensville, MD
Logos Christian Academy
Fallon, NV
Logos Christian Academy
Casa Grande, AZ
Logos Online School
Moscow, ID
Late Again!
Practical thoughts for the drive

We are a few weeks into the new school year—commute number 19 and Polo Shirt Friday number three—and mingled with the upbeat early-morning song on the radio comes the popular refrain, “Why do we have to wear uniforms anyway?”

Earlier in the summer, on a quieter and sunnier drive, I heard a report. It said, and I remember distinctly, that our modern brains suffer from something called “Decision Fatigue.” Basically, having too many decisions results in not having enough mental energy for the really important things, like contemplation, relationships, and waking up in the morning. Finally, a syndrome I can relate to.

And it gets better. What is the easiest and most practical way to combat Decision Fatigue? The answer is unexpectedly relevant—wear the same thing every day. In fact, the report seemed to assert that if you want to increase personal and professional success, make this one change. And watch time inexplicably expand and that promotion drop into your lap.

The ramifications are immediately apparent. Buy fewer but tasteful items. If they match, you will always look good. You spend less time shopping, sorting, matching, deciding, deciding, and deciding. And, interestingly, people actually like and trust the stability and authenticity of the new you. They might not come to you for fashion advice, but for some of us, that was never going to happen anyway.

How do I communicate these benefits to my young students who might care more about their classmate’s iWatch than their current academic and future professional success? Who couldn’t care less that the classroom atmosphere is negatively affected when students compete for “Best Dressed”? Who would rather pursue … well … anything than the deeper meanings of Dante?

I think we can all imagine typical teenage responses to the idea of uniforms. “That infringes on my freedom of expression.” Or, “My soul would wilt within me.” Well, if that’s all it takes, I wonder what will happen if you became a parent with multiple children to get to school each day, and run out of time, and then have to wear your pajamas all the way to school? Hypothetically speaking, of course.

Someday, I might have time to impart these deeper truths of wardrobe simplicity, of the catharsis born from clear-minded decision making. For we should dress for the benefit of our community, even as adults. Beauty on the outside enhances beauty on the inside, even through fibers woven together to cover our bodies.

Someday, yes, but not this day … when I’m busy trying to pass a Volt.

Here’s what you can tell your kids as you drop them off for day 947 of wearing the same thing to school. Uniforms save mom time, money, and stress. You can join the ranks of the fashionistas when those three things are all on you. Oh, and happy Polo Shirt Friday!

While the referenced show’s transcript is currently unavailable, try Googling “wear the same thing everyday” and see the results!
If the topic doesn’t come up, maybe you should introduce it yourself. Why uniforms? Practical reasons might satisfy the practically minded. But don’t stop there. It’s all about Paideia—the transfer of “affections,” not just information and rules. Daily, mundane events in our lives can shed real, illuminating light on a very encouraging fact—we are eternal and our eternal home is beautiful.

“Huh?” you might ask.

To clarify, when it comes to uniforms, first we have to consider a principle that seems to be eroding quickly in our culture: Things like skillful musicians, wise people, and nice clothes actually exist. So do their counterparts. In all of life, we want to acknowledge and choose what is best, most appropriate, and most beautiful for any occasion.

Because here is the second eroding principle: Our actions matter. The effect of wearing flip flops and shabby jeans to a funeral is real. The effect of speaking disrespectfully about an elderly person is real. The very act of choosing to take the “high road” over another has an effect, in and of itself. That’s why you might notice this general principle at work: The more your dress reflects respect to yourself and those around you, the more others will respect you.

Let’s not forget, a student is a disciple. “An undisciplined student is an oxymoron.” (*The Paideia of God*, Douglas Wilson) So, in general, is a well-dressed teenager. We cannot redeem the culture of education without outward signs of its redemption. Applying the real standards of truth, goodness, and beauty, in all areas, is a good first step. So, bring on the sweater vest and pleated skirt, plaid tie and shined up shoes. Good character made, is good character worn.

### Uniform Tips

#### TYING TIES

ClassicalDifference.com/uniforms for a demonstration of the following:

- Our recommended tie: The half windsor
- The full windsor
- The bow tie

#### IRONING PLEATS

To keep the pleats in longer, drip dry. You can also dry on low and remove the skirt when it’s still damp. The more and higher the heat in the dryer, the sooner the skirt will loose its pleats.


**NOTE:** Unless you’re going for a style your school may or may not approve, patches always go on the inside.

#### REPAIRING HOLES

In our family, holes most often occur in pants and sweaters.

**PANTS:** To avoid patching holes in the knees, buy pants with reinforced knees. They might be more expensive, but this can be worth it in the long run. Or even in the first week.

When holes do appear, have patches on hand. You can place a patch just about anywhere, even on the pocket that got cut by scissors in art class.

**SWEATERS:** Patches are handy for repairing holes in sweaters, even along seams. Make sure the hole is closed as much as possible before placing the patch, so that the sticky surface from the patch doesn’t show through and attract lint or dirt.

I’ve repaired many sweater holes this way along seams, on elbows, and in random spots. If you’re careful, repairs are nearly invisible.

**HINT:** Buy a supply of appropriately colored patches before school starts.
Because life’s most important lesson is learning why you’re here.

Inquire today about an exclusive ACCS scholarship!
Wisdom from the front

The best school in the world is a bunch of people who love and seek the truth in its many manifestations. At least a few of them should be alive.

—ANDREW KERN, President, Circe Institute, Former headmaster/teacher at multiple classical Christian schools around the country

We’ve lived long enough to learn that the past is not always suspect, while the present and future are not always our only hope.

—THE ACADEMY OF CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN STUDIES, Scholars Blog

I am reminded also that Christian education is intensely personal. Sticking this young man at a table with a book might not accomplish anything, but modeling a love for books and nurturing that love through guiding him toward good books is powerful. Education is essentially relational.

—DAVID BRYANT, Regents Academy Blog
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