

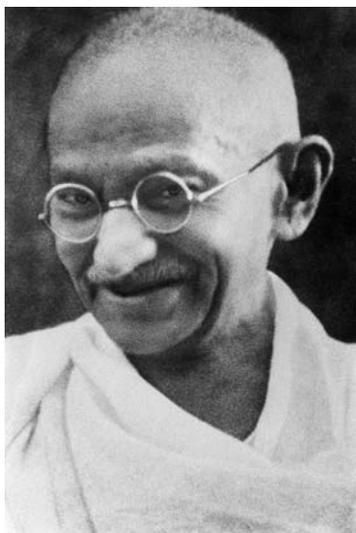
Palmarium

The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge.



Reflections on Love of Learning

••••• Assorted Quotes



Mahatma Gandhi
(1869-1948)

Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. *Mahatma Gandhi*

If we succeed in the giving of the love of learning, the learning itself is sure to follow. *John Lubbock (1843-1913)*

Love of learning is the most necessary passion . . . in it lies our happiness. It's a sure remedy for what ails us, and an unending source of pleasure. *Emilie du Chatelet (1706-1749)*

Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon. *E.M. Forster (1879-1970)*

There is no school equal to a decent home and no teacher equal to a virtuous parent. *Mahatma Gandhi*

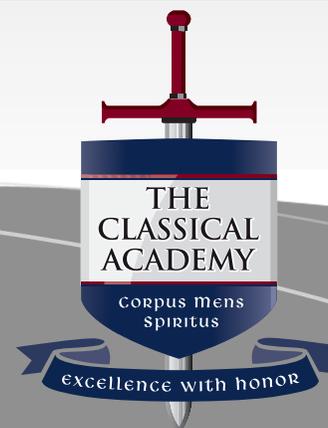
A love of books, of holding a book, turning its pages, looking at its pictures and living its fascinating stories goes hand-in-hand with a love of learning. *Laura Bush (1946-)*

see page 3 for more Love of Learning quotes

Contents

- Page 1 Quotes on *Love of Learning Reflection*
- Pages 2-3 *Love of Learning* article by Betsy Brown, Director of Character; *Love of Learning Definitions* + more quotes
- Pages 4-5 *Why Do We Have a President?; President* letter from the President on Assessments
- Page 6 National School Rankings; *Ponderings* TCA's Titan of the Year
- Page 7 Beyond the Book Club info; Confucius quote on the *Love of Learning*
- Page 8 Upcoming Due Dates for *Due Dates* DAS + Compliance Corner
- Page 9 *Love of Learning* Poster: *Due Dates* Ben Franklin

- Whole Person Focused
 - Relationship Based
 - Classically Oriented
 - Idea Centered



LOVE OF LEARNING *by Betsy Brown* (TCA Director of Character)

Education is the kindling of a flame not the filling of a vessel.

Socrates

“Love of Learning” is one of the character traits under a popular character strength survey called the VIA Character Trait Survey. “Love of Learning” is defined as “mastering new skills and knowledge and systematically adding to what one knows.” It just so happens to be my top character strength. Lucky me! I have taken the VIA character trait survey three different times and “Love of Learning” is always in the top spot, and I’m pretty confident that people who know me would agree with the assessment. In fact, one of my nicknames is “information booth.” A few years ago I was shopping with a friend in Whole Foods and we saw Acai juice. My friend said, “What is that? I’ve never heard of that before and how do you pronounce it?” and I replied, “Acai is a purple berry that grows in the Brazilian rain forest and it’s supposed to be high in antioxidants and it is pronounced ah-sah-EE”. At this point in the conversation my friend Jude was practically on the floor laughing and said “how do you know that, why do you know that, and this is exactly why people call you information booth.”

Titans take ownership and find joy in learning is one of my favorite lines from The Titan’s Creed. The emphasis on instilling a passion and joy for learning is core to our mission and vision at TCA. From Immigration Day, to Roman Day, to Medieval Day, to sitting around the table at a Socratic seminar, to defending a topic during hostile panels in Rhetoric, the goal of education at TCA is to cultivate a love of learning. In fact it is written into our core values: *We value an education that nurtures a passion for learning that will last a lifetime through the context of human relationships and a foundational knowledge base.* We are all born with a love of learning and an innate curiosity. In a world that wants to



reduce education to test scores, I commend TCA for recognizing the importance encouraging a passion for learning. I will be eternally grateful to so many TCA teachers and staff who have helped light the fire in my own children.

[continued on the next page]



CHARACTER STRENGTHS

on LOVE OF LEARNING in *Character*

“Love of learning describes the way in generally and/or the well-developed individual interest with which he or she engages particular content. When people have love of learning as a strength, they are cognitively engaged. They typically experience positive feelings in the process of acquiring skills, satisfying curiosity, building on existing knowledge, and/or learning something completely new (Krapp & Fink, 1992). This strength has important motivational consequences in that it helps people to persist in the face of setbacks, challenges, and negative feedback . . . It is likely that people with love of learning as a general strength would strongly endorse statements such as the following: I can’t do this task now, but I think I will be able to do it in the future; I like to learn new things; I will do whatever it takes in order to do a task correctly; learning is a positive experience; I care more about doing a thorough job than whether I receive a good grade (163).”

CLASSIFICATIONS and DEFINITIONS:

In their chapter *Strengths and Virtues*, Peterson and Seligman write: which a person engages new information and skills

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2nd edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. www.viacharacter.org

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. www.viacharacter.org



CREATIVITY: Originality; adaptive; ingenuity
CURIOSITY: Interest; novelty-seeking; exploration; openness to experience
JUDGMENT: Critical thinking; thinking things through; open-minded
LOVE OF LEARNING: Mastering new skills & topics; systematically adding to knowledge
PERSPECTIVE: Wisdom; providing wise counsel; taking the big picture view

LOVE OF LEARNING (continued from previous page)

The **VIA website** (<https://www.viacharacter.org>) suggests some exercises for boosting *love of learning*:

- *Deliberately learn five new words, including their meaning and usage, at least twice a week.*
- *Read a non-fiction book monthly on a topic you find absorbing and engaging.*
- *Follow an ongoing global event through newspapers, TV, or the internet.*
- *Watch Josh Kaufman's TEDXCSU talk: The First 20 Hours-how to learn anything: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MgBikgcWnY#t=416>*



As we kick off the 2015-2016 school year, I challenge everyone to a 21-day Love of Learning challenge. Every day for the next 21 days learn something new and share the information with someone in your life. If you didn't already know all the pertinent information about the Acai berry, you can use that to kick off the challenge. You're Welcome!

More Reflections on Love of Learning

••••• Assorted Quotes

I never teach my pupils, I only provide the conditions in which they can learn.

Albert Einstein

The love of learning, the sequestered nooks, and all the sweet serenity of books.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

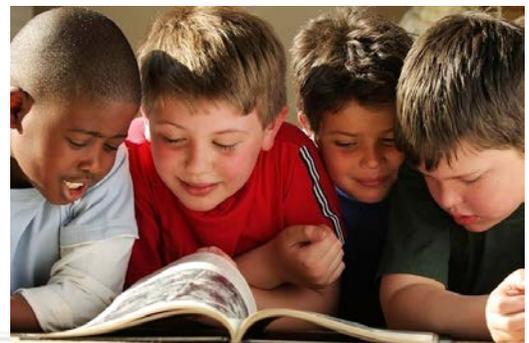


Teachers have three loves: love of learning, love of learners, and the love of bringing the first two loves together. Scott Hayden

Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence. Abigail Adams

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.

John F. Kennedy (undelivered remarks scheduled for November 22, 1963 speech in Dallas, TX)



WHY DO WE HAVE A PRESIDENT?

by Dr. Russ Sojourner



I've been telling a story at our various Back to School Nights, to give parents some backstory insight into the numerous emails, mailings, and other communications they'll receive from me – some of the thoughts and feelings behind the words they'll read or hear. Since I think that insight might be helpful not only to our parents, but to our staff, community, and assorted other Palmarium readers, please peruse on . . .

While I'm only starting my second year as TCA President, I've been associated with our amazing school for about a dozen years now. First, as the TCA junior high principal, then as dad of a TCA East Elementary teacher, and now – here I am. I mention the junior high principal stint because it sets up my story, from last year during the first few days of school, shortly after I took over as President:

And there I was, in the high school hallway on the North campus, when a group of my former students approached me and asked two most excellent questions, "Why do we have a President, and . . . what do you DO?" I think my three answers below (shortened a bit to save you some time) will give you a good sense of what I think is important and why it's so important – to me anyway.

First of all, in any school system or organization, someone ultimately must be responsible for everything that happens – the good and the bad. And I'm that someone. That means I get to receive lots of praise for the myriad wonderful things (usually of someone else's doing) that happen here.

And I gladly and happily accept that praise. But it also means I occasionally receive some criticism when things aren't as wonderful as they should be. And that's okay too, because it means I have things to work on that will help us improve.

Secondly, I get to help establish TCA's vision and priorities. For me, that all boils down to my desire to create and maintain an outstanding educational environment where the safety and security of our students and staff is our highest priority. So, when I make a decision or support a decision, I filter it through the following two filters: *Is it good for kids? And will it enhance or detract from the safety and security of our children and their teachers?*

Finally, with the preceding two factors as a backdrop, I want everyone to know that I'm DEEPLY committed to hiring and retaining the very best people, utilizing the very best facilities, and providing the very best instructional materials and co-curricular/extracurricular programs, to help our parents develop extraordinary young people. Because . . . they, and you, deserve the very best we can give.



In the first edition of last year's Palmarium, I wrote an article titled *I Love TCA*. In that article, I listed a number of reasons why I love our school and why I love being your President. One of those reasons was because "We're unapologetic about being different from other schools." As such, I'm unapologetic when I boldly state that we're here to develop extraordinary young people in mind, body, and spirit. And I'm also unapologetic when I boldly ask our parents and grandparents for their financial support. Because again . . . they, and you, deserve the very best we can give. And we can't do all that we need to do for our students with the limited revenue we receive from the state.

So, in a nutshell, that's why we have a President, and that's why I do what I do. Please know that I'm blessed beyond measure to be in this position, and as always, thank you for allowing me to journey with you.

We Are Titans!
Russ Sojourner

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT ON ASSESSMENTS

Dear TCA Community,

As we all know, last school year was an interesting time for state-required assessments in Colorado. Our legislature debated for much of the past session on how the state should proceed in reference to the number of assessments, the manner of assessing, and the overall standards. While not everything TCA hoped for was passed in the resulting bill, we greeted several elements with great enthusiasm. Specifically, we were pleased that TCA will now be given the option to complete any state assessment via the paper and pencil option rather than by computer as was required for several tests in the recent past. In addition, tests were eliminated or consolidated, effectively reducing by approximately 25-30% the time required for state assessments across all K-12 grade levels.

In the TCA Board-approved resolution from January 2014, two specific major areas of concern were noted: 1) The exceedingly expensive, unfunded, and developmentally inappropriate technological requirements associated with computer-based testing, and 2) The exceedingly intrusive testing regimen and drastic impact on student instructional contact time. We can now take pride in the fact that many of our administrative and parent community efforts have resulted in a reduced testing footprint for this coming year, and the paper and pencil option will greatly reduce the impact on classroom disruption and allow us to complete the state requirements in a much shorter timeframe. The Partnership for Assessment and Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has also reduced last year's two testing window format to one testing window for 2015-2016, and the time required to complete those tests has also been reduced.

While there is still room for improvement regarding the state-mandated testing requirements, we do see that strides have been made just in the past year. As noted in the 2014 Board resolution, TCA remains committed to its founding principles and core values and while committed to following state requirements, we will continue to stress that the Colorado Charter Schools Act was designed to "create a legitimate avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to take responsible risks and create new, innovative, and more flexible ways of educating all children within the public school system."

House Bill 15-1323 *Concerning Assessments in Public Schools* signed into law by the Governor in May 2015 requires the following:

Each school year at the earliest possible time, TCA shall distribute information to students' parents/guardians regarding the state and school specific standardized assessments that TCA will administer that year and an assessment calendar for the school year. Accordingly, TCA has created the following policies, procedures, and assessment calendar with associated links to the TCA website: [IKA-TCA State Assessment Systems Policy](#), [IKA-R-TCA State Assessment Systems Procedures](#), and [Assessment Calendar](#). In addition, exemption ("opt-out") paperwork can be found at the following links to the TCA website: [IKA-1-TCA-E Request for Exemption to Assessments – Elementary](#) and [IKA-1-TCA-S Request for Exemption to Assessments – Secondary](#).

Last year schools were held harmless (no associated penalty) by the State Board of Education from meeting the 95% state assessment participation threshold. For 2015-2016, the requirement to assess at least 95% of all students has not been removed, and failing to reach the 95% threshold could adversely affect our school and district accreditation by the state of Colorado. Furthermore, while we will continue to appropriately seek to reduce the amount of standardized testing, we recognize that valuable and useful information is obtained from assessment measures that enable us to make decisions about the best methods for helping your child academically.

Our Core Values document states that "the foremost measure of our success now and in the future is how well we live by the words of this document, and to a lesser extent by test scores, number of students enrolled, number of students on our waitlist, and other outside measures of success." As you reflect on the beginning of a new school year please take some time to review the documents referenced above and consider what is best for your family and the TCA community. If you have any specific questions, please contact your child's principal.

Respectfully,

Russ Sojourner

U.S. News and Newsweek Rankings



The Classical Academy High School and College Pathways have been nationally recognized in two different 2015 annual top high school rankings. Each year both *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* publish their school rankings using slightly different measurement criteria. *Newsweek* uses data from about 16,000 schools and *U.S. News & World Report* tallies their results from approximately 21,000 high schools.

Newsweek just ranked TCA's High School at **#298 nationally** and TCA's College Pathways at **#340 nationally**. For 2015, nine Colorado schools made the top 500 list and **TCA ranked #3 and #4, respectively, in the state**.

U.S. News & World Report ranked TCA's High School at **#602 nationally** and **#16 in Colorado** and TCA's College Pathways received **Bronze medal** recognition – the highest level College Pathways could be awarded (a school must have an AP or IB program to score higher than bronze level).

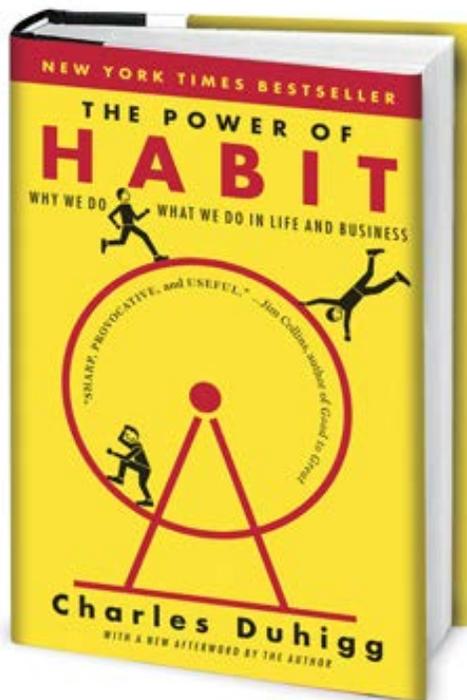
Each ranking system puts **TCA in the top 2-3% of high schools nationally**. Congratulations to all of our staff (K-12), students, and parents for a job well done.



TITAN OF THE YEAR

The 2014-2015 **Titan of the Year** award was presented to **Mrs. Candus Muir** at our beginning of school Teacher In-Service on Thursday, August 13, 2015. Mrs. Muir has been a teacher at TCA for 13 years and currently serves as a Junior High Science teacher. Mrs. Muir is best known for her incredible energy and drive. She has the ability to come up with an idea, make it excellent, and bring it into reality, which makes her stand out as an exceptional TCA staff member. Some examples of her work are the Science Fair, TCA Junior High Carnival, and 7th grade character lessons. Mrs. Muir's commitment to excellence in everything she does has led to many past nominations for this award and ultimately to her selection as Titan of the Year for the 2014-2015 school year.

BEYOND THE BOOK CLUB



In conjunction with our *Engaging Minds* theme this year we will be having our first meetings of the **Beyond the Book Club** next week at TCA's North Campus. For this first semester we will be discussing the book *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business* by Charles Duhigg in September and then Carol S. Dweck's *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* in November. If you would like to join us for one of the sessions please RSVP to me at wjolly@asd20.org (we will be meeting in the Front Range Room and classroom 2238). Our meetings will last 90-minutes. Next week's discussions are scheduled for the following times:

Mon, September 21 4:00-5:30 pm and 6:00-7:30 pm
Wed, September 23 4:00-5:30 pm

Please RSVP so we will know how many sessions to prepare for (we desire to keep the participants in each group to a relatively small number). If you would like more information on the four books and dates we will discuss those titles this year, and how you can be a part, please e-mail me at the address above.

Love of goodness without love of learning
degenerates into simple-mindedness. Love
of knowledge without love of learning
degenerates into utter lack of principle.
Love of faithfulness without love of learning
degenerates into injurious disregard of
consequences. Love of uprightness without
love of learning degenerates into harshness.
Love of courage without love of learning
degenerates into insubordination. Love of
strong character without love of learning
degenerates into mere recklessness.



Confucius
(551-479 BC) © shunya.net



Upcoming DAS Meetings and Due Dates:

ALT Meetings (11:00 am-12:30 pm or as noted):

Wed, Sep 23	ALT Meeting – Colorado Room (11:00-1:00 pm)
Wed, Oct 7	ALT Meeting – Colorado Room
Wed, Oct 21	ALT Meeting – Colorado Room
Wed, Nov 4	ALT Meeting – Colorado Room
Wed, Nov 18	ALT Meeting – Colorado Room (11:00-1:00 pm)

Due Dates and Upcoming Events:

Thu, Sep 17	Junior High School Visit – DAS (8:00-11:00 am)
Thu, Sep 17	DAS/Compliance Meeting (2:30-3:00 pm)
Mon-Sat, Sep 21-26	Homecoming Week Activities
Mon, Sep 21	Beyond the Book Club (4:00-5:30 & 6:00-7:30 pm)*
Tue, Sep 22	College Pathways Visit – DAS (8:00-11:00 am)
Wed, Sep 23	Beyond the Book Club (4:00-5:30 pm) <i>@North Campus*</i>
Mon, Sep 28	DAS/CCCI Meeting (8:30-9:30 am)
Mon, Sep 28	Cabinet Meeting (10:30-12:00 pm)
Tue, Sep 29	Cottage School Visit – DAS (8:00-11:00 am)
Thu, Oct 1	Central Elementary Visit – DAS (8:00-11:00 am)
Thu, Oct 1	DAS/Compliance Meeting (2:30-3:00 pm)
Mon, Oct 5	TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)
Tue, Oct 6	North Elementary Visit – DAS (8:00-11:00 am)
Thu-Fri, Oct 8-9	No Students – Elementary/Secondary Parent Teacher Conferences (Elem/Sec)
Mon-Tue, Oct 12-13	October Conference – Teacher In-Service
Mon-Fri, Oct 12-16	Fall Break for Students (<i>Staff Oct 14-16</i>)
Mon, Oct 19	Cabinet Meeting (10:30-12:00 pm)
Tue, Oct 20	High School Visit – DAS (8:00-11:00 am)
Thu, Oct 22	Junior High Visit – DAS (8:00-11:00 am)
Thu, Oct 22	DAS/Compliance Meeting (2:30-3:00 pm)
Mon, Oct 26	DAS/CCCI Meeting (8:30-9:30 am)



Compliance and Accreditation Corner

Check here for updates on compliance and accreditation items as we move through the year:

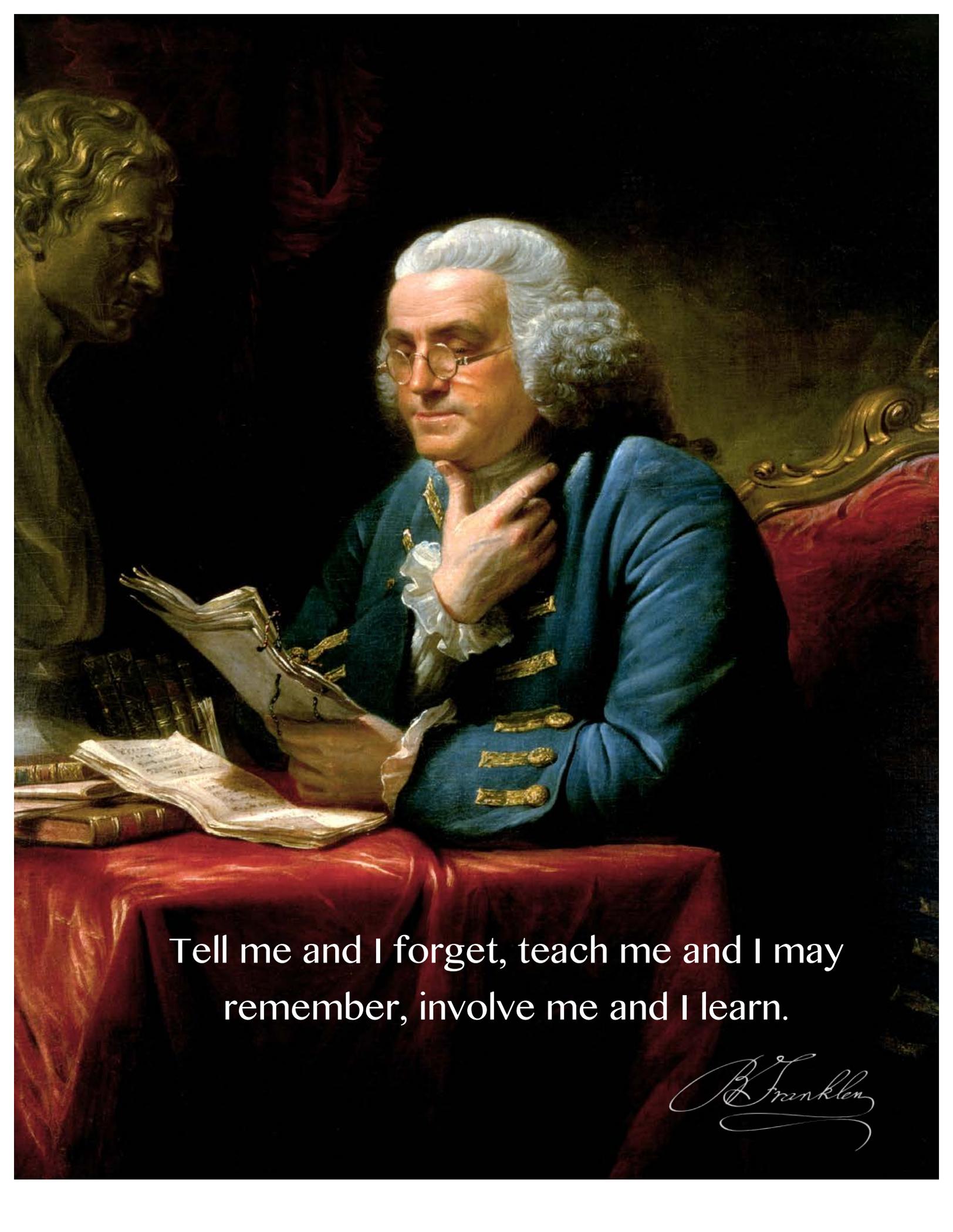
SAC BUSINESS TO COMPLETE:

- Schools create 2015-2016 SACs by **Wednesday, September 30** per charter
- e-mail list of SAC members to Cheri
- e-mail list of SAC meeting dates to Cheri
- share SPF and updated site plan w/ SAC
- gather parent input via SAC on paper and pencil option for state assessments
- update SAC bylaws (Cheri)

ITEMS DUE IN FUTURE:

- **Update Site Plans and SIPs/UIPs** – due to Cheri by **Friday, October 9**



A painting of Benjamin Franklin, an 18th-century American statesman, writer, and inventor. He is depicted sitting at a desk covered with a red cloth, reading a large open book. He is wearing a blue coat with gold buttons and a white wig. His right hand is resting on his chin in a thoughtful pose. In the background, a bust of his head is visible on the left, and a red upholstered chair with gold trim is on the right. The scene is set in a dimly lit room with dark red curtains.

Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may
remember, involve me and I learn.

B. Franklin