

# PALMARIUM

## Parent Survey



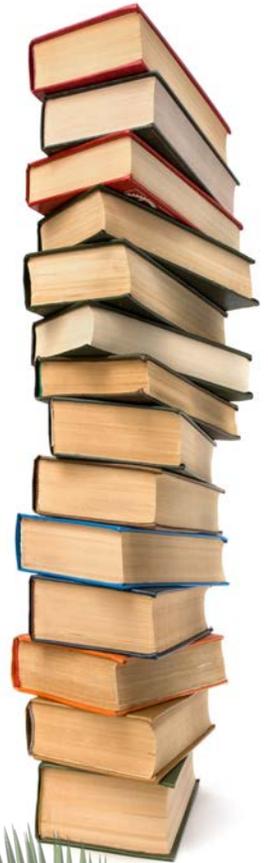
The Parent Survey included 1,180 responses this year across all schools.

A quick snapshot

**of the results:** the *fourth all-time best positive response rate* (covering 20 years of data), four of six common question areas reached 5-year highs (facilities, safety, academic preparation, and character) and the other two common question areas (communications and homework) barely missed 5-year bests. Nearly 50% of all areas TCA-wide attained 5-year bests and every common question had an 8-year best *strongly agree* response rate (see page 5). **Areas of focus include** homework and communications. Thanks to all that participated - your feedback is greatly appreciated.

## Engaging Minds: Beyond the Book Club

The last staff book study of this school year took place in mid-April. These *Beyond the Book Club* studies started in 2015, and when including the titles for next year (see page 2) we will have covered 34 unique book titles in over 75 different book studies in eight years. Hundreds of participants including staff, parents, administrators, and board members have participated in this effort over the years. Thanks to all that have given up 90-minutes of their time to engage on a topic of interest. For 2022-2023 we have four new titles to add to our studies. The goal is for us as a community to wrestle with relevant topics pertaining to our endeavors as a school and as individuals. The selected books are designed to stimulate conversation and intellectual discourse, and not everything in each book will directly align with each principle outlined in TCA's philosophy. If you'd like to be added to the RSVP list for next year's studies let me know at [wjolly@asd20.org](mailto:wjolly@asd20.org)



In this month's main article Dr. Sojourner shares why *I Still Love TCA* building upon his first article in the PALMARIUM back in August 2014. In addition you can learn about the Make-a-Wish final fundraising tally, learn about the VIA Character Traits and PALMARIUM connection, and find information on next year's *Beyond the Book Club* studies.

The Editor



# Rankings

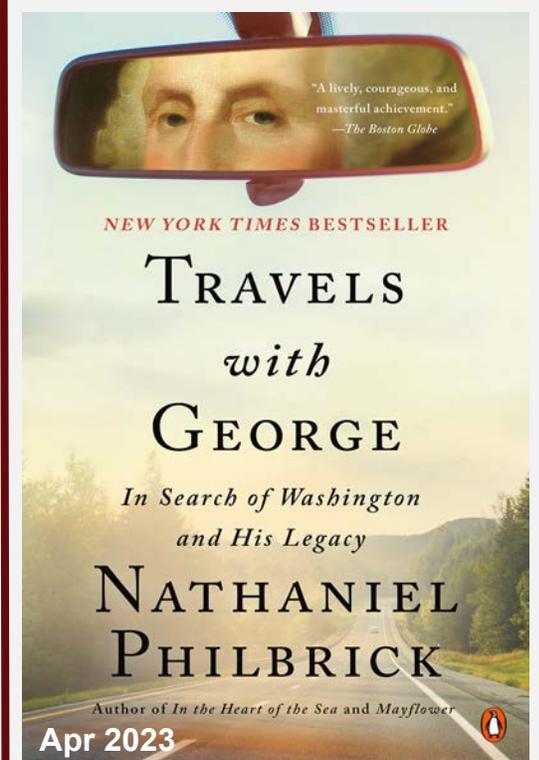
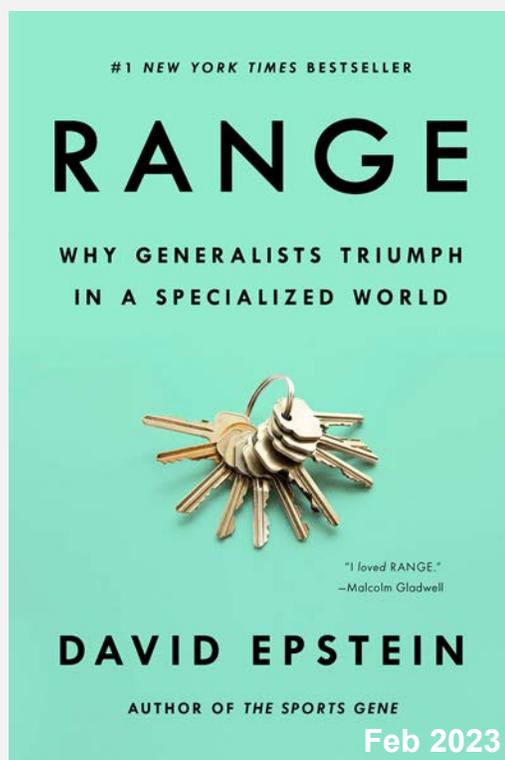
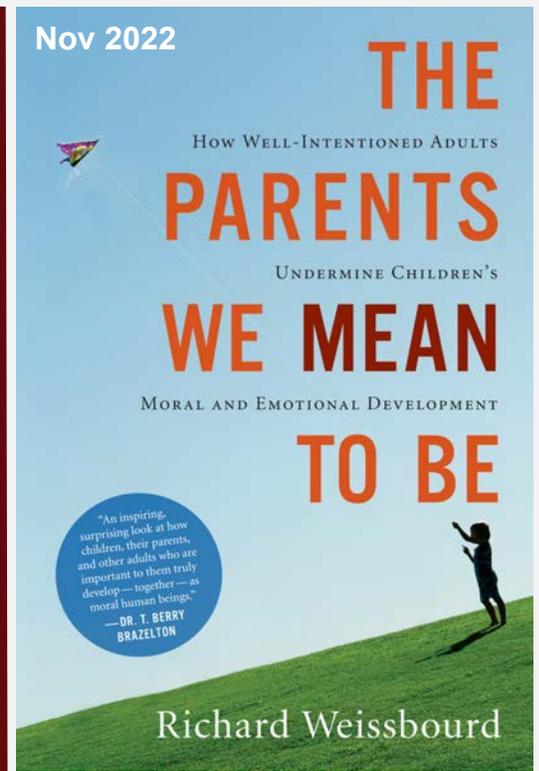
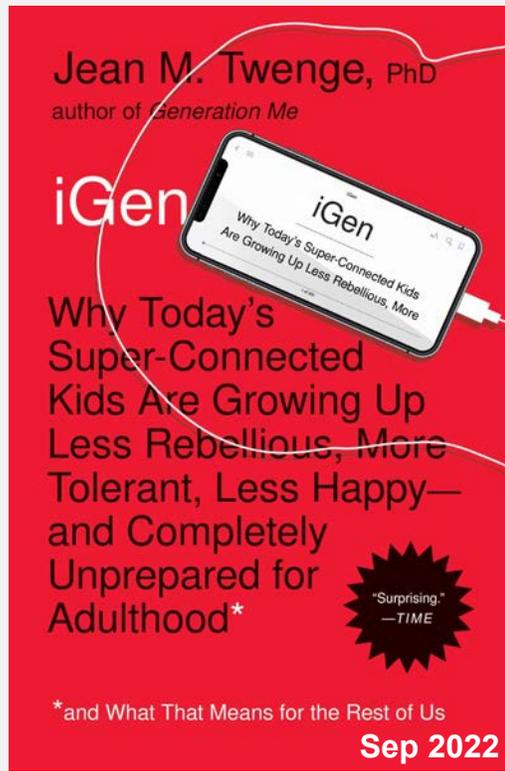
## U.S. News & World Report

Each year **U.S. News & World Report** releases a ranking of the top high schools in the nation. The 2022 results were just released this month after an analysis of 24,000 high schools. **TCA's High School** was ranked the #1 school in District 20, the #3 high school in Colorado Springs, and the #26 school in the state of Colorado. On the national level the rankings placed our High School as the #156 charter school in the nation and the overall #804 ranked high school in the country. Those rankings equate to our high school placing in the **top 3%** of all high schools nationwide. Such results do not happen without the great contributions of our parents, students, and staff across all grade levels. Thanks to everyone that made this possible. *Note:* Since College Pathways does not offer Advanced Placement courses it is not considered for the rankings.



click image above for link

# Engaging Minds: Beyond the Book Club



# SELECTIONS 2022-2023

Back in 2014, shortly after I returned to TCA as your President, our Director of Academic Services, Mr. Wes Jolly, asked if I'd write an article for the *Palmarium*, introducing myself to those who didn't know me as our former junior high school principal, and letting our community know what I thought of my return to this amazing school. At that time, I wished to let readers know that I was ALL IN, with sincere gratitude that I was selected to lead here, and a deep love for our school, our staff, our students, and our families.

Those feelings have never wavered – even during the especially difficult COVID times, when leading in the education community was particularly challenging. I'm pleased to say that the one constant throughout all has been my love for our school. I've thought a great deal about that lately, as we prepare to celebrate next year's Silver Anniversary. For 25 years TCA has been a pillar of excellence in the Pikes Peak Region, the state, and the nation. Assisting parents, virtuous character, passion for learning, solid foundation of knowledge... they really are more than just words in a mission statement. They're the lifeblood of our existence, and I know the Kretchmans and the other eight founding families are proud of what we've become. The inscribed phrase found on our entrance plaques honoring those families is a testament to the school we've become, as we've worked diligently to build, "a reality that far exceeded their dreams."

And so, as we prepare to enter our 25th, I'm drawn to the theme for the year, "Remembering Our Roots." My understanding of those roots began in 2004 when I joined our leadership team, and I'm pleased to say that understanding has only grown

deeper over the years. In that first *Palmarium* article, I listed many of the things I love about TCA, solidified for me during my two-year hiatus at a national nonprofit organization called *The Character Education Partnership*. I refer to that list each year when I address our new staff, and it seems appropriate to refer to my original comments (Volume 11, August 2014) here. I'll call it my partial understanding of our "rootiness:"

*Simply put, TCA is unique, it's special, it's countercultural, and it's unwavering in pursuit of the noblest goals. Trust me; I know what I'm talking about. I've seen and evaluated other schools – lots of them. I've met and spoken with other students – lots of them. And I've interviewed and trained other educators – yes, lots of them. Throughout it all I've continuously been reminded that TCA provides the finest educational experience that I've ever seen. Why (or how) do I love TCA? Let me list just a few of the ways:*

- Our kids really do stay kids longer.
- We prepare our students for the tests of life, not a life of tests.
- Uniforms (or at least a strict dress code) work. They're a pain to enforce, but they're worth the fight.
- Three words: Truth, beauty, goodness.
- Character counts. It really does. And we've never lost sight of the fact that educating in morals is just as important as educating in intellect.

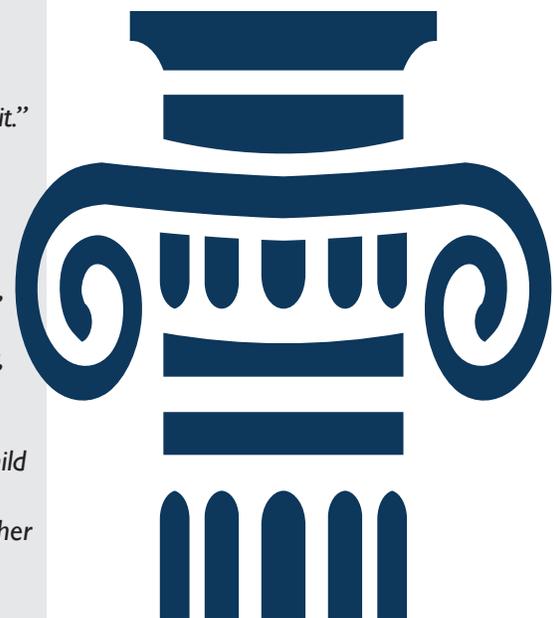
## I STILL LOVE TCA

- We wholeheartedly desire that our children do the work of learning and the act of knowing.
- The parent-teacher partnership is cherished and nurtured.
- Our teachers sacrifice financially, and it's "worth it."
- The foremost measure of our success lies in our Core Values, not our standardized assessments or other numerical benchmarks.
- We passionately value community.
- We recognize that it all starts with love, kindness, caring, and grace.
- Parents and teachers are grateful; for each other, and for our school.
- Relationships are paramount.
- Small schools and small classrooms, where no child is invisible.
- We're unapologetic about being different from other schools.
- Three more words: Mind, body, spirit.

As I've mentioned many times over the years, I'm blessed beyond measure to be your President, and incredibly excited to look forward to celebrating together our 25th year. These really are monumental times, as we prepare to celebrate a monumental accomplishment. Thank you for allowing me to journey with you, and thank you for helping me preserve TCA's uniqueness. There really is so much to love here.

We are Titans!

**Russ Sojourner**  
TCA President





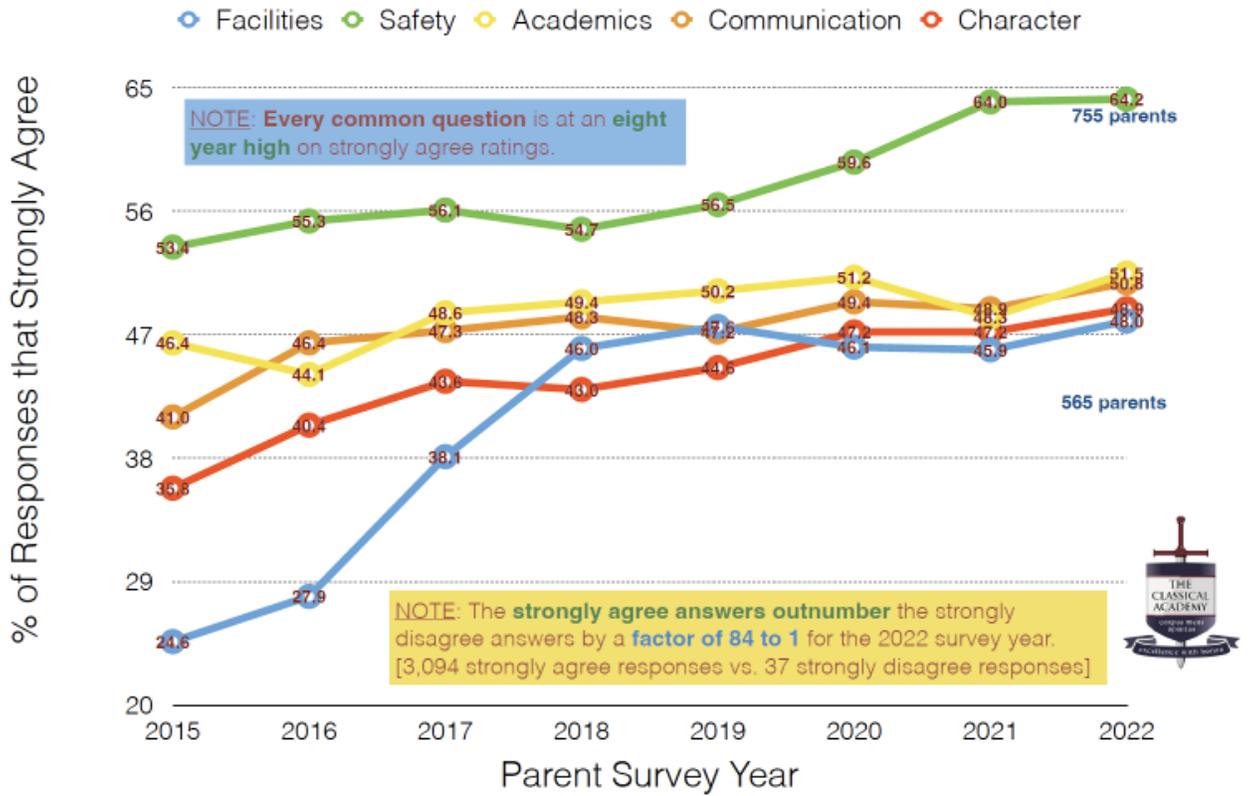
## COMMUNITY SERVICE: CORE VALUES IN ACTION

Each year our Titan Teams at High School go out into the community for a service day. In early May, thirty-five different teams participated in a myriad of projects including: *The Place (formerly Urban Peak), Next Step Horse Rescue, Catamount Institute - Sondermann Park, Fountain Creek Regional Park, Fox Run Park, Bear Creek Park, Western Museum of Mining, Wilson Ranch Pool, YMCA Monument Valley Pool, La Foret, ARC Thrift Stores on Austin Bluffs - Uintah - South Academy - North Academy, Discover Goodwill - Monument - North Colorado Springs - Austin Bluffs, COS Therapeutic Riding Center, Liberty Heights, Special Kids Special Families - Adult Services, Fresh Start Center, WildBlue Animal Rescue, Projects at our East, North, and Central Campuses, Mill Dog Rescue, Care and Share, and helping with the Homeless - Downtown.*

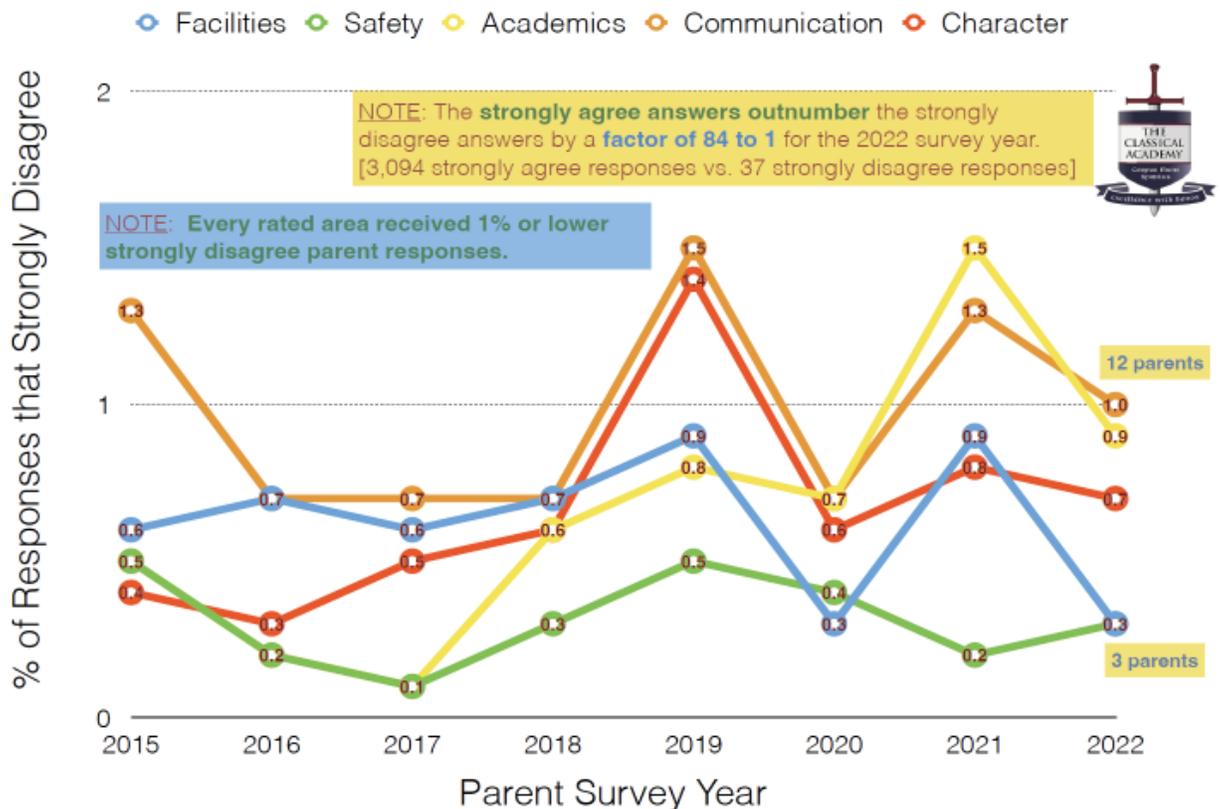


# PARENT SURVEY: Strongly Agree / Disagree

## Strongly Agree Comparison Year-over-Year



## Strongly Disagree Comparison Year-over-Year



# East Elementary Make-a-Wish Assembly

**Make-A-Wish Colorado: TCA Fundraiser**  
**Over \$90,000 Raised**



## Junior High Carnival for Make-a-Wish



**The TCA all-school fundraiser set an all-time donation record this year due to your generosity. Thank you!**



overall VIA: Vol 11

best of PALMARIUM and VIA: Vol 38/39

### Wisdom

Vol. 13, 16, 21, 33, 34, 44

### Courage

Vol. 11, 23, 28/29, 36/37, 41, 43, 45

### Humanity

Vol. 15, 26, 32, 66, 67

### Justice

Vol. 18, 22, 25

### Temperance

Vol. 12, 17, 27, 35, 43, 69

### Transcendence

Vol. 14, 19/20, 40, 42, 46/47, 49, 68

## PALMARIUM Volumes at TCA Covering VIA Strengths



First Volume of PALMARIUM - Sep 11, 2013 [35 of 69 volumes to date specifically cover VIA Character Strengths and 16 volumes directly focus on TCA's Core Values]

#### CREATIVITY

- Clever
- Original & Adaptive
- Problem Solver

Vol. 34

#### CURIOSITY

- Interested
- Explores new things
- Open to new ideas

Vol. 16, 44

#### JUDGMENT

- Critical thinker
- Thinks things thorough
- Open-minded

Vol. 33

#### LOVE OF LEARNING

- Masters new skills & topics
- Systematically adds to knowledge

Vol. 21

#### PERSPECTIVE

- Wise
- Provides wise counsel
- Takes the big picture view

Vol. 13

#### BRAVERY

- Shows valor
- Doesn't shrink from fear
- Speaks up for what's right

Vol. 28/29, 41

#### PERSEVERANCE

- Persistent
- Industrious
- Finishes what one starts

Vol. 11, 41

#### HONESTY

- Authentic
- Trustworthy
- Sincere

Vol. 23, 45

#### ZEST

- Enthusiastic
- Energetic
- Doesn't do things half-heartedly.

Vol. 36/37

#### LOVE

- Warm and genuine
- Values close relationships

Vol. 26, 67

#### KINDNESS

- Generous
- Nurturing
- Caring
- Compassionate
- Altruistic

Vol. 15, 66

#### SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

- Aware of the motives and feelings of self/others
- Knows what makes others tick

Vol. 32

#### TEAMWORK

- Team player
- Socially responsible
- Loyal

Vol. 18

#### FAIRNESS

- Just
- Doesn't let feelings bias decisions about others

Vol. 25

#### LEADERSHIP

- Organizes group activities
- Encourages a group to get things done

Vol. 22

#### FORGIVENESS

- Merciful
- Accepts others' shortcomings
- Gives people a second chance

Vol. 35

#### HUMILITY

- Modest
- Lets one's accomplishments speak for themselves

Vol. 12, 43

#### PRUDENCE

- Careful
- Cautious
- Doesn't take undue risks

Vol. 27

#### SELF-REGULATION

- Self-controlled
- Disciplined
- Manages impulses and emotions

Vol. 17, 69

#### APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY & EXCELLENCE

- Feels awe and wonder in beauty
- Inspired by goodness of others

Vol. 19/20, 46/47

#### GRATITUDE

- Thankful for the good
- Expresses thanks
- Feels blessed

Vol. 14, 42

#### HOPE

- Optimistic
- Future-minded
- Future Orientated

Vol. 24, 68

#### HUMOR

- Playful
- Brings smiles to others
- Lighthearted

Vol. 40

#### SPIRITUALITY

- Searches for meaning
- Feels a sense of purpose
- Senses a relationship with the sacred

Vol. 49



VIA Character and PALMARIUM VOLUMES

# Titans love, respect, and protect one another.

