

Palmarium

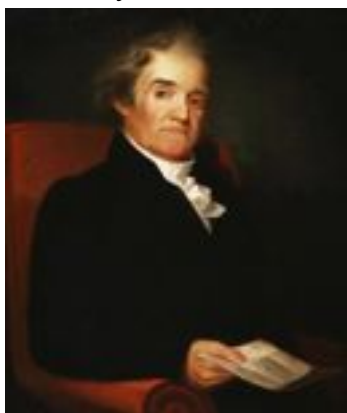
The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge.



Thoughts on Education: *Noah Webster*

From *On the Education of Youth in America* 1788

“Every child in America should be acquainted with his own country. He should read books that furnish him with ideas



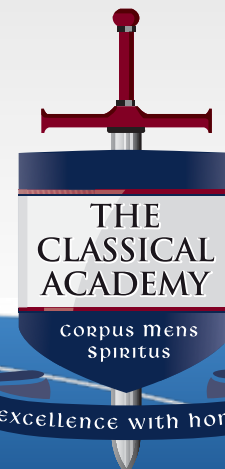
that will be useful to him in life and practice. As soon as he opens his lips he should rehearse the history of his own country; he should lisp the praise of liberty, and of those illustrious heroes and statesmen, who have wrought a revolution in her favor.”

“It is an object of vast magnitude that systems of education should be adopted and pursued which may not only diffuse a knowledge of the sciences but may implant in the minds of the American youth the principles of virtue and of liberty and inspire them with just and liberal ideas of government and with an inviolable attachment to their own country.”

Noah Webster.

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

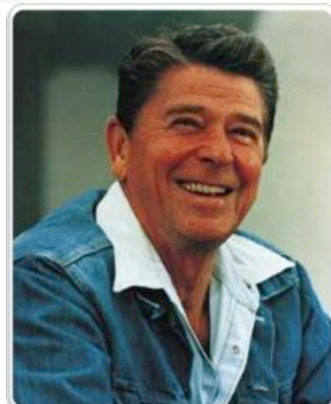
2012-2013 Academic Recognition for TCA

TCA's Elementary, Junior High, High School, and College Pathways Program received the **John Irwin School of Excellence Award** given by the Colorado Department of Education. This award is given to the top 8% of Colorado public schools. The awards are given to schools that demonstrate excellent academic achievement. On the school performance framework that is used by the state to evaluate schools, these schools "exceed" expectations on the academic achievement indicator and "meet or exceed" expectations on the indicator related to academic growth gaps. Of the nine ASD20 recipients, four were from TCA.

TCA's Junior High and High School also received recognition for the **Governor's Distinguished Improvement Award** which is given to schools that demonstrate exceptional student growth. TCA represented two of the seven ASD20 schools awarded this distinction.

Colorado School Grades is a coalition of 18 community organizations whose mission is to grade Colorado schools to provide community members with school performance information. Last year, Colorado School Grades rated TCA High School as the #1 of 327 high schools in the state (for the second straight year), TCA College Pathways was ranked #37 of 327 high schools, and TCA Junior High was ranked #16 of 491 schools.

Finally, the 2013 **US News & World Report**, Best High Schools report, ranked TCA High School as the #11 high school in the state of Colorado, #60 charter school in the nation, and #395 high school nationally out of over 21,000 high schools. A Gold Medal was also awarded in recognition of being one of the top high schools in the nation based on college readiness.



QUOTABLE

EDUCATION

"Education is not the means of showing people how to get what they want. Education is an exercise by means of which enough men, it is hoped, will learn to want what is worth having."

RONALD REAGAN



Discarded by Wesley Jolly

A couple weeks ago I was fortunate to travel with 40 seniors from Mrs. Stedman's vocal classes for the annual trip to the Denver Art Museum. Since I had been to the exhibit before I got to take on the role of docent to guide the students through the selected artwork. Nick Cave, one of the artists we spent some time examining, is known for his sound suits (see bottom left) – a blending of fabric, buttons, and many discarded items to make a piece of art that is used in live performance, video, and photographs. The background of how the pieces began traces back to the Rodney King situation in Los Angeles in the early 90s. Cave created a way to cope, a second layer of skin as a way to deal with the apparent evil in the world. The picture (top left) shows another type of artwork created by Nick Cave. He titled the exhibit "Rescues" – a blending of statues of dogs with numerous discarded (yard sale type) household items crafted into a type of shelter. As we worked our way through the exhibit the question I had for the students and myself was: "How often in our lives do we take the discarded, the forgotten, a person who is struggling or that is just left behind, and create something beautiful from the situation? Do we see the potential, the beauty, that awaits in the discarded?"

Common Core and State Testing Reference

"I was not trained to improve test scores; I was trained to improve students' lives and futures, which have precious little to do with a bubble test."

- jt53

responding to the Walt Gardner's Reality Check blog post "Rating Schools of Education" printed in the August 28, 3013 "Education Week" newspaper



Listed below are numerous links for the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) website and other sites concerning content standards for our state, the Common Core initiative, and PARCC testing. New links at bottom - more links to come next issue.

Colorado Department of Education Standards Links

CDE Main Page <http://www.cde.state.co.us>

Content Areas and Standards

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/contentareas>

(note: in each content area if you click on the discipline the first item in the drop down menu on the left links the state standards for all grade levels within the subject area either in word or pdf format)

Colorado Department of Education Testing Links

General Assessment Information

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/generalinfo>

Fact Sheets

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/resources>

PARCC Assessment Information at CDE Website

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/newassess-parcc>

Colorado Science & Social Studies (includes draft versions of the testing frameworks for 4th, 7th, and 12th grade Social Studies and 5th, 8th, and 12th grade Science tests – under Frameworks section)

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/newassess-sum>

Common Core Standards – Varied Links

Controlling Education From the Top: Why Common Core is Bad for America (takes you to link to download essay)

<http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/controlling-education-from-the-top/>

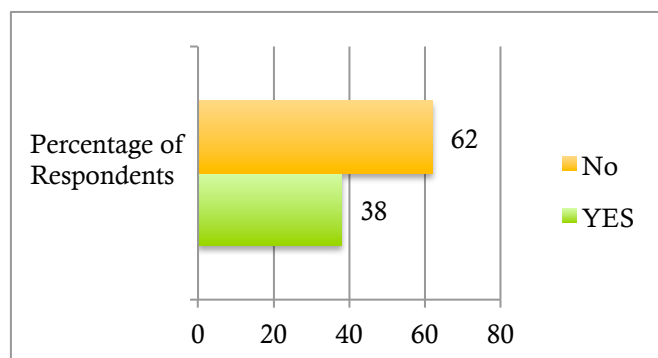
American Enterprise Institute - Common Core: Will Charter Schools Lead or Lag? (takes you to link to download draft essay)

<http://www.aei.org/paper/common-core-will-charter-schools-lead-or-lag>

At the September 9th TCA board meeting the board approved the creation of a temporary joint Board and Administration committee to research the affects that Common Core standards will have on the TCA educational philosophy and Core Values. The committee consists of the following members: *Steve Palmer* (board), *Dr. Kathleen Harrington* (board), *Executive Director* (representative), *Wesley Jolly* (DAS), *Dorothy Simpson* (CCCI), *Blake Galvin* (CCCI), *Don Stump* (principal), *Sean Shields* (principal), *Bob Swanson* (recorder). The first meeting of the group occurred on Monday, September 30th.

COMMON CORE PUBLIC AWARENESS

Question: Before today have you ever heard of the Common Core State Standards? (PDK/Gallup)



information and chart idea taken from page 1, *Education Week*, Aug 28, 2013

TOUCHSTONE

developed by CCCI

A school wide touchstone is the central key to developing an intentional school culture. A touchstone is a motivational, guiding statement that sits at the true heart of a school. Touchstones differ from “mission” and “vision” statements which describe the goals and purposes of a school, whereas a touchstone gets at the heart of how and why a school functions. It is a test for how well our thoughts, actions, and decisions align with the core values of the school. At TCA we are beginning the process of developing our own unique touchstone. We already have a good start with our detailed Core Values and Mission Statement. We will use staff, administration, students, parents, and our board, to develop a touchstone that we believe will be the next great step in continuing to develop TCA’s exceptional school culture.

Timeline for the Touchstone Process

September –

Train the Trainers; ALT members and DLTs will go through the initial phases of the touchstone process so that they can take their various groups through the process in October

October –

All staff will attend the school culture and character in-service with Dr. Russ Sojourner and Amy Johnston

All staff will work in groups (departments, grade levels, cabinet) to distill from the Core Values 4-5 key statements that speak most directly to who TCA is

November –

An expanded group possibly consisting of ALT members, teachers, parents, students, board members, and cabinet members, will distill the statements from the groups in October into the top 4-5

December/January –

A small group will begin to “wordsmith” the statements into 2-4 powerful and inspirational touchstones

C³I will work with principals to develop implementation and measurement procedures and guidelines that will be tied to the TCA Board Strategic Plan

January/February –

ALT will work to write a final TCA Touchstone using the work from the previous groups

March –

Presentation of Touchstone to TCA Board of Directors

April/May –

Finalize implementation/measurement procedures & guidelines

July/August –

Begin implementation and measurement process





Upcoming DAS Meetings and Due Dates:

ALT Meetings:

- Oct 2: ALT Working Session (Applitrak Trg); complete "Character Strengths/Virtues Test" prior to this date
- Oct 30: ALT Meeting (11:00-12:30) - Blake's office
- Nov: updated mtg schedule will be posted in mid-October

Due Dates:

- Sep/Oct: secondary teacher eval methods (principals/SEP); discussion item at SLT meetings
- Oct 2: complete "Character Strengths/Virtues" test
- Oct 7: Board Meeting; CCCI present - Touchstones +
- Oct/Nov: HS course approval process (principals/SEP)
- Oct 9: REMS training (4:30-7:00 pm @ D20)
- Oct 10-11: parent-teacher conferences
- Oct 14-15: teacher in-service; CEP-culture (CCCI/principals)
- Oct 17: TCA Monitoring Report to D20 (DAS)
- Oct 30: ALT evaluation process review (DAS)
- Oct 31: Quarterly Policy Reviews due (see spreadsheet)
- Nov 13: Strategic Plan - ALT input (led by CCCI)
- Dec 9: new course approvals presented to board (DAS)
- Jan 15: Strategic Plan - ALT input (led by SLT + CCCI)
- Jan 31: Quarterly Policy Reviews due (see spreadsheet)
- Mart 12: Strategic Plan - ALT input (led by ELT and SLT)

Please stay aware of the due dates listed on this page of the newsletter. It will help us make sure we are up-to-date on all upcoming requirements/suspenses. See compliance/accreditation specifics in the next column.



Compliance and Accreditation Corner

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

ITEMS SUBMITTED IN SEPTEMBER:

- Updated Site Plan submitted on Sep 30
- SAC Meeting Minutes and List of Members forwarded to Cheri by Sep 30
- TCA School Contact Time Estimates submitted to D20 on Sep 30

ITEMS DUE IN OCTOBER:

- SIPs/UIPs due to Cheri by Oct 26
- Complete Review of SAC Bylaws by Oct 31 (Cheri will complete)

ITEMS DUE IN FUTURE:

- Final Contact Time submit Apr 30, 2014
- Site Planning Training with D20 in Spring 2014 (coordinate with Cheri)
- Absolutess Notebook – Cheri will streamline process & gather appropriate information – due May 31, 2014

