

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 Perseverance

••••• Assorted Quotes



J. Q. Adams.

John Quincy Adams
first known photograph of a
president – taken in 1843 after
his presidency

Image from website: <http://all-that-is-interesting.com/first-photograph-of-president>

“Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.” *John Quincy Adams (1767-1848)*

“If your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill. Great works are performed not by strength, but perseverance.” *Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)*

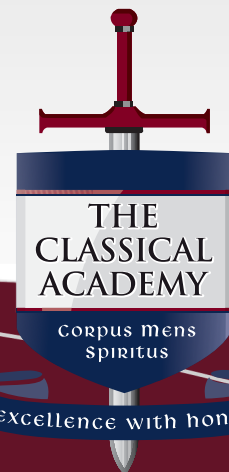
“Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty . . . I have never in my life envied a human being who led an easy life. I have envied a great many people who led difficult lives and led them well.” *Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919)*

“Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan *Press On!* has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.” *Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933)*

“Look at a stone cutter hammering away at his rock, perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred-and-first-blow it will split in two, and I know it was not the last blow that did it, but all that had gone before.” *Jacob Riis (1849-1914)*

Contents

Page 1	Quotes on <i>Perseverance</i> <i>Pondering</i>
Page 2	2 nd Year of <i>PALMARIUM</i> ; <i>Thoughts</i> Theme for 2014-15
Page 3	Thoughts from the <i>TCA</i> <i>President</i> President – Dr. Sojourner
Page 4	Paul Tough’s <i>How Children</i> <i>Reflection</i> <i>Succeed</i> – ‘14-15 Book Focus
Page 5	Compliance Corner and <i>Due Dates</i> Upcoming Due Dates for Academic Services
Page 6	“A Titan’s Creed” <i>Poster</i>



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

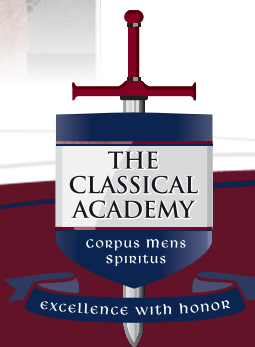
PALMARIUM – Year Two Focus

During the first year of the PALMARIUM publication the front page each month focused on quotations from great Americans primarily about education. For the next year or two, each month the front page will now relate quotes from various individuals regarding one of the 24 Character Strengths and Virtues listed later in this edition. The book, *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* by Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman, is being utilized as a framework around which we are further developing our character efforts at TCA. The goal is to utilize the newly minted “A Titan’s Creed (shown below etched in stone and on the back page of this newsletter) and these twenty-four

character strengths as a common language for our TCA community. At times, the hope is to have relevant articles or stories from staff members or others about the topic of the month. For the first edition of this new school year I thought it appropriate to start with the term *perseverance*. The *VIA Institute on Character*, in their document entitled *VIA Classification 2014* (which can be found on their website link listed at the bottom of the page), describes *perseverance* as “[persistence, industriousness]: Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles; ‘getting it out the door’; taking pleasure in completing tasks.” Join with us as a school community as we journey together in examining these positive character traits over the next couple years.



A Titan’s Creed – entryway at North



CHARACTER STRENGTHS

CLASSIFICATIONS: The portion of the viacharacter.org website) synthesizes one twenty-four character strengths. The six classification areas are: **Wisdom and Knowledge**, **Courage** (listed below with the four strengths in that area included), **Humanity**, **Justice**, **Temperance**, and **Transcendence**. *Perseverance* discussed briefly via quotations on the first page falls into the **Courage** classification as well as bravery, honesty, and zest. This edition of the PALMARIUM is meant as a brief introduction to some of our efforts regarding character and our expected goal of intentionally, systematically weaving these character strengths and virtues into the TCA classroom. So when you read quotes about a character strength on the front cover of this newsletter or you hear your student or a staff member referring to a specific strength you will have a little background info on the topic.

COURAGE	BRAVERY	PERSEVERANCE	HONESTY	ZEST
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valor • Not Shrinking from Fear • Speaking Up for What's Right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistence • Industry • Finishing What One Starts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authenticity • Integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitality • Enthusiasm • Vigor • Energy • Feeling Alive

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

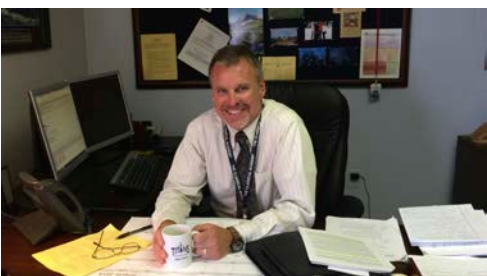
I Love TCA

Hi everyone! My name is Russ Sojourner, and at the very beginning of summer I became the President at TCA. Please bear with me as I tell you a little bit about myself – hopefully to frame my overall intent for this short article; to help you understand why I love our school, why I was relentlessly determined to return, and why I'm so excited to be back in the TCA "family."

In 2004 I became an administrator at TCA, before we had a separate high school and junior high, back when there was just a grade 8-12 secondary school. I was hired to be a secondary assistant principal, with an eye toward transitioning to leadership of the soon-to-be-formed junior high. When the third floor secondary wing was complete and classrooms for the 400+ seventh and eighth graders were moved from the many portables that wrapped around the north gymnasium, I took over as principal.

I've told folks since my very first day in administration that I was put on this earth to be a middle school/junior high principal. Perhaps that tells you a little about my maturity level, sense of humor, and passion for adolescent learners. Junior high kiddos will always be "my people," and I still believe to this day that me and junior high – we were meant to be – for a time.

But that time passed, and I "retired" from the principal business in 2012, when I had an opportunity to join a national non-profit, which focused on character education in schools around the world. I believed that opportunity would afford me a chance to do something REALLY significant... big and important things for thousands of students, parents, teachers and administrators. And while I did indeed do



significant things – visiting schools and training educators across the United States and in several foreign countries – I soon realized that the big and important . . . I

mostly left that behind at TCA. The reason? 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:

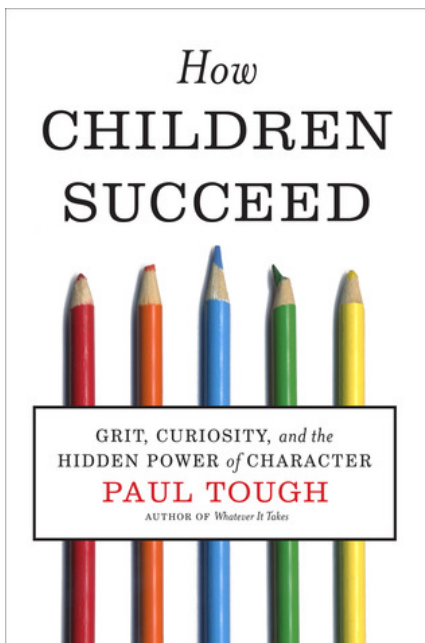
- Our kids really do stay kids longer.
- We prepare our students for the tests of life, not a life of tests.
- Uniforms (or at least a strict dress code) work. They're a pain to enforce, but they're worth the fight.
- Three words: Truth, beauty, goodness.
- Character counts. It really does. And we've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

Please know – I recognize the list above is only partially complete. Mr. Jolly is affording me only so much space for this entire article, and I could (and will, at different times) talk all day about why I love The Classical Academy. But hopefully you get the picture. Most schools "do" education. But very few schools do education the way TCA does education – in a very special way, for very special reasons.

When I recently introduced (or reintroduced) myself to the TCA staff, I tried to express how excited I was to learn, over a year ago, that the TCA President position was about to be advertised. Not because I was looking to leave the nonprofit world. I wasn't applying for jobs, I wasn't polishing up my resume, and I wasn't contemplating a return to school leadership. But I was longing. Longing to once again be an integral part of something bigger than myself, longing to return to the school I love, and longing to make a real and significant difference in the lives of young people – who will change our world, for the better. I'm blessed beyond measure to be your President, and I promise to do everything in my power to take care of our children, our staff, and our school. Thank you for allowing me to journey with you.

We are Titans!

Sincerely,
Russ Sojourner



How Children Succeed by Paul Tough

We so hope you found *How Children Succeed* an interesting read this summer and that it spurred some of your own thoughts about relationships with students over the coming years. Few things encourage our own growth like time to process with colleagues that share our life’s work, so we will create some space in the October Conference for small group discussions around some of the research and ideas presented. We look forward to talking together (*Office of Character, Culture, Curriculum, and Instruction – CCCI*).

“... educators and parents must first recognize that character is at least as important as intellect.” Angela Duckworth quoted in *How Children Succeed*

TCA CHARACTER FOCUS: 24 STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

A critical component of any endeavor a group undertakes is to have a common frame of reference – a common language. That is part of the reason we are using a single book study across all campuses this year (see above) to help contribute to this process. Beginning last year we started examining the 24 character strengths and virtues listed in the word cloud below prepared by the VIA Institute on Character. As we move into the 2014-2015 academic year we will continue this process as we work to embed these into our everyday TCA character framework. It is important as a staff member if you have not completed the VIA Character Strengths survey to do so soon. You can find the survey at the following website: <http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths/VIA-Classification> Again, if you have not taken the time to complete the survey it is a unique tool that can provide insight into your personal interactions and those of your grade level/department teams and it provides standard definitions of each trait. This year the Director of Character, Betsy Brown, will be working with dedicated points of contact, character program leads, at each school campus and the reinstated Character Advisory Team (CAT) with representation from parents, students, teachers, and administration to help guide our school-wide character efforts. As we proceed through the 2014-15 school year we will strive to build upon the natural links between the new “Titan’s Creed” and the listed 24 character strengths and virtues.



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



Upcoming DAS Meetings and Due Dates:

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

- Wed, Aug 20: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Wed, Sep 10: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Wed, Sep 24: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Wed, Oct 8: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Tue, Oct 21: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Wed, Nov 12: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Wed, Dec 3: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Wed, Dec 17: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room

Due Dates and Upcoming Events:

- Sat, Aug 23: Titan 5K/ 1 mile walk @ North Campus
- Mon, Aug 25: CCCI/DAS Meeting (8:30-9:30 am)
- Wed, Aug 27: Ext Rvw Sub-Committee Mtg (9:00-10:00 am)
- Mon, Sep 1: Labor Day - No School
- Wed, Sep 3: D20 Ext Review Planning Mtg (3:00-4:00 pm)
- Mon, Sep 5: Carnival @ East Elementary (3:30-7:30 pm)
- Mon, Sep 8: D20 K-12 Principals Meeting (10:00-12:00)
- Mon, Sep 8: Summer BBQ @ College Pathways
- Mon, Sep 8: TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)
- Mon-Thu, Sep 15-18: Grandparents' Week @ Cottage School
- Tue-Thu, Sep 16-18: Mountain Lab (8th grade)
- Thu, Sep 18: Grandparents' Day (Central & East Elem)
- Fri, Sep 19: Teacher In-Service (Secondary/Elementary)
College Pathways (in-session)
- Mon, Sep 22: CCCI/DAS Meeting (8:30-9:30 am)
- Thu, Sep 25: Grandparents' Day (North Elementary)
- Fri, Sep 26: Homecoming - Assembly and Football Game

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 and 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:

SAC BUSINESS TO COMPLETE:

- Create 2014-15 SAC by **Tuesday, September 30** per TCA Charter
- e-mail list of SAC members to Cheri
- e-mail SAC meeting dates to Cheri
- share SPF and site plans with SAC
- e-mail SAC minutes to Cheri throughout the year

ITEMS DUE IN FUTURE:

- **Site Plans Due** – principals need to submit new site plans to Cheri by **Monday, September 22.**
- **Contact Time Estimate** - Cheri will submit on **Thursday, September 30.**
- **External Review Visit** – **Wednesday, October 22.**
- **SIPs/UIPs** due to Cheri **late October** (Cheri to confirm date)
- **North Elementary Site Plan Training** – scheduled for **Tuesday and Wednesday, November 4-5.**



A Titan's Creed

Titans endeavor to recognize and pursue truth, beauty, and goodness.

Titans celebrate virtue in scholarship, relationship, and citizenship.

Titans take ownership of and find joy in learning.

Titans value our responsibilities above our rights.

Titans love, respect, and protect one another.

Striving to be our best, do our best,

And give our best to the world, in

Mind, Body, and Spirit,

We Are Titans!