



THE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

April 6, 2017

Dear TCA Family,

Per my recent email to the TCA community dated 6 April 2017, please see below an update on several areas related to student wellness/mental health and suicide awareness and prevention efforts at TCA. These efforts come as recommendations from the *TCA Wellness Task Force*, created after Dr. Scott Poland suggested several school-based prevention efforts when he addressed our community last October.

The *Task Force* is comprised of a multidisciplinary team of administrators, school counselors, and instructional and health professionals from our seven schools. This group has extensively discussed numerous topics related to student, parent, and staff needs, having met seven times this school year, with four more meetings scheduled before the end of May. The *Task Force* will also continue to meet next year, with the addition of several parent and student representatives. Please see below several important *Task Force* recommendations that soon will be implemented at our secondary schools (grades 7-12):

- On Monday, March 13th, the TCA Board approved a new graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2021 – mandatory implementation of the previously approved high school *Health and Wellness* course elective. The scope and sequence for this course (taught at College Pathways since its inception nearly a decade ago, and as a traditional high school elective for the past three years) can be found [here](#).
- On Monday, April 24th, from 6-9 pm, TCA will host a ***Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Expo*** in the North Gym – all TCA parents are encouraged to attend. In addition to the opportunity to hear from mental health and suicide awareness/prevention experts, parents can also meet and hear from the Health and Wellness course teachers and our secondary educational philosophy staff before and during the Expo.
- Beginning next school year (AY 2017-2018), TCA secondary will begin utilizing the *Signs of Suicide* program during select Flex Time offerings. *Signs of Suicide*, a research-based program recommended by Dr. Poland, has been used throughout the U.S. with great success. Every staff member at TCA will be trained as part of this effort.

PRESIDENT OFFICE

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- Related to implementation of the *Signs of Suicide* program, parents of High School, College Pathways, and Junior High students will soon receive communications from your principals about an upcoming anonymous seven-question student survey. Dr. Poland recommends use of this anonymous survey as a brief screen for adolescent depression and associated risk. You will be provided a copy of the survey two weeks prior to administration, and you may opt your student out of participation if you choose.
- To help us provide the types of future information you are most interested in receiving; please take a moment to answer a one minute, one question survey on potential Parent Academy topics. Click [this link](#) for the Survey Monkey-based question. Please complete the short survey by Thursday, April 20.

I will continue to update you early next school year regarding additional *Task Force* recommendations and focus areas for all our schools/campuses.

Thank you for your support as we move forward with these most challenging student, family, and community issues.

Sincerely,
Russ Sojourner
TCA President