

# The Classical Academy's Core Values

---



The Classical Academy

According to Leadership author Patrick Lencioni – “*Core Values* are the deeply ingrained principles that guide all of an organization’s actions; they serve as its cultural cornerstones; they are inherent and sacrosanct; they can never be compromised, either for convenience or any short-term gain. They are the source of an organizations distinctiveness and must be maintained at all costs.” In 2008, several of our founders and key leadership took on the task of creating a document that captured the beliefs and values of our founders as they created TCA. In December of 2010, our board adopted and approved this document known as The Classical Academy’s Core Values.

Our Core Values document is deep and rich. The language, formatting, and organization of the ideas are intentional. The first statement in the document is our Mission Statement – “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”. After this statement the rest of the document provides an explanation for what is meant by exemplary citizens, analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, passion for learning, and a solid foundation of knowledge.

The Core Values document is organized using the picture of a tree. This picture is developed starting with the roots section or the Core Beliefs and Values. This section is what grounds us as a school and provides the foundation for everything we do. One of the first statements in this section is “We value children as persons and therefore will regard them as full human beings”. This statement is a guide for everything we do at TCA, from how we treat our students to why we emphasize Socratic questioning.

This is followed by the trunk. This section contains the big ideas of our Instructional Philosophy. Ideas like the use of the Trivium – grammar, logic, and rhetoric – in everyday classroom instruction. Also, our focus on the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness, the use of Socratic questioning, and Charlotte Mason’s philosophies are spelled out in this section.

The third part of the tree is the branches. This section has a sub-heading of “Commitments”. These are often unique commitments that unify all of our

schools and campuses. Commitments like “We let kids be kids longer”, and “We commit to stay small – both class size and school size”, are distinctives that help to make us who we are.

The fourth part of the tree is the leaves. This section has the sub-heading “Behaviors and Practices”. These are things that we do as a school community that help to bring our philosophy and Core Values to life.

The final section of the Core Values document is the fruit. The fruit of a tree has a very specific purpose. It is the only part of the tree that is specifically designed with the purpose of leaving the tree. After parents hand a diploma to their child, we want those graduates to leave the school, carrying who we are as a learning community aimed at excellence with them into their future, so that wherever they go and whatever they do, they will be exemplary citizens. Our graduates are the fruit of this tree. This section dives a bit deeper into a description of our founder's vision of an exemplary citizen.

The Classical Academy's Core Values Document is the single most important guide for our school. It directs everything we do on a daily basis.