

Nova's Mission

A faint background graphic featuring a torch with a bright orange and yellow flame, positioned behind a grey classical column with a capital.

In a supportive community and through a systematic, accelerated college-preparatory education in the classical tradition, Nova Classical Academy challenges its students to develop intellect, to attain the habits of learning and mastery, and to live a virtuous life of duty and ideals.

In a supportive community...

We value a growth mindset.

We know mistakes are a part of learning.

We encourage questions (and questioning).

We accept that we can disagree and still be a community.

We continue to work for equity for all.

“We believe that supportive relationships between students, staff, and families are necessary for students to reach their full potential.”



In a supportive community...

Everyone gets what they want.

Everyone agrees at the end of the day.

We talk about “my truth” and “your truth”.

We say, “Well, the students just didn’t learn it.” Or blame the student’s family for a lack of support.



...and through a systematic...

Our curriculum is a tapestry, each strand important to the whole.

We teach parts to whole, concrete to abstract.

We know that basic knowledge and skills are crucial to higher-order thinking and we ensure that our students have the practice to master these.

We carefully build on what has come before and prepare students for what is coming next.



...and through a systematic...

Our curriculum is one size fits all.

We can't change anything; do as you're told.

We do the same thing every day/month/year.

We teach things one way.



...accelerated...

We dig deeply into topics so that students have time to make the knowledge their own.

We encourage students to reflect on their learning and make connections.

We use every minute because we know every minute with our students is important.



...accelerated...



We cover a lot of material, the more the better!

We allow students to drown or leave them behind if they can't keep up.

We jump to the higher-level thinking without taking time to ensure students have mastered the foundational pieces.

...college-preparatory...

“We learn not for school, but for life.”

Our students will have the skills to go on whatever path they choose after Nova Classical and they will know how to be successful.



...college-preparatory...

Our students must go on to college, especially “elite” ones.

If students may not be able to attend college or don't choose to do so, this isn't the right school for them.



...education in the classical tradition...

We utilize pedagogies from the three stages of learning (grammar, logic, rhetoric).

We enable students to participate in the Great Conversation and to seek Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.

We are knowledge-centered.



...education in the classical tradition...

We teach only the western canon.

We are a Christian school.

We are unable to utilize “modern” pedagogies or materials.

Our teachers are just “sages on stages”.

Students can't relate to how or what we teach. Also, we bore them.



...NCA challenges its students...



We challenge EVERYONE.

Our goal is to teach to the highest scholars in the class while helping everyone else get as close to that level as possible.

Our students will feel *agon*, but they will also feel the success that comes with working through it.

Scaffolding and differentiation are important parts of helping EVERY student reach their full potential.

...NCA challenges its students...



We do rigor for rigor's sake.

Agon means students need to figure things out on their own.

Students who aren't able to attain a higher level (for whatever reason) don't belong here.

Scaffolding/ differentiation are dumbing things down.

If our students don't learn it when it's taught, they'll never understand it.

...to develop intellect...

Again, we want our scholars to have a growth mindset to support them as lifelong learners.

We give our scholars training and practice with foundational skills so that they can use them anytime, anywhere.

By the time they graduate, our students should not need us to continue learning.

“We believe students learn how to learn in NCA’s classical education model.”



...to develop intellect...

Only “A students” belong here.

If our students don't learn it somewhere K-12, they'll never learn it, so we have to cram it in.



...to attain the habits of learning and mastery...

HABITS is the key word; we want learning to be like brushing your teeth, a daily routine that doesn't need much conscious thought for it to happen.

Again, we prize deeper mastery above broader, cursory knowledge.



...to attain the habits of learning and mastery...

We teach that one and done is equal to mastery.



We teach in a bubble because only rarely can skills and knowledge be transferred between subjects.

With instant internet access, mastery/memorization isn't necessary for our students to learn or to be successful.

...and to live a virtuous life of duty and ideals.

We believe the core virtues (fortitude, justice, prudence, temperance, and wisdom) are a crucial and embedded part of learning and living.

Participation in the Great Conversation as well as the search for Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, can't happen without virtue and the desire to help and serve humanity.



...and to live a virtuous life of duty and ideals.

Virtue is black and white, so we tell students what is virtuous and what isn't.

We have our standards set so high that no one can achieve them.

There is one common idea of virtue, duty, and ideals.



Questions for Reflection (or discussion if time)

- What part(s) of the mission statement resonated with you?
- What part(s) make you uncomfortable?
- How do you uphold this mission in your classroom?
- What questions do you still have?

