



## Member Affirmation Statement

Established in 2013, Frederick Classical Charter School, Inc. (FCCS, Inc.) is a Maryland non-profit corporation authorized by the Frederick County Board of Education (BOE) to operate a Kindergarten through Grade 8 charter school in accordance with the approved charter application. The charter is a legal contract between FCCS, Inc. and BOE that defines the terms of school operation, including the curriculum and pedagogy detailed in the approved charter application as well as the policies of Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS).

FCCS, Inc. is governed by a Board of Trustees, the leadership of which must be parents of students currently enrolled at the school. The Officers and Trustees are elected or confirmed by the organization’s members to represent them in governing the school in accordance with the charter application. Members of FCCS, Inc. are defined by the organization’s bylaws and include parents, faculty, staff, and founders, to whom voting rights are granted. The Board of Trustees accomplishes its duties primarily through setting the curriculum and school policies, monitoring and supporting the Principal in his/her implementation, providing a facility, managing the budget, and overseeing various committees intended to provide the support needed to achieve the school’s mission.

Frederick Classical Charter School (Frederick Classical) provides an educational alternative to the traditional neighborhood public schools in Frederick County. Its educational approaches were selected based on their track record of most effectively instructing the most students possible. Teachers and administrators are contracted from FCPS to perform the daily duties of operating the school, primarily through implementing the educational program established in the charter as directed by FCCS, Inc. This corresponds with traditional public schools in the county, where staff are employed by FCPS and must utilize the pedagogy and materials specific to their school. However, unlike traditional public schools, Frederick Classical staff are also voting members of the organization whose feedback and recommendations for improvements within the established pedagogy are considered a critical part of making the school successful. For this reason, Frederick Classical incorporates a teacher liaison position to provide a vital avenue for teachers to influence governance and curricular decisions for Frederick Classical.

By working together, the Board of Trustees, parents, staff, and members strive to deliver this educational option. The philosophy of the program is based on a combination of empirical research and common sense. As a result, the school seeks to avoid fads in favor of carefully selected approaches based on studies and data that have withstood the test of time. The primary goal is to prepare all students to succeed in high school and pursue their vocation or college of choice, with a secondary goal to have students develop an appreciation for the classical liberal arts. The underlying purpose of pursuing these goals is not just college preparation or appreciation of the classics, but to equip students for citizenship and lifelong learning. These goals are achieved by focusing on developing an in-depth mastery of a subject beyond a mere focus on performance on high stakes state assessments. Frederick Classical intends to meet standards through an overall richer program without narrowing instruction to minimum state requirements.

Frederick Classical follows a classical education model. This is a systematic, building block approach to learning, following historical timeframes with an integration of concepts across subject disciplines. The systematic progression is known as the Trivium, which divides the twelve years of education into three phases: grammar, logic, and rhetoric. The “grammar” phase is from kindergarten through fourth grade, and emphasizes not just grammar, as its name suggests, but the acquisition of knowledge, through memorization, and skills that are the building blocks of all subjects. The “logic” phase is from fifth grade through eighth grade, and develops students’ ability to reason, using the knowledge and skills from the previous phase as the starting point. The stage “rhetoric” is from ninth grade through twelfth grade, and develops students’ abilities to marshal their knowledge, skills, and logic to persuade others and engage in self-expression.

	Phase	Emphasis
Our School	<b>Grammar (K-4)</b>	Fundamental knowledge and skills (or “grammar”) of all subjects— not just English grammar.
	<b>Logic (5-8)</b>	Building on existing knowledge and skills, use reasoning to learn more and to more deeply understand previous learning.
High School	<b>Rhetoric (9-12)</b>	Marshal knowledge and reason to persuade others and express student’s own views.

It is important to note that the trivium describes the emphasis at each phase, not an exclusive focus. In the classical approach, instruction at all levels involve elements of knowledge and skill acquisition, reasoning, and self-expression. Through the Socratic Method, teachers can keep the class lively, yet disciplined. In terms of subject matter, all areas are considered important to students' development and are mutually reinforcing.

In ***reading and English***, students will begin their study by using a reading program that emphasizes all five components of scientifically-based reading instruction, including systematic and explicit phonics instruction that has been shown to prevent serious reading difficulties in the vast majority of children. Students will receive instruction in proper grammar and punctuation and will be expected to marshal their logic and express their creativity through writing. Students will be exposed to a wide selection of literature at all grade levels.

In ***math***, students will focus on learning a smaller number of topics in greater depth, which gives them more time to master the material. The emphasis is on solving multi-step, challenging, non-routine problems as well as learning the standard algorithms and why they work. This approach is designed to prepare students for a traditional Algebra I course in eighth grade that focuses on the topics needed in high school math and beyond.

In ***history***, students will complete two chronological sweeps through history: an introduction in grades 1-4 (starting with ancient history in first grade and proceeding to modern times in fourth grade) followed by a more in-depth sweep in grades 5-8. Providing a strong focus on history in the elementary grades and covering the material in even greater depth in middle school will provide solid preparation for high school study in which students are expected to draw conclusions using original source materials.

In ***science***, students will focus on the “big ideas” of physics, chemistry, biology, and earth science to prepare them for further study in those fields. Students will learn through conducting experiments, teacher-led demonstrations, and studying textbooks and other written materials.

In ***art and music***, students will become familiar with important artistic works and artists, often from the same time period they are studying in history. Students will develop their own artistic and musical abilities through a comprehensive, well-sequenced program.

In ***foreign language***, students will learn Spanish, Latin, and some Greek. The primary focus is on Spanish instruction, which will begin in kindergarten with a focus on oral vocabulary. Spanish instruction progresses toward reading, writing, and formal grammar study in later years. Latin instruction is provided beginning in fourth grade and is integrated with the study of English morphemes (prefixes, suffixes, roots) that are Latin derived. Fifth and sixth graders study more complex Latin-based forms, and sixth and seventh graders also study words used in literature, math, science, and philosophy that are based on Greek combining forms. Seventh and eighth graders may choose to study Spanish or Latin as their foreign language.

**For further information about the school's approach, please see the charter application and other materials on the website at [www.frederickclassicalcharterschool.org](http://www.frederickclassicalcharterschool.org).**

**Members, please maintain your current contact information by filling out the form at [www.frederickclassicalcharterschool.org/membership-form](http://www.frederickclassicalcharterschool.org/membership-form).**

## How are we different?

	Frederick Classical	Traditional Public School
<b>Approach</b>	Focuses on teaching all students the tools necessary for self-education by utilizing the Trivium: Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric with integration of concepts across subjects.	Embraces a common core of information, primarily in math and reading, whose proficiency is measured with standardized test scores.
<b>Phonics</b>	Systematic instruction in how language works, building from individual sounds into entire words. This foundation is necessary prior to emphasizing the meaning of written words.	Focuses heavily on learning entire words by sight in early instruction, by guessing words based on pictures, context, and other words. Phonics may also be taught incidentally, but not systematically.
<b>Literacy</b>	Scientifically-based reading instruction, built on phonics, making early use of substantive classic children's literature.	Built on a "whole language", non-phonics, foundation utilizing a mix of leveled readers.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Emphasizes mastery of facts, rules, tables, etc. repetitive drills to make math processes habitual to provide a strong basis of computational skills for understanding more abstract math concepts.	Emphasizes abstract concepts above rote learning of math facts, tables, rules, etc.
<b>Science</b>	Biology, Astronomy & Earth Science, Chemistry, and Physics are taught concurrently with the corresponding historical period in which the roots of the discipline were developed. We favor a more balanced approach including direct instruction, teacher demonstration, reading books as well as experimentation.	"Inquiry-based" instruction that emphasizes discovery learning. Biology, Earth Science, Chemistry and Physics are often not taught in depth until high school.
<b>Foreign Language</b>	Spanish instruction begins in Kindergarten. Latin begins in grade 4 for all students.	Foreign language instruction begins in Middle School. Various language options exist, but Latin is not required.
<b>Standards</b>	Focus is on teaching a smaller number of subjects to greater mastery developing a foundation for advanced study in high school and college. Avoids an "inch deep and mile wide" education.	Focus is on state prescribed standards covering a broad range of topics with less depth. Tends toward teaching to the standardized test.
<b>Assessments</b>	DIBELS, Singapore, iReady, and MCAP. Assessments are selected to best measure understanding of the school's materials and to maintain compliance with state standards.	Utilizes standards focused assessments such as Global Scholars in preparation for the MCAP state exam.
<b>Techniques</b>	Data-driven and time-tested methods that focus on developing a student's ability to learn. Cursive writing is taught. A preference is given to direct, in-person instruction over computer-based instruction.	Driven by government mandated minimum standards with tendency to unproven trends, especially with use of technology during instruction. Cursive is no longer taught.
<b>History</b>	Chronological going back to 4000 BC.	Anecdotal history, driven by current politics.
<b>Classroom Size</b>	Smaller class sizes than the county average, capped at 21 students per classroom.	Broad range that may significantly exceed the county average.
<b>Conduct</b>	Structured classroom environment behavioral expectations that are consistent across the school. Teachers seek to both form and inform students, and view the development of sound character and intellectual development as intertwined. Students wear uniforms that signify they are a part of larger community that they wish to represent well by demonstrating classical virtues.	Less structured classroom interaction with variation among teachers. Uniforms are not required. Tends to emphasize individual expression and aspirations at the expense of having shared community goals or standards. Character development is often a separate initiative instead of part and parcel of the school's daily academic and other work.
<b>Objective</b>	Good citizens with a lifelong love of learning who are prepared for college and career.	Education is a method for improving society; College and career readiness

For more information, please visit our website at <https://frederickclassicalcharterschool.org/>  
 This affirmation draws information from several sources, including the charter application:  
<https://www.classicaleducationtoday.com/2017/08/26/the-difference-between-classical-education-modern-education-and-traditional-american-education/>  
 Douglas Wilson, "A Classical Education Provides a Timeless Introduction to Knowledge", 1993  
 Jeanne Chall, "The Academic Achievement Challenge", 2000  
 Louisa Moats, "Whole-Language High Jinks", 2007