



EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY

Eagle Ridge Academy and the Classical Tradition

The History of Classical Education

There is a rich history of the Classical tradition. The Greco-Roman period was one of intense and multifaceted exploration of knowledge and learning, as well as the human virtues, most particularly good citizenship and the triad of truth, beauty, and goodness.

Classical education today also includes a spectrum of traditions. Moral Classicism focuses on the virtues. Democratic Classicism encourages good citizenship and embodies a more humanist approach. Liberating Classicism seeks to develop students' natural capacities and individual potential, using Classical resources to achieve academic excellence.

Classicism in the Christian west developed in phases. Medieval scholasticism emphasized dialectic and logic. Renaissance humanism focused on literature and rhetoric. Both of these traditions uphold the importance of learning and embodying the Trivium: grammar, logic, and rhetoric. The Trivium applies to stages of human learning. During the grammar stage, individuals learn the grammar level information – the foundational facts – of a particular discipline. During the logic stage, individuals understand the logical reasoning behind particular disciplines. During the rhetoric stage, individuals work on the art of speaking and writing articulately with adequate reasoning and support.

In each stage of the Trivium, various instructional methodologies are utilized. Teacher-led instruction is a method of straight forward, explicit teaching techniques, usually to teach a specific skill. Mimetic instruction leads students to new understanding of an idea and perceptions of truth by contemplating types (examples) of the idea. Dialectic (Socratic) questioning is the process of examining an idea by “deconstructing” it to find weaknesses and inconsistencies in one’s understanding then “reconstructing” it to purify one’s perceptions of the truth. Seminar discussion requires participants to seek deeper understanding of complex ideas through thoughtful dialogue.

Many schools choose to work out of some particular aspect(s) of the Classical tradition. Eagle Ridge Academy deliberately takes the best from several traditions. As educators deeply immersed in and dedicated to the Classical tradition, we have crafted a detailed and comprehensive Classical approach, designed to enrich, ennoble, and educate our students.

Our Classical Approach

Eagle Ridge Academy is a K-12 Classical charter school. Eagle Ridge Academy is focused on providing a rigorous, academic foundation that works in conjunction with the Academy’s Pillars and Latin motto. The following virtues constitute the Academy’s Pillars: Citizenship, Integrity, Perseverance, Honor, Excellence, and Respect. The Academy’s motto “Veritas, Probitas, Pulchritudo” identifies in Latin the central tenets of the Academy: Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. Using these virtues and tenets as foundations, Eagle Ridge Academy is able to fulfill its mission of providing our students with a traditional, Classical education that demands their best in academic achievement, behavior, and attitude and challenges them to attain their highest potential.

Eagle Ridge Academy represents the three stages of the Trivium in its three distinct Schools: the School of Grammar (K-5), the School of Logic (6-8), and the School of Rhetoric (9-12). Grades five and eight serve a special role as the transitional years: grade five is the transitional year between the School of Grammar and the School of Logic, and grade eight is the transitional year between the School of Logic and the School of Rhetoric.



EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY

Upon completion of their education at Eagle Ridge Academy, students will be exemplary and knowledgeable citizens who have been instilled with a life-long passion for learning; value self-discipline, respect, perseverance, and achievement; search for truth, beauty, and goodness; and have an appreciation for the United States of America and her unique role in the world.

Additional information specific to the School of Grammar, School of Logic, and School of Rhetoric follows.





EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY

School of Grammar

Virtue and wisdom are inextricably linked components of Classical education. Citizenship, integrity, perseverance, honor, excellence, and respect are all both moral and intellectual virtues. Like the principles used by the Founding Fathers of the United States of America, Eagle Ridge Academy was built on certain principles and truths that are timeless and inherent.

The first years of schooling are called the “grammar stage.” These are the years in which the building blocks for all other learning are laid. In the elementary school years the mind is ready to absorb information. Children at this age actually find memorization fun. During this period, education involves not self-expression and self-discovery, but rather the learning of facts. Students will learn such things as the rules of phonics and spelling, rules of grammar for English writing and speaking, poems, the vocabulary of foreign languages, the stories of history and literature, descriptions of plants and animals and the human body, and the facts of mathematics. This information makes up the “grammar,” or the basic building blocks, for the second stage of education.

The School of Grammar at Eagle Ridge Academy is characterized by a well-structured learning day that sets and maintains an appropriate educational tone from beginning to end. When students come to school they are coming for intellectual engagement. This includes learning how to think, question, wonder, and find joy in that which is true, good, and beautiful. Their conduct at school must demonstrate a self-discipline in purpose and a sense of appropriate expression (both social and academic) that stress the importance of learning both individual and group skills.

School of Grammar Components:

- Language focused
- Structure, vocabulary, rules, basic facts of all subjects, data collection, acquisition of information
- Structured curriculum around a sequential, historical framework
- Study of Latin and the fine arts
- Introduce note-taking and text annotation skills

Instructional Methodology:

- Teacher-led instruction
- Songs, chants, whole group recitation
- Mnemonic devices, drills, memorization
- Modeling/demonstration
- Written practice
- Mimetic instruction
- Grades 4 & 5 – Introduction to dialectic (Socratic) questioning

The structure of our learning environment is characterized by routines and procedures that support orderly learning and discipline:

- A unified, school-wide signal will start the day
- Attendance taken
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Students engaged using SLANT: sit up, listen, ask and answer questions, nod your head, track the speaker
- Objective and standards of first lesson stated
- Student completed planners
- Room arrangement ensures focus on the teacher
- Uniform check
- Students stand to respond
- Walk on right side of the hallway, hands behind back – K-4, hands at side – 5, quiet, following the teacher



EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY

School of Logic

The School of Logic builds upon the knowledge and skills introduced in the School of Grammar to form logical and organized thoughts and reasoning. This stage requires students to begin answering the “why” behind concepts, ideas, and experiences.

By fifth or sixth grade, a child’s mind begins to think more analytically. The “logic stage” is a time when students begin to notice cause and effect, how different fields of knowledge relate, and the way facts fit together into a logical framework. These students begin to develop their natural capacity for abstract thought while continuing to nourish their curiosity.

In addition to rigorous academics and high expectations in the classroom, the School of Logic also expects students to continue to embody the pillars of Eagle Ridge Academy. As students begin to grapple with the increasing demands of the School of Logic, they develop self-motivation and self-discipline to pursue truth, beauty, and goodness.

School of Logic Components

- Focus on questioning and logical reasoning skills
- Build upon the structure, rules, basic facts of all subjects, data collection, acquisition of information level to the why and reasoning beyond the foundation
- Structured curriculum around a sequential, historical framework
- Study of Latin and the fine arts
- Teach note-taking and text annotation skills

Instructional Methodology:

- Teacher-led Instruction
- Modeling/demonstration
- Written practice
- Mimetic instruction
- Dialectic (Socratic) questioning
- Seminar discussion

The structure of our learning environment is characterized by routines and procedures that support active engagement by students, disciplined study, and orderly learning in the classroom:

- A unified, school-wide signal will start the day
- Attendance is taken each period
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Objective and standards stated on the board
- Students engaged using SLANT: sit up, listen, ask and answer questions, nod your head, track the speaker
- Necessary class materials, including planner, brought to every class
- Notebooks out in class so students are ready and prepared to take notes
- Volume in the hallway should be at a conversational tone to be respectful of others
- Allow others to access lockers and hallways without delay



EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY

School of Rhetoric

As the final stage in the Trivium, the School of Rhetoric builds upon what students have accomplished in the Schools of Grammar and Logic. Students continue to learn additional grammar-level facts and concepts and to utilize logical reasoning; however, students build on these skills by speaking articulately and writing eloquently about concepts and in defense of arguments and positions. Teachers use open-ended questions to facilitate the depth of thought and insight expected of students. As they continue to develop analytical and analogical reasoning skills by grappling with challenging material and ethical ideas, students are prepared for college and foster a life-long love of learning.

Building on the first two stages of the Classical Trivium, students in the “rhetoric stage,” will learn to write and speak with confidence and originality. They learn to apply the rules of logic to the basic information learned in the early grades. By graduation, students will be able to express conclusions in clear, compelling, elegant language. Students will start to specialize in branches of knowledge that interest them. Specialized training in those areas may begin.

Students in the School of Rhetoric value academic achievement, self-discipline, and always strive to reach their full potential. As students become aware of the interconnectedness among disciplines and observe the truth, beauty, and goodness of our Classical curriculum and virtues, students will be exemplary and knowledgeable citizens who are appreciative of the United States and her unique role in the world.

School of Rhetoric Components:

- Humane Letters with Classic texts
- Seminar discussion
- Structured curriculum around a sequential, historical framework
- Study of Latin, Art History, and the fine arts

Instructional Methodology:

- Teacher-led instruction
- Dialectic (Socratic) questioning
- Mimetic instruction
- Seminar Discussion
- Modeling/demonstration
- Written practice

The structure of our learning environment is characterized by routines and procedures that support active engagement by students, disciplined study, and orderly learning in the classroom:

- A unified, school-wide signal will start the day
- Attendance is taken each period
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Uniform check
- Objective and standards stated on the board
- Students engaged using SLANT: sit up, listen, ask and answer questions, nod your head, track the speaker
- Necessary class materials, including planner, brought to every class
- Notebooks out in class so students are ready and prepared to take notes
- Volume in the hallway should be at a conversational tone to be respectful of others
- Allow others to access lockers and hallways without delay