

Growing a *wise*
and *virtuous*
generation





A pair of hands is shown from the wrist up, gently holding a small oak sapling. The sapling has several bright yellow, lobed leaves and a small brown root ball. The background is a soft, out-of-focus bokeh of warm yellow and orange light. The text is overlaid on the center of the image.

ISAIAH 61:3

“They will be called
oaks of righteousness,
A planting of the LORD for
the *display of His splendor.*”



A NOTE FROM THE FOUNDERS

RYAN & LINDSEY WOOD

Dear friend of The Oaks,

As farmers familiar with the excitement and anxiety of planting a new crop each spring, we are experiencing many of the same feelings as we work with our community to plant The Oaks Academy (TOA) here in Hancock County. As each year's crop requires careful planning, nurturing, and effort by the farmer and other partners, we are judiciously and methodically developing plans with partners that will lay a solid foundation for years to come.

The catalyst to plant The Oaks began with our desire for our children to have a classical Christian education close to home. But as we talked with friends and neighbors, we found there are many likeminded families who similarly want a Christ-centered education that will instruct their children toward wisdom and virtue. Time and time again, we are hearing from parents and grandparents that they want their children to learn about Jesus Christ and the Bible, but they also want their children to understand all knowledge through a biblical worldview and under the Lordship of Christ.

We don't have to look far to see the influence of moral relativism and anti-Christian agendas in our own towns and neighborhoods. But what if we could change the future? What if we could alter our culture, or even our nation's trajectory, through the transformation of our children's generation? Our society sorely needs strong-spirited men and women who are intellectually and morally prepared to speak their Christian convictions winsomely and earnestly. What if we could advance God's kingdom here in Hancock County, but also wherever God might choose to plant our children? That is precisely the heart of The Oaks.

The namesake verse for TOA is Isaiah 61:3, ""They will be called oaks of righteousness, A planting of the LORD for the display of His splendor."

This passage was written to the remnant of Israelites who had not lost hope in God's promise despite experiencing captivity, and to encourage them of the restoration God was going to accomplish through the Messiah. The verses that follow expound on the acts of restoration God will use His people to accomplish, including the people being called "priests" and "ministers". It's saying that these individuals will be planted by God to accomplish acts of restoration - to be a bridge between God and the world - and to do it all to display God's splendor and glory. What more could we hope for our children?

We believe this mission is vital, and we are prayerfully planning for The Oaks Academy to open its doors in the Fall 2025. I would like to invite you to partner with us as we seek to provide a solid financial foundation for the school by subsidizing tuition to make this education affordable and accessible; covering start-up expenses, such as desks, books, and curriculum; and securing qualified and gifted teachers and staff with competitive compensation. I hope you will join us in the work the Lord is doing at The Oaks.

Gratefully,

Ryan & Lindsey



THE NEED

WE REMOVE THE ORGAN AND DEMAND THE FUNCTION

“And all the time - such is the tragic-comedy of our situation- we continue to clamour for those very qualities we are rendering impossible.... In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honour and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful.”

~C.S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man

In a culture that says truth is relative and denies that there are absolute realities that we must live within, education can become anchor-less and ungrounded. Classical Christian education upholds the belief that absolute truth exists - foremost in the person of Jesus Christ (John 14:6) and the Bible (John 17:17).

74%

OF YOUNG ADULTS IN THE U.S. BELIEVE IN “MORAL RELATIVISM” (“MORALLY RIGHT AND WRONG CHANGES OVER TIME, BASED ON SOCIETY”)*

65%

BELIEVE “MANY RELIGIONS CAN LEAD TO ETERNAL LIFE.”*

*Gen Z: Vol. 2, Barna Group

IL Board of Ed

"The purpose of [the Digital Equity Grant] is to assist school districts in closing the digital divide and enabling digital-age teaching and learning...

All purchases must be prioritized first to ensure 1:1 ratio of devices to students."

Technology focus promotes isolation

vs.

G.K. Chesterton

"Education is about soul formation, not just information. And this formation builds a culture. ...It is... a transfer of a way of life."

Transformation focus promotes engagement




COMMON VIEWS OF SECULAR EDUCATION

- Truth is relative; I create my own reality
- Education is about gaining information and job-skills
- The Board of Education, teachers unions, and school staff know what children should be taught. Parents Aren't always informed about their child's course material.
- Regular technology use (individual ipads or laptops) for instruction and leisure time.

THE VIEW OF THE OAKS

- Jesus Christ is the source of all truth (John 14:6); objective truth can be known and discovered and is consistent with His Word (John 17:17). Objective Goodness and Beauty do exist and point us to God.
- Education is about soul transformation and cultural transfer; creating strong-spirited individuals of character who love God and neighbor.
- Parents are responsible for their children's education. Parents are informed and engaged partners.
- Students are engaged with peers, teachers, and books for learning. Teachers, staff, and books provide instruction. Use of screens, especially in lower grades, is infrequent.



**THE OAKS ACADEMY
AIMS TO TRANSFORM
GENERATIONS
THROUGH
CHRIST-CENTERED,
CLASSICAL EDUCATION,
CULTIVATING WISDOM
AND VIRTUE, AND
YIELDING LIVES MARKED
BY THE DISPLAY OF
GOD'S SPLENDOR.**



YIELDING A FRUITFUL RETURN

IMPACTING A GENERATION

Planting the Oaks Academy will provide children from our region an education that not only builds their intellect, but matures their character and faith as well. This is critical to their success in life, but more importantly, to the conviction that leads them to take their place in advancing God's work. We envision generations of Hancock County youth rising up who are not led by this world, but rather who become leaders in our world.

Classical Christian education (CCE) is a proven path to this end. CCE focuses on growing knowledgeable, wise, and mature students who joyfully join Jesus in His work bringing restoration to the world. The rigorous curriculum hones minds that discern truth and hearts that are drawn to what is good and beautiful. This approach bears the fruit of eloquent followers of Jesus who are equipped to live a compelling counter-narrative that faithfully proclaims God's truth while compassionately exhibiting His Spirit.



"I'VE GOTTEN TO KNOW ABOUT JESUS... IN HARD TIMES I CAN REMEMBER [THE VIRTUE CALL-OUTS]. I'VE LEARNED THAT DILIGENCE MATTERS, ESPECIALLY WHEN DOING MY HOMEWORK."

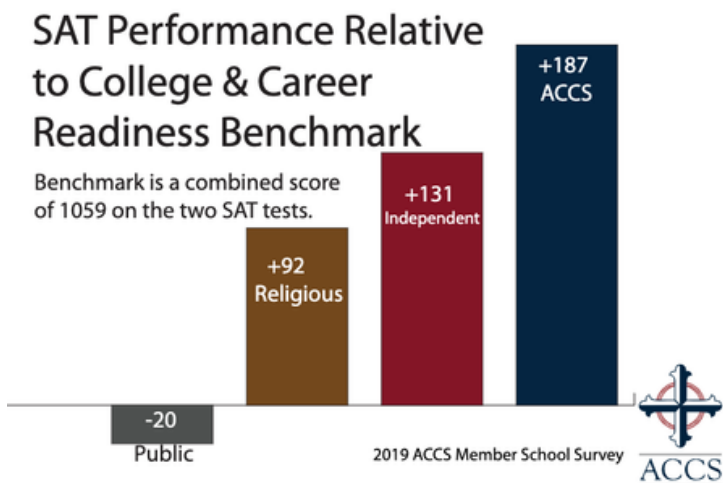
~IVAN WOOD, AGE 9, CCE STUDENT



Research conducted by the Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS) and the University of Notre Dame, entitled The Good Soil Study, support CCE as the ideal educational approach to prepare students academically, but also to prepare them for a satisfying, God-honoring life.

This study compared 24-42 year old alumni from public, secular private/prep schools, Catholic schools, evangelical Christian schools, religious homeschools, and ACCS (classical Christian) schools.

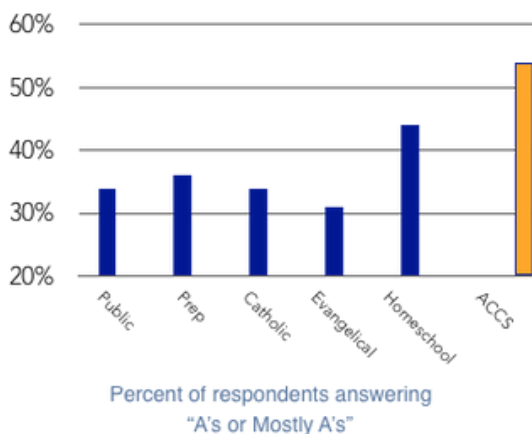
Alumni from Classical Christian schools...



Perform better on the SAT Exam

ACCS students score 187 points above the benchmark compared to public school students falling 20 below the benchmark.

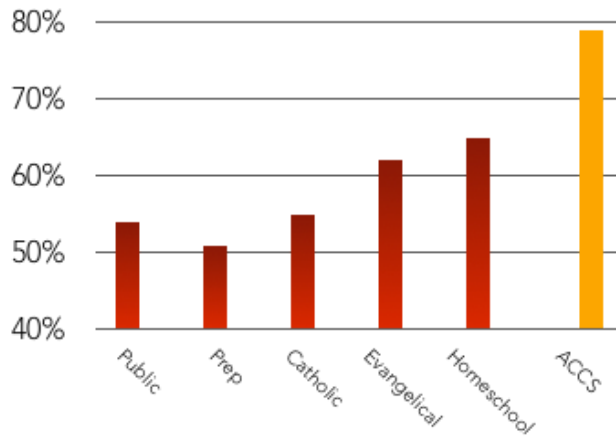
EARNED A'S OR MOSTLY A'S IN COLLEGE



Were more likely to earn A's or mostly A's in college

Over 50% of ACCS alumni reported earning A's or mostly A's in college.

I HAVE SO MUCH IN LIFE TO BE THANKFUL FOR

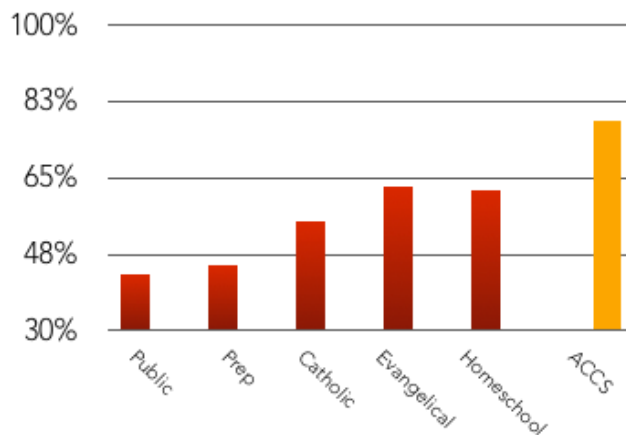


Those who agreed or strongly agreed.

Are more grateful and satisfied.

Nearly 80% of ACCS alumni reported having much to be grateful for.

FAMILY TALKS ABOUT GOD



Percent who talked more than 3x per week.

Talk about God regularly with their families.

Compared to the other alumni, ACCS alumni were most likely to discuss God and faith with their families on a regular basis.





A SUSTAINABLE START

- Seeking to open the school in a **shared space**. This allows us to control costs, focusing resources on student and faculty development.
- Utilize gifted community members who **donate their time to teach** subjects such as art, music, or agriculture.
- **Source used school equipment** from schools that have closed or who are upgrading (desks, white boards, etc)
- The Oaks would have a traditional, **5-day per week schedule**, with the hope to include hybrid options in the future. This would allow homeschooled students or public school students to enroll part-time.
- Enroll **K-6th grade** to start - a complete grammar school, utilizing **mixed-age classrooms**.



VISION

A ROOTED & SECURE FUTURE

LOCATION

In our early years, renting a shared space will minimize costs and focus resources on student and faculty development. We envision a time in the future when The Oaks would need to purchase and renovate an existing building or build a school suitable for our student body.

ENROLLMENT

Initially starting with a grammar school (PreK-6th grade) that grows organically by advancing one grade each year, culminating in The Oaks graduating its first class in 2032. Our goal would be to enroll 50 students by 2030.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

As TOA matures, we envision enhanced in-school and extracurricular offerings, including choir, band, and high school elective courses. Possible extracurricular offerings could include soccer club, chess club, music lessons, trap shooting, archery, tennis/pickleball club, ag-related clubs, among other options.

**Abraham
Lincoln**

“THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL
ROOM IN ONE GENERATION WILL BE
THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE
GOVERNMENT IN THE NEXT.”

ISAIAH 61:4-11

They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated
for generations.

Strangers will shepherd your flocks;
foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.
And you will be called priests of the LORD,
you will be named ministers of our God.
You will feed on the wealth of nations,
and in their riches you will boast...

For I, the LORD, love justice;
I hate robbery and wrongdoing.
In my faithfulness I will reward my people
and make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants will be known among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples.
All who see them will acknowledge
that they are a people the LORD has blessed.”...

I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and
arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,...
For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.



**“THEY WILL BE CALLED OAKS OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS, A PLANTING OF THE LORD
FOR THE DISPLAY OF HIS SPLENDOR.”**

ISAIAH 61:3

