Alberta Classical Academy Ltd.

Calgary and Edmonton

Charter School Evaluation Report

Evaluation conducted March 2025

Presented to the charter board June 2025

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Calgary Classical Academy opened its first campus in August 2022 in the Bridgeland neighborhood in Calgary. In December 2022, the organization rebranded to Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. (ACA) and initiated plans for an Edmonton campus. By the 2023/24 school year, ACA expanded with the opening of two additional campuses: the Calgary Currie campus serving Kindergarten to Grade 8 and the Edmonton Eastgate campus serving Kindergarten to Grade 7.

ACA is structured to deliver the Alberta Programs of Study/Curriculum through a classical liberal arts education lens, with its instruction designed around a traditional framework that emphasizes the study of classical texts, logical reasoning, and historical context. The educational model aims to develop the intellectual capacities of students through a structured program that focuses on foundational knowledge and critical inquiry.

Enrolment per instructional group as of March 27, 2025, is as follows:

Grade	***2022/2023***	***2023/2024***	***2024/2025***
KINDERGARTEN	65	93	128
Grade 1	56	135	161
Grade 2	45	122	175
Grade 3	49	117	157
Grade 4	26	126	157
Grade 5	24	95	153
Grade 6	27	69	126
Grade 7		66	98
Grade 8		28	80
Grade 9			48
Total	**292**	**851**	**1,283**

Facilities

Calgary Classical Academy Ltd. initiated operations in August 2022 at the former St. Angela School site located just north of the Calgary downtown core, offering Kindergarten to Grade 6 programming. Currently, this facility is designated for students in Kindergarten to Grade 4.

A second campus opened in August 2023 within the Currie Barracks community in Southwest Calgary. Originally established to serve students from Kindergarten to Grade 8, this campus is currently undergoing renovations and is operating as an elementary

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and junior high facility (Kindergarten to Grade 9) in the 2024/25 academic year. In Budget 2025, ACA was approved for design funding to purchase and renovate the Edmonton campus building, with the objective of expanding its programming to accommodate a full K-12 grade configuration.

The third campus is called Edmonton Classical Academy and serves as the institution's hub in Edmonton, functioning as an elementary and junior high school for students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 for the 2024/25 academic year. As part of its strategic planning, ACA has submitted a Capital Plan to purchase and renovate the Edmonton campus building, with the objective of expanding its programming to accommodate a full K-12 grade configuration.

In addition to its existing campuses, ACA has proposed the establishment of new facilities in Red Deer and Lethbridge. These proposed locations are part of the academy's broader regional expansion strategy.

Staff

Job Title Description	Job Title Count	Sum of FTE
Administrative Assistant	3	3
Aftercare Worker	16	16
Associate Principal	3	3
Central Office Accountant	1	1
Chief Development Officer	1	1
Chief Financial Officer	1	1
Deputy Superintendent	1	1
Director of Facilities	1	0.7
Executive Admin Assistant	1	0.71
School Counsellor	1	1
Financial Admin Assistant	1	0.85
Guest Teachers	32	32
HR Coordinator	1	0.9
Language Tutor	13	11.6
Learning Strategist Teacher	1	1
Library Technician	3	2.6
Principal	3	3
Secretary	5	5
Superintendent	1	0.3
Teachers	62	61.4
Transportation Admin Assistant	1	0.9
Tutor	10	9.5
Grand Total	**162**	**157.46**

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Foundational Statements

Our Purpose

To deliver a classical liberal arts education that equips students with the virtues, knowledge, and habits befitting free citizens.

Our Vision

To develop well-cultivated and virtuous men and women who are committed to seeking truth and wisdom, who contribute to the authentic common good of their communities, and who recognize the perennial reality of truth, goodness, and beauty as the guiding light of human affairs.

Our Philosophy

Our philosophy begins with the assertion that truth, beauty, and goodness exist as objective qualities, impervious to time or human opinion. Knowledge of these is what constitutes wisdom.

The pursuit of wisdom is a life-long endeavour. It begins with the experience of philosophical wonder, is nurtured through exposure to great ideas and beautiful works of art, is practiced through free inquiry and disciplined study, and is sustained through a love of truth.

Our Principles

- We believe that truth exists, and we are committed to seeking it diligently and courageously. This commitment is expressed through a culture that values open and civil conversation, free inquiry, and intellectual humility, and that encourages a sense of philosophical wonder.
- With Plato, we hold that the pursuit of truth is entwined with the practice of virtue. Where there is truth, there is goodness and beauty. Knowledge of them is what constitutes wisdom.
- The highest aspiration of education is to foster moral excellence. Our goal is to help students cultivate the mind and the heart, impart a love of virtue, and form the habits of temperance and self-mastery that will enable them to live good, healthy, and purposeful lives.
- We recognize that we are the temporary guardians of a rich civilizational inheritance, and from that comes a duty to transmit to the next generation the best that has been thought and written. Students likewise have a right to enjoy that inheritance, and to be ennobled and uplifted through encounters with great and beautiful works of the past. By ensuring that learners are conversant with those who came before us, we allow them to benefit from the unearned wisdom of the generations.
- We believe that liberal education is not principally a utilitarian undertaking, but an emancipatory one: It equips students.

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- With the virtues and habits that make people free in a true sense. Our academically rigorous program will prepare students well for further studies and give them the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the workforce. Yet these are not the primary ends of education. They are, rather, a happy by-product.
- All persons are bearers of divine souls that each of us possesses with an inviolable dignity, irrespective of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- Education should be pursued in a spirit of friendship and leisure – scholē, in Greek. Learning that is forced, or that is not accompanied by a sense of wonder and joy, is unlikely to take root. Effective formation of the human personality requires space for contemplation and thought, away from distraction and material exigencies.
- Students thrive in an environment that provides stability, order, belonging, and love. We understand that structure and high expectations are not incompatible with the spirit of leisure or the pursuit of freedom, but a precondition for them. Through immersion in a well-ordered environment, pupils can learn to order their own souls well.
- Teachers are leaders in the classroom and in the school community at large. They impart knowledge and expertise to students, model good conduct, encourage respectful dialogue and inquiry, and create and uphold the school's culture.

Charter Goals and Outcomes

Charter Goal 1: Students will grow in virtue, demonstrate exemplary moral character, and relate to each other in a spirit of friendship and good will.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify virtuous behaviour and its antithesis, both in literature and in their own lives.
- Students demonstrate an understanding of the meaning and applications of a range of virtues.
- Students demonstrate moral growth, as determined by both the subjective assessment of parents and teachers, and through their own self-assessments.
- Students display an ability to reflect on their own character and conduct with reference to virtues.
- Students acquire an understanding of major religious and philosophical traditions from around the world, and are able to discuss and identify their essential moral teachings.
- Students grow in their understanding of the relationship between virtue and the intellectual traits necessary for clear thinking and sound judgement.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding that truth and wisdom exist, and that seeking them is an essential human pursuit.
- Students will display improved affective and mental health outcomes, as compared to peer cohorts not enrolled in the program.

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- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the links between truth, goodness, and beauty.
- Students will become comfortable engaging in open conversation and dialectical dialogue in the pursuit of truth, and in a spirit of friendship.
- Students will participate in one or more community service projects each year.
- Students will indicate a strong sense of belonging, pride, and security in the school.
- Instances of bullying and harassment will be minimal, and will be addressed quickly and effectively.
- Parents will indicate high levels of satisfaction with the development of virtuous and conscientious behaviour in their children.

Charter Goal 2: Students will attain academic success and reach personal excellence in all programs of study.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Students will show continuous improvement in reading, writing, numeracy and arithmetic as they progress from Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Students who begin the program in Kindergarten will be at or above grade level in reading and writing by the end of grade 3.
- Students will be at or above grade level in numeracy and mathematics as they progress from Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Students will indicate continuous improvement in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies related to the Alberta Curriculum and the ECA's expanded programs of study.
- Students will achieve mastery of a broad knowledge base, as set out in the Alberta Curriculum and the ECA programs of study.
- Students will acquire familiarity with canonical texts, including fables, histories, poems, dramas, literature, and philosophical and scientific texts.
- Students will indicate continuous improvement in the application of logic and dialectic.
- Students will indicate continuous improvement in their communication skills, both written and oral.
- Students will indicate continuous improvement in their skills in debate and respectful argumentation.
- Students enrolled continually in the program for at least three years will acquire conversational proficiency in at least one language.
- The overall percentage of students in grades 6, 9, and 12 who perform above the acceptable standard on Provincial.

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- Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams will exceed the provincial average and will increase for each of the school's first five years of operation.
- Graduating students pursuing the academic stream will be qualified to succeed in the Classical Learning Test (CLT).

Charter Goal 3: The school will contribute to the education system in Alberta as a whole, and enhance education research and delivery.

Measurable Outcomes:

- The school will publish newsletters, blogs, opinion essays, and maintain an active social media presence, in order to publicize its approach to teaching, conduct, and curriculum delivery.
- Student academic performance and survey results will be available to the public.
- The school will host tours for interested educators, researchers, and parents interested in learning about classical education.
- Research projects shall be undertaken in collaboration with a post-secondary institution (or institutions) to better measure and assess the academic and affective outcomes achieved by the school.
- Teachers-in-training will gain practicum experience at the Alberta Classical Academy schools.
- Curriculum tools and resources will be locally developed and shared with other school boards and homeschooling families.
- Training courses related to classical education will be developed and made available to all teachers and educators.

Term of Charter

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. is currently (2025) in its third year of operations of a five-year term. The term of the current charter is from September 1, 2022, to August 31, 2027.

Terms of Reference

The Charter Schools Regulation requires that all charter schools in the province be evaluated at least once in the term of their charter. There are a number of purposes for the evaluation of a charter school:

- To provide evidence to the Minister and the board that the charter school is in compliance with provincial requirements and the requirements of the charter, inclusive of charter amendments, approved by the Minister.
- To report to staff, parents, and the community on the success of the charter school and to identify areas of strength and areas that may require additional attention.
- To focus the attention of the board and staff on the goals and objectives of the charter and the need to establish and confirm measurable outcomes and measures.

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- To facilitate continuous improvement in the charter school consistent with the assurance requirements of the Ministry and with the local direction established by the charter school community and authorized by the board of directors.

The criteria by which the charter school is evaluated are:

1. The school meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success.
2. The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.
3. The charter school is governed effectively.
4. The school is administered effectively.
5. The school is fiscally viable and responsible.
6. The students, parents, staff, school council, and community members consider the school program to be successful.
7. Student success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order (#005/2024)
8. The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with the education community.
9. Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.
10. The charter school exhibits in multiple ways an ongoing commitment to engaging students, teachers, parents, and community members in a model of continuous improvement.
11. The charter school works collaboratively with stakeholders and demonstrates broad and sustained levels of community engagement.
12. The charter school uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.

2025 Evaluation Processes

The findings of the evaluation were established using the following processes and activities:

1. The charter school authority was asked to develop and submit to Alberta Education a self-evaluation report based on the 12 criteria named above (see the appendix to this report).
2. Alberta Education established a team of four staff from Field Services, as well as one staff member from Business Operations and Stakeholder Support, to review the self-evaluation report submitted by Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. and to determine and conduct school site evaluation processes.
3. On March 10, 11, and 13, 2025, Alberta Education and Childcare Field Services staff conducted focus group sessions established to provide opportunities for the board, superintendent, principal, teachers, support staff, students, and parents to share insights about the school's successes and ideas about how the charter school authority might become more effective. Focus groups were conducted as follows:
    - One focus group with the superintendent and deputy superintendent,

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- One focus group with three principals, three associate principals, and curriculum teams,
- One focus group with the board chair and board members,
- One focus group with the secretary-treasurer,
- Three focus groups with a total of 24 school support staff and tutors,
- Seven focus groups with a total of 69 parents,
- Seven focus groups with a total of 50 teachers, and
- Seven focus groups with students from grades 1 to 9.

4. Evaluation team members participated in grades 1 to 9 classroom observations to view instruction, the design of student learning activities, and student engagement.

Executive Summary

The Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. evaluation in March 2025 found that Alberta Classical Academy has provided evidence of meeting the twelve criteria in the charter school evaluation.

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II. EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS, COMMENDATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & REQUIRED CHANGES

1. The school meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show evidence of success. ACA delivers the Alberta Programs of Study/Curriculum through a classical liberal arts' instructional pedagogy. Classical liberal instruction is a traditional approach that leverages classical literature and historical context to plan and deliver the curriculum. Interactions with students, families, and staff demonstrated a clear understanding of the mission and vision of the charter, that the charter's approach is the reason stakeholders register, and that staff chose to work at this school.

Commendations:

- Stakeholders referenced that they recognize and value Alberta Classical Academy's classical liberal arts instructional pedagogy and virtuous culture.

2. The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. meets the provincial requirements of the Charter Schools Regulation (Alberta Regulation 85/2019) and the *Education Act*. ACA delivers the Alberta Programs of Study/Curriculum, provides access to the required amount of instructional time, and the courses offered reflect classical course naming. Furthermore, ACA complies with Alberta Education planning, reporting, and funding requirements by providing timely information.

There is a commitment to delivering the Alberta Programs of Study/Curriculum. ACA implements a curriculum with a classical arts instructional approach that incorporates the provincial curriculum. ACA communicates weekly with parents, and there is access to student learning information through the parent information portal. Moreover, ACA has demonstrated a commitment to collaborating with stakeholders to revise their report cards to ensure alignment with provincial requirements while reflecting its charter goals.

ACA hires certificated teachers and classically trained educators who have a Letter of Authority. Students expressed that teachers at ACA know students' needs and are accessible for students to provide specific support. The charter school has a strong enrollment and a desire to expand to additional communities, which indicates increased interest in their programming.

Commendation:

- Alberta Classical Academy has transformed their acquired facilities to reflect the classical arts focus and the instructional needs of its students.

Recommendations:

- Ensure all subjects and courses reflect the naming conventions outlined in the Alberta Programs of Study/Curriculum.

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3. The charter school is governed effectively.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. is governed by a nine-member board, each serving an initial three-year term and representing different geographic areas within the province of Alberta. The board includes members with diverse backgrounds, such as classical liberal arts, law, business, and accounting. They meet bi-monthly, along with active committees that provide direction on various aspects, such as curriculum, governance policy, human resources, and fiscal management, with input from both the board and school administrators. Board meetings are open to the public online, and once a year, principals and school council chairs present reports from their areas of responsibility at these meetings. The board holds an annual retreat for team building and strategic planning, increasing leadership capacity, and producing outcomes included in the education plan.

The board operates as a not-for-profit company under the *Alberta Companies Act,* and its bylaws align with best practices in governance. A recent survey of board members showed satisfaction with the board's work over the last two years. Also, the teacher focus group expressed appreciation for the board and enjoyed working with board members to weave the classical education lens withing the Alberta Education Programs of Study/Curriculum with. Key objectives for the board include improving governance understanding through shared training, developing formal performance reviews for the superintendent, enhancing strategic planning, clarifying the separation of governance and operations, completing the policy manual, and improving communication with stakeholders.

Commendations:

- A clear governance structure was evident with many levels of support between the board and staff.

4. The school is administered effectively.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. has a committed leadership team consisting of a superintendent, deputy superintendent, curriculum development officer which serves the entire authority and at each site they have a dean of culture, learning strategist, principal, and associate principal. The diverse members of the administration team have experience in classical education environments and public schools in Alberta. Provincial and local stakeholder survey responses indicate the schools are effectively run, which was echoed in focus group interviews. There is a clear feedback and supervision element, and faculty appreciate the relationships and support contributing to low staff attrition rates.

Weekly campus-level meetings focus on operations, visioning, planning, curriculum development, and professional development. District professional learning plans are regularly reviewed to align with charter priorities and address staff needs. All staff complete annual professional growth plans and receive coaching. Leadership undergoes annual performance reviews, and retreats are held yearly for strategic planning and leadership development. The diversified staff and leadership development approach has nurtured internal talent and contributed to a robust administrative structure.

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Commendations:

- The administration has created effective input and feedback systems that support staff and students.

Recommendations:

- The diverse staff complement may benefit from further opportunities for professional development or shared dialogues with other schools to expand knowledge and experience in the Alberta Teacher Quality Standards (TQS). All certificated teachers in the province of Alberta are responsible to understand and adhere to the TQS and Code of Conduct.

5. The school is fiscally viable and responsible.

Through a review of their financial reporting and a virtual meeting, Alberta Classical Academy has demonstrated they are fiscally viable and responsible. Their approach to strategic planning involving the expertise of their experienced superintendent and board trustees including continual monthly review of budgets and financial statements with the board is an example of their responsible approach to fiscal management and practices. The secretary treasurer expressed that the knowledge and experience of their superintendent is a strong asset that has been vital to the success of Alberta Classical Academy operations.

This charter is in its third year of operation. In these inaugural years Alberta Classical Academy has demonstrated the demand for its programming through its exponential increase in enrolments year over year. In the 2022-23 school year, the charter reported an enrollment of 261 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students. In the following school year of 2023-2024, this number increased by 308% to 803 FTE students. During the 2024-2025 school year, the charter has projected another increase of 414 FTE students for a total projected enrolment of 1217 FTE students.

The secretary treasurer indicated that this enrolment growth, while a success for Alberta Classical Academy, has caused the organization growing pains in school administration. In the inaugural year, a part of the success of the organization was attributed to financial practices and management at the school level. This allowed for localized decision making and agility in the organization regarding fiscal practices. An example of this is the implementation of a live expense tracking sheets at the principal level that are reviewed weekly by the secretary treasurer. This practice is one example of how they allow localized decision making while retaining fiscal oversight at upper levels of management.

Alberta Classical Academy is aware of their fiscal pressures and is planning effectively to address these costs. The charter indicated that salaries are approximately 80% of their budgeted expenditures. They indicated that due to a low turnover in their first three years of operation, increases in salaries have put pressure on their budget. They also stated that quality teachers are a priority for their school and have been prioritized in the budget. To potentially offset these increasing costs the charter has supported staff on flexible contracts to be able to reduce hours if expenditures need to be reduced to balance the budget. The charter is commended on ensuring their fiscal practices reflect their operational priorities.

Another challenge facing Alberta Classical Academy is finding appropriate space to accommodate their enrollment growth. The secretary treasurer stated that the leases they engage in are shorter term leases and have multiple options for renewal. This is done

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purposefully so that the organization is not burdened with long-term capital obligations if they choose to change priorities.

The charter authority has also stated that enrolment growth is a mandate for their organization. They intend to increase their enrollment as quickly as is possible for them to manage. The department advises caution as extreme growth can come with unforeseen challenges and recommends the charter work closely with the department to address desired expansion.

The last three years of budgets and financial audits show that Alberta Classical Academy is managing its finances effectively. This charter school has also shown a positive surplus accumulated from operations over the last two years. Enrolment has steadily increased, and the charter school has adjusted its certificated staffing Full Time Equivalent (FTE's) accordingly to keep a similar ratio of students to certificated staff.

Alberta Classical Academy's Budget Surplus (Deficit) Summary for the last four years is as follows:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (Projections)
Actual Expenses	$4,124,599	$13,378,658	N/A
Budgeted Expenses	$2,919,615	$11,621,797	$16,011,722
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) From Operations	($67,391)	$409,238	$638,125

Commendations:

- The charter authority is commended for their collaborative approach to school administration and fiscal management at all levels of decisions making.
- The charter authority is commended for being innovative and creative in acquiring additional learning space.

Recommendations:

- That Alberta Classical Academy continue to work closely with Alberta Education Capital Planning and School Finance staff to address desired expansion.

6. The students, parents, staff, school council, and community members consider the school program to be successful.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. is regarded by its students, parents, staff, and community partners as fulfilling its charter mandate to deliver a classical, virtue-based

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education. The Fall 2024 Alberta Education Assurance Survey Report confirms this view, with the ACA's Education Quality current result remaining "Very High" at 93.8%.

Students report that success at ACA involves not only mastery of content but also the ability to articulate underlying principles, apply concepts independently, and demonstrate personal growth. They value small-group discussions, rigorous examination of classical works, and the integration of character education into daily lessons. According to focus group feedback, these practices foster more profound engagement, critical thinking, and a supportive learning atmosphere.

Parents and staff highlight ACA's comprehensive reporting and communication strategies, which include report cards covering academic and virtue-based outcomes, regular parent-teacher conferences, and ongoing electronic updates. Faculty describe a calm and respectful school culture underpinned by collaborative planning, visible administrator leadership, and opportunities for cross-grade mentorship. These appear to provide a safe, nurturing environment supporting intellectual and personal development.

Commendations:

- Consistently high Education Quality results demonstrate sustained instructional effectiveness.
- Effective stakeholder engagement and communication practices reinforce Alberta Classical Academy's classical, virtue-based approach.

7. Student Success: Student success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order #005/2024.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd.'s definition of student success aligns with the Ministerial Order on Student Learning. First, ACA's charter emphasizes character development by describing the commitment to "truth, beauty, and goodness" in the pursuit of virtuous living. Systematic phonics instruction, as well as the science of reading, the practice of cursive writing, and the selection of literature that aligns with ACA's philosophy, demonstrate commitment to literacy. Numeracy foundations are achieved by combining the Alberta curriculum with the Singapore math program.

ACA embraces truth-seeking by employing the Socratic method and virtue, logic, and rhetoric instruction to foster civil conversations and clear reasoning. Students learn to ask questions, inhabit different perspectives, and practice tolerance. Outcomes for learning include explicit instruction in orality and rhetoric. ACA aims to preserve and build upon past wisdom, promoting virtues through team sports, field studies, and outdoor excursions. ACA celebrates community-building events and provides ample outdoor play and physical arts time, focusing on holistic student wellness and character development.

Commendations:

- Alberta Classical Academy weaves the Ministerial Order on Student Learning outcomes with its charter vision and goals.

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8. The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. contributes to the wider education community by sharing its classical education practices and pilot program insights through multiple channels. Over the past three years, faculty, leadership, and board members have presented at provincial conferences, including the Association of Alberta Public Charter School (TAAPCS) research conference, and led professional development workshops in other jurisdictions on topics such as cognitive load theory, character education, and the Quadrivium. ACA volunteered to pilot the new provincial curriculum (K–6 Science in 2022 and Social Studies in 2024), providing implementation feedback and resource recommendations to Alberta Education.

In addition, ACA regularly hosts tours and workshops for educators, policymakers, and researchers from organizations such as TAAPCS, the Montreal Economic Institute, and the Fraser Institute. These visits offer firsthand observation of ACA's instructional model, virtue-based reporting, and technology-minimal classrooms. ACA's research, from policy surveys on smartphone use to a forthcoming chapter on classical education, has been shared with senior policymakers and published in outlets such as the Calgary Herald and Alberta Views.

Finally, ACA disseminates its work through public media and digital platforms. A series of short videos on ACA's YouTube channel highlight key innovations in curriculum design and school culture, while opposite the editorial pages and articles by ACA's staff appear in local and national publications.

Commendations:

- The public school authority is actively engagement in provincial curriculum pilots and professional networks to inform, refine, and share instructional practices.

Recommendations:

- Explore additional partnerships with local public school authorities and Indigenous education organizations to broaden the reach and impact of Alberta Classical Academy's classical education innovations.

9. Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.

While Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. has minimal provincial achievement test (PAT) trend data results, this metric will increase over time as more subjects and grade levels are added. Currently, the Grade 6 social studies provincial achievement test results indicate a high percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard. Although the percentage of students achieving the standard of excellence is significantly above the provincial average, there was a notable decrease from the previous year.

ACA has identified supporting English as an Additional Language learners as a target area for improvement. In addition, ACA recognizes the need to expand their support systems to address a significant increase in student population and to meet the needs of these students.

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ACA has utilized the provincial screening tools (Early years literacy and numeracy and UFLI assessments) and has identified significant student improvements after providing interventions, indicating strong programming. Additionally, ACA analyzed screening data to identify students needing further assessments to identify learning needs. ACA has consistently utilized literacy and numeracy resources within a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach to address these needs and continually improve achievement throughout the grades.

ACA's Charter Goal 2 and its outcomes clearly outline academic success for all students. While reporting on literacy and numeracy for students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 is evident, levels of achievement for higher grades are not indicated. Local measures suggest that parents are satisfied with their child's achievement levels and feel the communication and reporting of these results is adequate. High percentages of teachers and parents agree that the numeracy and literacy skills taught are useful.

Commendations:

- A strong academic culture permeates Alberta Classical Academy, and students are rising to their teachers' high expectations, resulting in improved overall learning.

Recommendations:

- Consider assuring stakeholders of numeracy and literacy achievement through local measures. As Alberta Education and Childcare continues providing Literacy and Numeracy assessments for higher grades, these may be used as achievement indicators.

10. The charter school exhibits in multiple ways an ongoing commitment to engaging students, teachers, parents, and community members in a model of continuous improvement.

Parents indicated that they stay informed through excellent teacher and administration communication. Parents are encouraged to be involved through parent advisory committees, board meetings, and volunteering. ACA is committed to educating parents on classical education through the "Classical 101" component of their weekly newsletters.

Students are encouraged to think critically and actively participate in discussions. The student focus groups indicated they are challenged, encouraged to achieving, and ready to take on the next grade level. Furthermore, while students indicate that education on virtues is important and helps establish a good learning environment, they would also welcome different elective classes to increase their engagement.

Teachers appreciate the professional development rooted in the charter goals and classical teaching as evidenced by responses in the focus groups. In addition, teachers appreciate the direct training in using literacy and numeracy resources, which has improved teaching practices.

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Teachers regularly engage in book study groups and interact with each other through the content, contributing to a culture of camaraderie where staff feel supported and encouraged to grow professionally, particularly in classical education.

11. The charter school works collaboratively with stakeholders and demonstrates broad and sustained levels of community engagement.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. maintains structured collaboration and sustained engagement with its governance bodies, school community, and external partners. The board of directors and superintendent meet bi-monthly with school council representatives, and all stakeholders receive regular updates via weekly newsletters, quarterly bulletins, and an open-door meeting policy. Information in the Annual Education Results Report and stakeholder survey findings are reviewed in dedicated strategy sessions, enabling targeted feedback on topics such as report-card design, homework practices, and governance processes.

Parents and students participate directly in school decision-making: parents fill volunteer roles, serve on committees (e.g., library, fundraising), and contribute to budget and policy discussions at the annual general meetings, while students engage through student-led clubs and structured feedback forums such as Oxford debates. Professional development workshops, often co-facilitated by the board and superintendent, further integrate staff, parent, and student perspectives into continuous improvement planning.

Commendations:

- Ongoing, multi-channel communication strategies and stakeholder involvement support collaborative decision-making.

12. The charter school uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.

Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. bases its instructional approach on direct teaching of classical literature, language, and foundational skills, augmented by targeted, research-informed adjustments. Staff engage in action-research professional development, examining classical texts alongside contemporary studies such as cognitive load theory and Singapore Math, to inform classroom practice. Surveys of students and parents have guided the establishment of homework guidelines (10 minutes per grade level) and reviewed policies on in-school screen use. The school has also explored potential collaborations, such as etiquette coaching, to integrate evidence on student engagement into daily routines.

To maintain consistency and support ongoing improvement, the curriculum coordinator conducts regular site visits to observe instruction and share findings across campuses. Faculty development includes Latin and Hebrew language study, and the use of Letters of Authority to appoint classically trained instructors in specialist subjects. Structured routines, ritualized greetings, and virtue-based assemblies are periodically evaluated through staff feedback and survey data to assess their impact on student behaviour and learning.

Classification: Protected A

Commendations:

- Alberta Classical Academy systematically collects stakeholder feedback and conducts action research cycles to review and refine its instructional model.

Conclusion

As a result of our evaluation processes, the Alberta Education and Childcare Evaluation Team is satisfied that the Alberta Classical Academy Ltd. is meeting the requirements of legislation and regulations for charter schools. In the spirit of continuous improvement, Alberta Classical Academy is encouraged to celebrate its successes while considering the recommendations offered by the Alberta Education and Childcare Evaluation team.

The Alberta Education and Childcare Evaluation Team extends its sincere thanks to the board, administration, staff, students, and parents for their time, perspectives, insights, and hospitality.

Classification: Protected A

III.APPENDIX

Alberta Classical Academy's Self-Evaluation Report

February 2025

Classification: Protected A

Alberta Classical
ACADEMY

Charter Authority Self Evaluation











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Contextual Overview:

Alberta Classical Academy (ACA) delivers a classical liberal arts education, aiming to equip students with the virtues, knowledge, and habits befitting free citizens. Students grow in virtue and develop exemplary moral character, and attain academic success and personal excellence in all programs of study. Information on our unique classical approach is available in the school charter, on the ACA website and ACA YouTube page.

The approval of our initial five-year charter in January 2022 established ACA as the first and only public non-sectarian classical school in Canada. That August, the Bridgeland campus opened to 291 students. In response to high levels of parent interest, we rebranded as the Alberta Classical Academy (ACA) and in August 2023 opened two additional campuses: Eastgate in Edmonton and Currie in Calgary. Today, ACA serves 1285 students, marking a 340% increase in enrolment from year one. Despite rapid growth in our system capacity, demand for the program continues to exceed capacity. Approximately 3000 students sought admission in the 2024/25 school year, and a lottery process was run to fill a limited number of vacancies. Waitlists for the school are reset every year.

The classical offerings at Alberta Classical appeal to a broad demographic. Currently, 42 languages are represented and 15% of students are coded as English as Additional Language (EAL) learners. Nearly 20% of students require some form of direct student learning (SLS) support, 2.1% self-identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit (FNMI) and five students have declared refugee status. District wide, 12% of families access financial assistance and 51% of students rely on bus transportation to travel safely to and from school.

Data and evidence of success in the core elements of the charter are framed using ACA's campus evaluation metrics. The data used to prepare this report balances provincial measures, including Alberta Education accountability and assurance measures, ACA annual education plans and Annual Education Results reports, and relevant performance reviews, with local data collated from stakeholder engagements, surveys, and anecdotal accounts. We trust this evidence, coupled with data collected from onsite visits of Alberta Education evaluators, will highlight our authority's success and support our application for a 15-year charter renewal.

1. Charter Conditions: *The Alberta Classical Academy is succeeding in meeting the terms of its charter and has provincial and local performance measures that provide clear evidence of this success.*

Classical Culture - *A distinctive community united by friendship and a shared love of wisdom and virtue.*

Our schools are safe, welcoming environments where students grow in virtue and where students and faculty relate to each other in a spirit of friendship and good will. Schools are orderly, calm, and contemplative and

Provincial Measures	2023	2024	Achievement
Percentage teachers, parents, students who agree that learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe.	86.7	88.2	Very high
Percentage of parents, teachers, and students who are satisfied that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.	82.0	86.1	Very high

staff are well supported in maintaining high standards of student discipline. We seek to orient souls toward transcendent and unchanging standards of goodness, justice, truth, and beauty. Students are bearers of souls, and their education should serve both worldly and final ends. This classical metaphysical and anthropological

outlook informs our approach in all aspects of the school. We engage in annual and continuing training with faculty to deepen their philosophical engagement with the classical tradition, and to translate this into classroom practice, instruction, and assessment. An emphasis on virtue is consistently reinforced through: explicit instruction; teacher modelling; ritual; student assessments; the student code of conduct; and common language. Internally developed report cards speak to students' moral development and habits of learning, and student self assessments related to virtue acquisition are being developed and refined. The absence of personal electronic devices, pop culture, and activist teachings offers students a reprieve from the contemporary issues of the modern world.

Classical Curriculum & Methods - *Cultivating a love of virtue, wonder, and a love of wisdom*

Measures of student engagement and education quality are excellent. In local surveys, 90.3% of parents report that children are excited about their learning. In the natural sciences, philosophic wonder is sparked and nurtured through observation and experimentation, and the study of the natural world through outdoor pursuits. In history, students read and analyze primary source texts, learn to ask good questions and inhabit diverse perspectives, and stage elaborate battle reenactments. Students participate in Socratic dialogues and seminars. The depth of wonder and philosophical inquiry students display is evaluated through assessments.

Rich and integrated, classical curriculum - Of parents surveyed, 92.2% assert the curriculum has exceeded expectations and 93.3% agree it is challenging and interesting. Our content-rich curriculum includes a rigorous Singapore math program; structured literacy and grammar (K-4); Latin instruction (5-8), outdoor education, natural sciences, including astronomy; music, studio arts, and performing arts. We have implemented a K-12 world history and geography sequence and reading lists that include classic poems, stories, and great books for all grade levels. To the degree possible, these studies are integrated, with history often serving as the "master discipline." For example, when studying ancient Egypt, China, and Mesopotamia, grade 1 students analyze why civilizations often settle near waterways, drawing connections between geography and botany. They learn about and imitate these civilizations' respective writing technologies, integrating history with science and art, and study children's adaptations of ancient myths and epics from these cultures.

Classical instruction in teacher-led classrooms -Teacher quality is exceptional: 96.4% of parents surveyed locally report that teachers are professional and knowledgeable and 97.5% say their child loves and respects their teachers. All disciplines described above are taught using a combination of explicit instruction—which relies heavily on mimetic methods—and Socratic discussions, and teachers receive training in these methods.

Classical Approach to Community Relations:

Local performance measures indicate that ACA schools are successfully building a community of friendship amongst all stakeholders, and serve as a cultural hub and rallying place where community members can gather and celebrate the goodness of being. See Sections 10 and 11 (below) or visit the Alberta Classical Academy YouTube page to view parent testimonials to understand our approach to community building.

Reflection: There remain some programmatic elements that cannot be consistently offered due to staffing and facilities limitations. For example, schools lack science labs, CTS labs, properly equipped arts rooms (e.g. rooms without sinks). The Currie facility has no green space or gymnasium, and the Edmonton campus has temporary walls. Moreover, while ancient and modern language offerings are strong in grades 5 and above, foreign languages in K-4 have suffered, particularly the Mandarin option. Challenges cited are attributable to the scale

of each school, teacher recruitment, and the need to provide learning interventions and language tutoring for English Language Learners, and the high number of students presenting with speech and language delays.

2. Provincial Requirements: *The Alberta Classical Academy operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.*

The Alberta Classical Academy complies with all statutory requirements set out in the *Education Act,* Charter Schools regulation, and other relevant regulations. We work closely with Alberta Education and education partners to provide timely information and high quality reporting. Below are some indicators of success:

Accountability reporting Annual Education Results Reports, 3-Year Educational Plans, Three-Year Capital Plans and annual budgets are collaboratively developed, approved by the Board, and available on the ACA website as per provincial timelines and ministerial requirements.	***Programs of study*** The schools meet and often exceed the learning outcomes set out in the Alberta Programs of Study using classical resources and approaches. All programs adhere to recommendations for instructional time in core disciplines.	***Inclusive education*** Diverse student needs are supported by an increasingly robust continuum of supports, comprehensive data collection and reporting, and a system wide staffing and professional development strategy supported by provincial funding.	***Professional compliance*** Where applicable, ACA staff have completed TQS, LQS, and SLQS certifications. ACA works closely with the Office of the Registrar and the Minister on the issuance of temporary Letters of Authority. The superintendent's office are members of CASS.
Policies and governance The charter board has adopted and implemented all policies required under the Education Act and associated regulations and legislation, and has made these policies available on its website found here.	***Financial management*** The authority complies with Alberta Education planning, reporting, and funding requirements. See the ACA website [here] and Section 5 below for more detail.	***Employment and OHS*** Compliance with employment standards and occupational health and safety legislation includes an OHS officer and safety committee. Staff complete OHS training modules using PublicWorks.	***Records management*** ACA is compliant with all regulations pertaining to PASI compliance, student records management, FOIP, etc. No known instances of litigation or complaint exist to date. Legal counsel is used to ensure compliance where necessary.

3. Governance: *The charter authority is governed effectively.*

The Classical Academy is currently governed by a group of nine board members, all serving their initial three-year term, comprising representation from each geographic area in which the school operates. Two of our directors have children in the school and the board includes several members with backgrounds in classical liberal arts, two lawyers, two professors of business, and a Certified Professional Accountant. The board currently meets bi-monthly, and has several active committees that likewise meet bi-monthly to provide direction on curriculum, governance policy, human resources policy, and financial management, as well as *ad hoc* committees that convene as needed to address nominations of new directors, strategic visioning, and grievances or appeals.

The board operates as a governance board with all communication flowing directly through the Superintendent to and from the various members of the executive team and school leaders. Since its inception, the board has adopted 37 policies, with several additional policies currently in development, while administrative practices and procedures are developed by the executive team with input from both the board and school administrators. A

detailed executive report including campus reports is provided to board members a week prior to each board meeting. Once a year each Campus Principal and the Campus School Council Chair make a presentation at a board meeting. Board meetings are open to the public via an online link, and the board has begun to inviteSchool Council chairs specifically to each meeting. The board has allocated one weekend each year for a retreat, during which they engage in team building and strategic planning, in conjunction with the executive team and Superintendent's office.

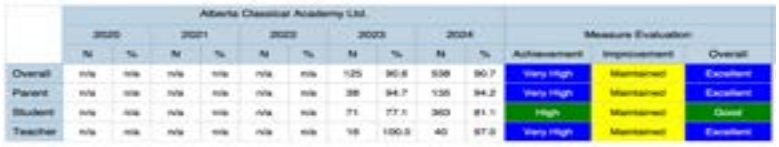
The board operates as a not-for-profit company, registered pursuant to Section 9 of the Alberta *Companies Act.* Its Bylaws are consistent with best practices in not-for-profit governance. The authority was recently granted charitable status by the Canada Revenue Agency.

Reflection: A recent survey of board members indicated strong satisfaction with multiple elements of the work of the board over the first two years of the charter. Objectives for the board arising from the survey as well as the annual retreat and regular in-camera board discussions include:

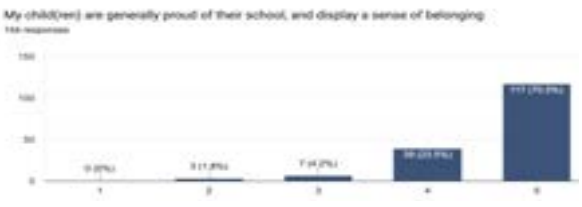
1. *Improving upon the understanding of governance by board members through shared training.*
2. *Development of the current initiative regarding formal performance reviews of the Superintendent.*
3. *Improvement on the Strategic Planning of the Board, with both short-term and long-term objectives.*
4. *Increasing clarity on the separation of Governance and Operations in the work of the board.*
5. *Completion of the policy manual.*
6. *Improvement in communication with stakeholders.*

4. Administration: *The charter authority is administered effectively.*

Percentage of stakeholders that agree students are safe at school, learn ***the importance*** *of caring for others,* ***learn*** *respect,* ***and are*** *treated fairly in school.*



Alberta Classical Academy Ltd.													
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		Measure Evaluation		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Achievement	Improvement	Overall
Overall	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	125	90.8	538	90.7	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Parent	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	38	94.7	135	94.2	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Student	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	71	77.1	360	81.1	High	Maintained	Good
Teacher	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	16	100.0	40	97.0	Very High	Maintained	Excellent



Provincial and local surveys provide insightful and objective evidence that ACA schools are administered effectively. Stakeholders express confidence in and high regard for school and system-level leadership. Codes of conduct define the high standards of comportment and virtuous conduct expected from *all* community members to ensure a welcoming and well ordered learning community, marked by friendship, reverence, and mutual respect. Local surveys point to a strong sense of pride and belonging in our school communities.

Faculty relate to each other in a spirit of friendship and good will. Staff attrition rates are extremely low and evaluations of ACA leadership reflect high levels of trust with scores consistently averaging in the excellence range or ≥ 90%. Strategies include weekly and monthly standing meetings between authority leadership and campus-based administration focused on operational and district priorities and emergent issues including: student and curriculum matters; staff development; accountability reporting and feedback and education planning; proposed administrative procedures; and strategic visioning and growth. The Deputy Superintendent (DS) and Curriculum Development Officer (CDO) visit schools regularly to support the operations teams.

Campus-level administrator and whole-staff conversations focused on operations, visioning, planning and curriculum development, classical PD and socratic book study, and communities of practice, are held weekly.

District professional learning plans are reviewed regularly to address charter priorities, emergent teaching and learning issues, and areas of staff need. All staff complete yearly professional growth plans and receive coaching aligned with charter goals and district plans and priorities. All levels of leadership undergo annual performance reviews combining provincial and local measures. Administrator and Board/Executive retreats are held yearly, focusing on strategic visioning and planning, developing the 3-year education plan, leadership development, and addressing organizational challenges and areas for growth based on stakeholder feedback.

Reflection: A diversified approach to staff and leadership development has enabled the nurturing and promotion of classical talent from within, and contributed to a robust and effective administrative structure. This is evidenced by school and system-level staff modeling the merits of and pursuing lifelong professional learning including leadership qualifications (e.g., SQLS, LQS), postgraduate studies, conference attendance, and membership in professional associations (e.g., CASS, ASBOA). The charter authority funds and supports these endeavours where possible. Further, ACA staff frequently lead professional development and committee work, and contribute to curriculum development and research initiatives within and in the wider charter community and educational context. Refer to Sections 8 and 12 (below) for additional evidence and strategies.

5. Fiscally Viable: *The charter authority is fiscally viable and responsible.*

Alberta Classical Academy's (ACA) business operations are guided by the charter values of discernment, diligence, integrity, and temperance. These principles are reflected in our student-centered fiscal management approach, which prioritizes transparency, direct student impact, and maximizing value. While fiscal year 2022 was a partial year focused on preparing for our inaugural campus opening in August 2022, fiscal year 2023 marked our first full year with comprehensive budgeting and audited financial statements. Both the 2023 and 2024 audits, conducted by MNP, resulted in unqualified opinions. During this period, ACA's accumulated surplus grew, and we anticipate continued growth in 2025 based on our current budget projections.

ACA's responsible stewardship extends to our strategic partnerships. We lease a school from the Calgary Catholic School District and share technology and facilities resources with the Foundations for the Future Charter Academy. Additionally, we lease spaces from community organizations such as Bethany Chapel and Refinery Church.

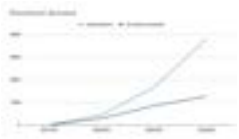
Financial oversight is robust and multifaceted. The Board of Directors receives regular financial reports at every board meeting and holds proactive Audit and Finance Committee meetings. This governance structure is complemented by monthly leadership team meetings, ensuring ongoing, organization-wide financial awareness and prudent fiscal management. Our operational and fiscal effectiveness has enabled rapid growth from one campus serving 294 students in 2022 to three campuses serving 1,284 students in 2024. This expansion reflects strong enrolment demand in Calgary and Edmonton, innovative facility conversions, and effective management of operations and capital projects.

Looking ahead, ACA will continue to refine its strategic plan and strengthen its partnership with Alberta Education's Capital Planning division. These efforts, coupled with strong enrolment demand and waiting lists,

underscore ACA's long-term fiscal viability, stability, and commitment to responsible financial stewardship.

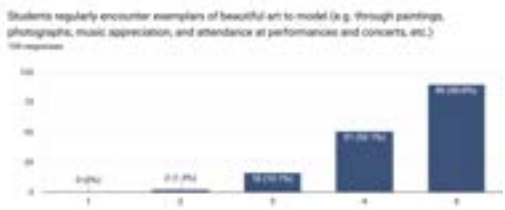
6. Successful: *ACA students, parents, staff, and school council(s) and community members consider the school and program to be successful.*

Growing demand is a key measure of program quality and success. The graph (right) shows that by May 2024, 3,700 students sought enrolment for the 2024/25 school year. That number climbed past 4000 before September 1, 2025. Applications for the 2025/26 school year have surpassed 1000 applications in less than 6 weeks. Waitlists are reset yearly.



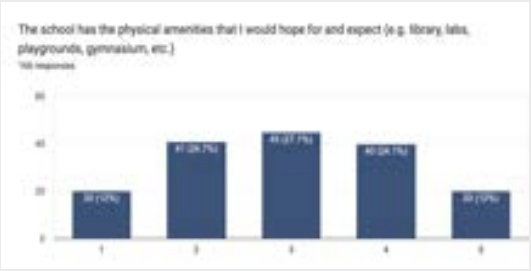
**results for all ACA campuses*

Provincial and Local Measures	2023	2024	Achievement
Percentage of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the overall quality of basic education	93.5	93.8	Very high
Percentage of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education.	95.6	84.3	Very high (declined)



Excellent results in the areas of education and teacher quality, student engagement, and citizenship are also markers of success. Positive perceptions of teacher quality (see Section 1) speaks to the caliber of ACA's teaching and support staff, and their collective commitment to their students and professional craft as classical educators. Local surveys point to high stakeholder satisfaction with ACA's programming; 94% of parents feel that explicit and systematic instruction in fine arts is elevating their child/ren's skills and 88% feel the quality of training in classical music and music theory is exceptional.

Reflection: Students receive rich and varied programming in the physical and fine arts, including fencing, martial arts, dance, art appreciation, musical literacy and historical theory, Latin instruction, and training in orality and rhetoric. The accomplishments of our athletic and speech and debate teams, and our robust, high quality outdoor education programming are further indicators of program success. Improved integration of drama and foreign language (French and Mandarin) into the curriculum remains a priority. Surveys and anecdotal evidence reveal stakeholders dissatisfaction with the lack of adequate amenities and facilities necessary to deliver the charter. ACA is working with Alberta Education to address these deficiencies.



"The location of Currie Campus is problematic. The lack of a gym and outdoor field space needs to be addressed. While the school is bright and tidy, the space is small, and the hallways feel cluttered and narrow" (Parent, June 2024).

"The lack of green space, limited library services, science labs, and a gymnasium is a serious deficiency, to the point that I can't quite understand how the provincial government would allow us to begin a school without these facilities" (Parent, June 2024).

7. Student Success: *Student success is determined in accordance with the Ministerial Order #005/2024.*

Vision for Student Learning: Like Confucius, we hold that 'an educated person is not a tool'. Career preparedness is a happy byproduct of a liberal arts education, but not the primary objective. The ultimate telos is to promote human flourishing and prepare students to live virtuously and with purpose. Although evaluating longitudinal success is premature, local performance evaluation rubrics include 10+ year alumni survey questions pertaining to metrics such as civil service, community engagement, family, friendships, and sense of purpose.

Provincial Measures (Supplemental AEAMs)	2023	2024	Achievement
Percentage of teacher and parent satisfaction that students demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning.	94.0%	89.0%	Very high
Percentage of teachers and parents who agree that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school.	94.9%	95.0%	Very high

Foundations for Learning: Local performance measures (below) are indicators of success in this domain.

Children in early elementary grades receive systematic instruction in phonics grounded in the science of reading.	Average score: 4.7 / 5.0
The literature studied in the school reflects a high level of aesthetic, moral, literary, and/or informational value.	Average score: 4.6 / 5.0

**Parent and teacher survey results above based on all three campuses the average scores from a five point scale, where 1 is "not at all" and 5 is "excellent"*

All teachers are trained in the science of reading. Literacy resources (available here) are linguistically and aesthetically rich, and promote an appreciation of the beauty of language. Mastery of the rules of English grammar and the study of Latin deepens students' understanding of etymology and the structure of case-based languages. Singapore Math (dimensions), a program focused on mastery of standard algorithms and memorization of math facts, gives students a strong foundation in numeracy. See Section 9 for more detail.

Objectivity and Impartiality: A commitment to truth-seeking is explicit in our charter. The use of Socratic methods, coupled with intentional instruction in virtue, logic, and rhetoric support courageous and civil conversations. Students learn to reason clearly, practice discernment, and anchor themselves in truth. They can safely ask penetrating questions; inhabit different perspectives; make mistakes without fear; practice tolerance and broad-mindedness, and they come to understand that friendship is possible even amidst disagreement.

Outcomes for Learning: Explicit instruction in orality and rhetoric teaches students to speak and write beautifully and persuasively. A rhetoric lesson inspired by Shakespeare's Brutus can be viewed here, Printing and cursive are explicitly taught with 92.5% of parents reporting improvements in their child's handwriting. Students compose original stories, and practice oration through singing, narration, and poetry performances. Penmanship; the content and organization of writing; vocabulary; and oral communication are graded.

Our charter aims to "preserve, transmit, and build upon the wisdom of past generations —not to repudiate or dismantle it." Through encounters with enduring classical works from across time and place, students come to adopt a posture of gratitude, intellectual humility and reverence, and understand that each generation is as a link in a chain, owing duties to those who came before, and to those who follow in time. They come to recognize truth, beauty, and goodness and the pursuit of wisdom to be the guiding principles of human affairs.

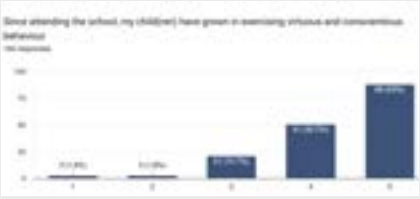
Health for Life; Character Development; Civic Engagement: Local parent surveys* provide evidence of success:

Local Survey Results	
Participation in team sports promotes virtues of courage, endurance, self-control, magnanimity in victory & defeat, justice, friendship, fair play.	97.4%
Students have opportunities to participate in regular and enriching field studies and outdoor excursions.	94.5%
The school celebrates festivals, games, feasts, and other events to build community, culture, teach reverence, and to celebrate the goodness of being.	90.3%

**Parent and teacher survey results above based on all three campuses using a five point scale. Percentages reflect an answer of "good" (4) or "excellent" (5)*

Ample time for daily outdoor play, outdoor pursuits in nature, and a balanced physical arts and health program delivered by specialist teachers, promotes Scholé (leisurely learning) and a holistic approach to student wellness, focused on virtue and character development, camaraderie, resilience and personal agency.

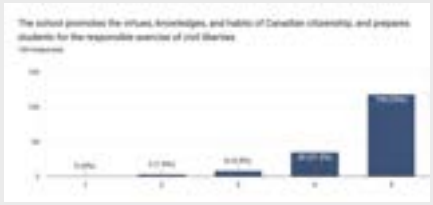
Virtue & Character Development:
Teaching and reporting is focused on acquiring essential virtues. Reporting measures *phronesis,* or "prudence,"and the virtues of temperance, fortitude, and benevolence. Students learn to accept responsibility; learn from mistakes; balance work and leisure; be prepared for class; take responsible risks for the sake of learning; remain diligent in the face of difficulty; be patient and broad-minded in the face of provocations or disappointment; and extend forgiveness when wronged.
To observe students reciting a class pledge, their daily promise to the pursuit of personal excellence, click here.

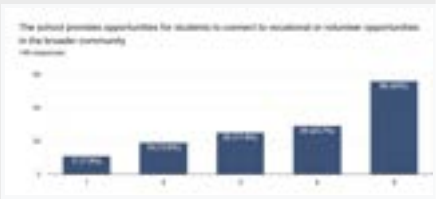


Self Reliance & Wellness: High standards and authentic brushes with adversity {and failure} help students to develop confidence, self-reliance, and personal responsibility. Strategies include:
-Academic rigour, challenging material, and accurate grading, including failing grades. Students can misstep, improve, and to learn that ultimate worth is not determined by test scores.
-Uniform policy emphasizes propriety and respect for self and others
-Outdoor education programming, including backcountry camping and 20+km hikes with substantial elevation gains, often in inclement weather.
-Student Code of Conduct: students are responsible for their own learning, homework, and academic challenges, rather than relying on parents to intercede on their behalf (this expectation is calibrated to their age and maturity).

Community & Civic Engagement
-A diverse community, ACA promotes cultural sharing, appreciation, and teaches diversity of perspective
-Charter focus on acquiring knowledge and habits of good citizens, and preparing students for the exercise of civil liberties
-Each grade completes one local community service project per year

Parent Surveys, June 2024





Reflection: Our charter and practices are well aligned with and respond effectively to the Ministerial Order. In partnership with parents who are the *first* educators of their children, we instill both practical and philosophic wisdom and virtue in our students, enabling them to lead good and meaningful lives. . As part of the charter renewal process, ACA intends to submit charter amendments that will further strengthen our commitment to and improve programming offerings in areas such as outdoor education, fine and performing arts, traditional building crafts, orality, ancient and modern languages, and Canadian history/civics.

8. Sharing Practices: *ACA shares its innovative practices & learning outcomes with the education community.*

ACA is committed to the dissemination of classical education and its practices to the education community in Alberta and beyond. A non-exhaustive list is offered below and is expanded upon in Section 12 of this report.

Educational Research & Professional Development: Faculty, leadership, and board members have presented at educational conferences, led panel discussions, and delivered professional development in other jurisdictions. Topics include:"cognitive load theory" and its connection to the new content-rich Alberta curriculum; the benefits of removing screens and smartphones from schools; the classical Quadrivium and Singapore Math; and "What Aristotle and Confucius Can Teach us About Character Education."

Curriculum Implementation Pilot Participation: From the outset, ACA intentionally adopted all new provincial curricula including fully implementing the new K-6 ELAL, Mathematics, and PE and Wellness standards, and volunteered for 100% participation in the K-6 Science (2022) and Social studies (2024) piloting initiatives. This has enabled us to support teachers, share our learning and approaches within and beyond our district, consult on resources, and advise on and provide robust feedback to the province related to curriculum development.

Professional Organizations and Memberships: Full participation in the Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS); College of Alberta Superintendents (CASS); Association of School Business Officials of Alberta (CASS); Charter Superintendent Community of Practice; and the Alberta Research Network (ARN).

Public tours and networking: We continue to share and refine our practice by regularly hosting school tours for educators and education researchers, and continuing to build relationships with other Alberta charter schools and classical jurisdictions further afield.

Reflection: Alliances and networks have been established with various scholars and educators to understand, apply, and contribute to educational research, to ensure continuous school improvement and to strengthen the educational landscape of our province, especially in the field of classical education. Efforts to establish conventional research partnerships with post secondary institutions are ongoing. See sections 11 and 12 for more on how ACA shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with the education community.

9. Student Achievement: *Student achievement is consistently strong and improving for ACA students.*

Provincial Measures	2023	2024	Achievement
PAT Acceptable Rate – Grade 6 Social Studies.	88.9%	81.4%	High
PAT Excellence Rate - Grade 6 Social Studies.	51.9%	25.7%	High
Percentage teachers, parents, & students who agree students have access to appropriate supports & services at school.	83.7%	80.6%	Very high

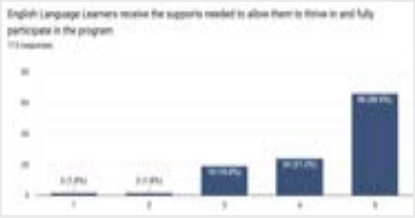
Evidence indicates that student achievement in moral and intellectual pursuits is strong and continually improving. District results for the grade 6 Provincial Social Studies exam outperform provincial averages. A slight drop in PAT "excellence" appears anomalous - in year two, rapid organizational growth and a 160% increase in the grade 6 population introduced increased learner variability. In response, targeted improvements

are underway to strengthen student learning support (SLS) services. Strategies include the use of robust academic screening to inform instruction and planning for interventions, a budget that prioritizes hiring and training dedicated SLS teams at each campus (e.g., school counselors, learning support teachers, educational assistants, language tutors), and the purchase and implementation of improved

Parent Survey (June 2024)



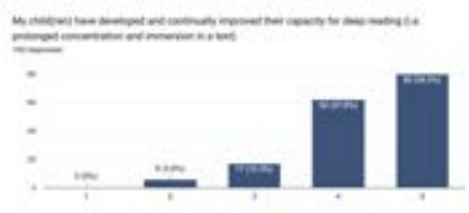
Parent Surveys (June 2024)

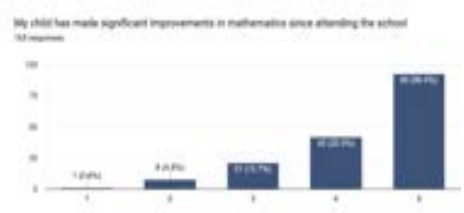


resources, processes, and systems to track student performance (e.g., Dossier, level B training). An implementation lag is anticipated, but local surveys already reflect improved stakeholder satisfaction in this area.

Virtue and Friendship: At ACA students develop exemplary moral character and relate to each other in a spirit of friendship and good will. In provincial surveys 91.1% of parents and 95.9% of teachers report that students model the characteristics of active citizens. Of parents surveyed locally, 90.4% agree their child has developed positive and beneficial friendships at school. A video showcasing our unique approach is available here.

Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy: Local surveys (below) indicate that parents are highly satisfied with student improvements in mathematics and reading. Provincial screening results from September 2024 indicate





"My child has improved tremendously in all areas of her education. I have been so impressed with her writing and reading. She can read a whole book now!" (Grade 2 parent testimonial)

that on average less than 5% of students in grades one to three were identified as requiring additional supports in literacy and math, well below provincial ranges. This signals that our research-informed approach to structured literacy and numeracy instruction and intervention is yielding results. Parents and teachers report that using the Singapore Math program, students are making significant gains in fluency and mastery of math facts and algorithms. In literacy, students in K-3 receive direct phonics instruction (as demonstrated here) and grade 4 students know and can recite all the rules of grammar (as evidenced here). Student capacity for sustained reading has improved, with students in grades 3 and up completing 4 to 6 classic novels per year.
97 % parents agree that students have opportunities to learn, memorize, and recite poems (see here) , songs, speeches and prose Other testaments of success include our prize-winning debate team and Latin program.

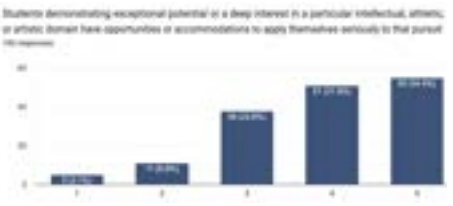
Achievement in History and Geography: Social Studies PAT results and anecdotal evidence positively exhibit the efficacy of ACA's unique chronological and integrated approach to teaching history and geography as distinct disciplines. Knowledge-rich content, socratic discussion, and use of primary sources in older grades, all cultivate wonder and engagement in world, Canadian, and Albertan history. A grade 4 recitation of modern history facts, found here, showcases our unique approach and achievement in this curricular area.

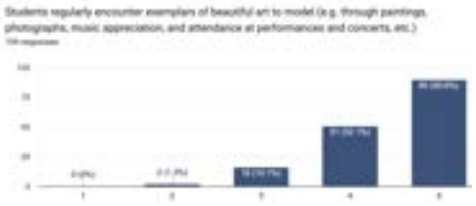
Parent Testimonials (Parent Survey, June 2024)

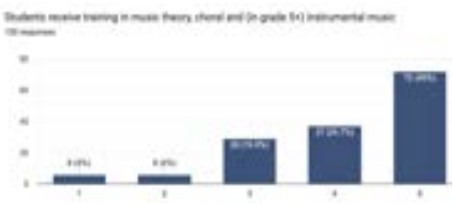
"The content and depth for ELA, history, and math have greatly surpassed what my children learned in the local public school. Wonderful!"

"The inclusion of world history and geography in the curriculum have been such a positive change from previous schools as our son loves these topics and excels in them."

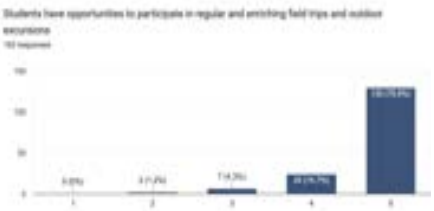
Achievement in artistic, athletic, and outdoor pursuits: Local parent surveys (below) indicate that students regularly encounter and participate in intellectual and cultural enrichment and are afforded opportunities to seriously pursue and successfully apply themselves in areas of interest. One key example is the training students receive in music theory and history, choral, and instrumental music (see video evidence here).







Student accomplishments in extracurricular and team sports include strong showings from our Paladin athletes, including medal finishes in volleyball, cross country, basketball, and the Thermopylae mud run. ACA's outdoor education program supplements the science program and teaching related to indigenous cultures, and promotes student wellness and sparks and appreciation for the wonder and majesty of the natural world.



Reflection: Due to the newness of Alberta classical and PAT exam cancellations and exemptions (due to curriculum piloting), historical data related to student achievement is unavailable. However, local surveys and stakeholder anecdotes, classroom-based assessments, reporting, and provincial literacy and numeracy screening results, all provide ample evidence of success in this domain. In the coming years, we fully expect that our students will continue to excel across all provincial metrics. Enriching the educational experience of all learners, including exploring strategies to challenge gifted learners, remains a priority going forward.

10. Continuous Improvement: *ACA exhibits in multiple ways ongoing commitment to engaging students, teachers, parents, and community members in a model of continuous improvement.*

Provincial Measures (Supplemental AEAMs)	2023	2024	Achievement
Percentage of teachers, parents and students indicating that their school and schools in their jurisdiction have improved or stayed the same the last three years.	82.2	87.1	Very high
Percentage of teachers and parents satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.	96.1	92.5	Very high

Although stakeholder engagement is iterative, robust stakeholder engagement frameworks are successfully implemented to ensure accountability and foster a culture of continuous school improvement. One example being the recent introduction of AERR and Annual Education Plan communications and consultation sessions for board members, school administration and staff, and school councils members. These consultations focus on data reporting and analysis, and gather stakeholder feedback and strategies towards continuous school

improvement. The product of this work is journalized and found on ACA's Annual reports and plans page.

Parent Engagement: We believe that parents are the first educators of their children. Provincial metrics show that 92.4% of parents and teachers are pleased with the level of parent involvement in decisions about their child's education. Locally, 94% of parents agree that there is a sufficient number and range of volunteer opportunities and 95.7% are highly satisfied with communication and access to the school and its personnel.

> *"I can not tell you how much I appreciate the school taking the parents' authority seriously. I will battle through any challenge with the growing community here to be acknowledged as the primary authority when it comes to my children in the public school realm." (ACA parent testimonial)*

Opportunities and avenues for parent engagement are facilitated in many ways including an open door policy, clear policy, and a required minimum of ten volunteer hours per year from each parent. An iterative and robust communication plan collects feedback from parents and communicates our vision (e.g. information nights, weekly newsletters with information on different aspects of classical education, regular learning conferences and four reporting periods). Parents are surveyed regularly throughout the year (e.g., June 2024 Parent Survey).

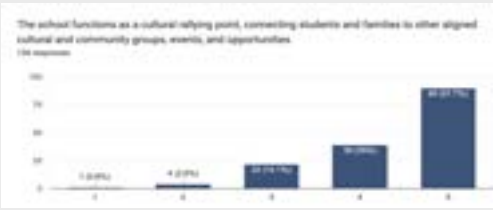
School Faculty Engagement - Our staff are committed to achieving the best possible results with all students and are reflective practitioners actively engaged in school improvement. Teacher quality ratings are excellent and 90.6% surveyed confirm that professional development contributes significantly to their professional growth. Strategies include opportunities to contribute to the AERR and Annual education reports and ample opportunities for school staff to offer feedback and reflect on practice and contribute to school improvement through collaborative conversation (e.g., weekly meetings, scheduled PD) and staff surveys.

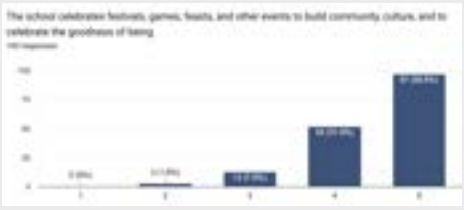
Community Engagement - ACA has been proactive and strategic in this regard. Members of our faculty, board, and executive leadership regularly engage with educational researchers and classical educators from other jurisdictions to ensure that we are incorporating best practices in our pedagogy, culture, and curriculum. This includes touring other high performing classical schools such as Great Hearts and Founders Academy in the U.S. and sharing resources in areas of policy, administrative practices, curriculum, pedagogy, and professional development. For the last three years, Alberta Classical has engaged outside researchers to conduct multi-day training with our faculty members, including experts in the "science of reading" such as Jodi DeVries, and classical educators like Dr. Andrew Zwernemann. Board members and faculty have also attended and presented at various academic conferences on educational research (e.g., ResearchEd, TAAPCS). See Section 12 for more.

Reflection: Students actively help plan and contribute to school assemblies, events, and extracurriculars (e.g, student run clubs, poetry and debate competitions, Spiritus Scholasticus, and cultural celebrations). Mechanisms to capture student perspective and enhance engagement, including surveys and consultations, are being developed. Satisfaction with the quality and delivery of the program of studies declined markedly from 95.6% (in 2023) to 84.3%. In truth, the source of discontent rests with a lack of amenities and facilities (e.g., gymnasium, library, CTS, and playgrounds). Informing, consulting, involving, and collaborating with stakeholders and soliciting parent feedback will be an important next step if we are to affect positive change.

11. Community Engagement: : *ACA works collaboratively with stakeholders and demonstrates broad and sustained levels of community engagement.*

Local Measures
Parent Surveys
June 2024



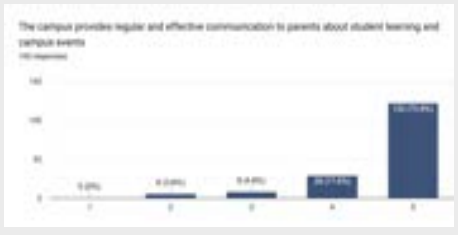


Classical education is a human endeavour. As such, stakeholder engagement and community partnerships are purposefully cultivated. Stakeholder input is valued and appreciated, and interactions amongst community members reflect conviviality, collaboration, and open conversation. The school prides itself on being a cultural hub and rallying place where community members can gather and celebrate the goodness of being. Examples include community events (e.g., welcome BBQs, concerts, seasonal and cultural celebrations), assemblies and services that mark occasions with reverence and ceremony, and hosting broader, off-hours community events (e.g. Shakespeare study days, speaker events, community rentals, school council's Aristotle book club, etc).

Broader Educational Context: Evidence and strategies include: 1) Establishing collaborative networks with other classical jurisdictions in and beyond Canada (e.g., Great Hearts, Founders, Hillsdale college) and with a number of post-secondary researchers, specializing in and consulting on classical educational philosophy, history, and pedagogy; 2) Voting membership in TAAPCS: our Secretary Treasurer served on the executive and recently facilitated a webinar with the Minister of Education for charter school parents from across the province, which was well attended by ACA parents. Faculty participates in the TAAPCS Superintendent Community Practice and CASS conferences and events; 3) Regularly welcoming local municipal and community leaders, including the Education Minister and other MPs and MLAs; 4) Partnership and ongoing consultation with the Canada Lands Corporation (CLC) in Calgary is focused on expanding the Currie campus in the community.

Parents, school councils, and students: Our open-door policy and volunteering mandates ensure parents have ample opportunity to receive and share information and to voice their perspectives. Parents often help in classrooms and support field studies. All stakeholders are invited to attend student assemblies and information sessions on topics of interest. Collegial working relationships exist between all school councils, fundraising societies, and school leaders, and these groups actively plan and host the majority of community events. School council members attend public board meetings and are invited to report on their work in support of the school.





"I really appreciated that I was able to come into the classroom and teach the grade 1's about local Indigenous plants and why they're so important to our First Nations community." (CCA Parent)

Students have access to classical clubs, activities, and teams. Some clubs are student-driven and facilitated. A robust field study and outdoor education program and focus on service learning takes students beyond the school walls and helps them engage with and serve their local communities in meaningful ways.

Reflection: We continue to look for opportunities and entry points for stakeholders to ask questions and provide feedback at the school, system, and board levels. Priorities include: establishing research partnerships with post secondary institutions; welcoming more preservice teachers and ECE practicum students; and building relationships with Indigenous communities and local elders beyond the immediate authority.

12. Research Informed *practices create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.*

ACA uses and shares research-informed practices to promote innovation and advance student learning. In less than three years, significant contributions have been made in this area, some of which are highlighted below:

1) Educational Research: Although still an area for growth, early educational research initiatives include:

Francis Fast and John von Heyking. "Classical Academy on the Prairie." Chapter for *Accounting for Canadian Education: A Reappraisal of* Bankrupt Education: The Decline of Liberal Education in Canada. Edited by David Livingstone. Palgrave MacMillan. *Under review*

November 2024: "Classical Academy on the Prairie" (with Francis Fast). Accounting for Canadian Education. Vancouver Island University. Nanaimo, BC. Conference Presentation

Research Proposal: "Leveraging Children's Voice in the Pursuit of Critical Thinking, Expression, and Citizenship" (with J.Leighton)

October 2023: "Rethinking Screens in Schools" (A.Casali): "The Quadrivium and Singapore Math" (C.Gamboa); "What Aristotle and Confucius Can Teach us About Character Education" (C.Guy): "Cognitive Load Theory and the Content-rich Trivium" (K.Formosa, C.Gay). The Alberta Association of Charter Schools research conference. Calgary, Alberta. Conference presentations.

2) Sharing innovations and best practices with the broader educational community: As noted in question 8, faculty and leadership have presented at educational conferences and delivered professional development in other jurisdictions. We host school tours to showcase our unique school culture and educational approaches. Visitors include public officials and public policy researchers for think tanks including the Montreal Economic Institute, Fraser Institute, Second Street, and Cardus; current and former public school practitioners; educators from international jurisdictions; and members of education faculties including St. Mary's University and the University of Calgary. School administrators have conducted research surveys of parents to determine how our smartphone and social media policies have impacted their children outside of school hours. This research was shared with senior policymakers at Alberta Education and with think tank researchers to support province-wide policy restricting smartphone use in schools.

3) Sharing research, innovations, and best practices with the general public via media and social media:
ACA has publicized innovations and best practices through engagement with the media, podcasts, as well as through social media channels like YouTube. A series of videos posted to the ACA YouTube channel highlight our approach to key themes including virtues, technology, school culture, and the importance of beauty.

Local and national news organizations have noted our unique approach: we have received positive attention and interviews in outlets such as the CBC, The Hub, the National Post, the Epoch Times, True North News,

Second Street, Western Standard, and others. ACA faculty and directors have published op-eds, essays and journal articles concerning classical education, teaching a knowledge-rich curriculum, civics education, educational pluralism, and other topics. These have appeared in publications such as the Calgary Herald, Alberta Views magazine, the Hub (more here, here, here), the Imaginative Conservative (more here, here, and here), and others. We have conducted original research in our school authority about teacher education, and published these findings along with policy recommendations on how to improve teacher training and certification.

Reflection: Ample evidence exists that ACA uses and shares research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning. Although efforts to establish post-secondary research partnerships will continue, our charter authority is actively redefining what constitutes research and the sharing of educational practices as illustrated by the many meaningful contributions listed above.