

THE TORCH BY NOVA CLASSICAL ACADEMY

SEPTEMBER 2021

THE TORCH



A DEEP DIVE INTO CLASSICAL EDUCATION

Dear Nova Classical Community,

Throughout its existence, Nova Classical Academy has earned the reputation for being a phenomenal academic school. The school has continued to rank among the top in the state as well as nationally. While these accolades are a great representation of the amount of learning that is going on at Nova Classical, it is important to remember that these results occur because of **our strong commitment to the classical model of education**. While many of the founding families chose to attend Nova because they were specifically looking for a classical school, that is not always the case today. When I speak with our new and prospective families, many of them have chosen to come to us because of our outstanding academic reputation, while also acknowledging that they are not extremely familiar with what constitutes a classical school.

We believe that an important step to maintaining a healthy Nova Classical Academy community is to have our families aligned behind the classical education model and seek to develop a consistent understanding of classical education among our community. To facilitate this, we are going to begin sending a monthly email titled *The Torch*. *The Torch* will focus on defining **what classical education is as well as what classical education is not**.

We expect this to be an ongoing conversation, but topics that will be covered this year include definitions of classical education; the Trivium; the role of spiraling in classical curriculum; the Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric stages of classical education; The Great Conversation; and why Latin is an integral part of Nova's classical education model. We have chosen the topics for the first year of *The Torch* strategically, as we feel they will create a foundational base of common knowledge which will allow us to dip deeper into the intricacies of classical education in the future.

For the inaugural issue of *The Torch*, we offer a brief introduction to the year by defining our educational model. Dr. Christopher Perrin, a specialist in classical education and the keynote speaker for the 2021 MN Classical Conference, offers several analogies of the model in his lecture series about the major elements of classical education. In his explorations, he likens classical education to a museum, a cathedral, a garden, a table, a monastery, a tower, a road, and finally, bees gathering honey. If that list of analogies seems like a lot to consider in a definition, Dr. Perrin also notes that each time he writes or talks about the definition of classical education, he is "bound to say something new".

The above list of analogies may bring the definition of classical education into sharper focus for some familiar with the model, but for others, the list of analogies may further obscure what classical education is. To start from the foundation of understanding, we would like to offer the simple definition from our website- that **a classical education teaches children the art of learning and trains their minds to think well**. Over the coming months of the 2021-2022 school year, we will delve deeper into how each facet of our learning model supports the definition: our pedagogy, our curriculum, and our virtues. We are excited to bring this ongoing conversation to our entire community in order to light the way forward with collaborative understanding.

It's a Great Day to be a Knight!

Dr. Missy Johnson

Dr. Brett Wedlund