



OUR MISSION:

To train the minds and improve the hearts of young people through a rigorous, content-rich classical curriculum in the liberal arts and sciences, one that produces thoughtful leaders and virtuous citizens.

UPCOMING DATES

April 1

Spirit Wear Dress Down Day

April 2-9

Spring Break

May 21

Spartan Sprint

May 25

Lower School (K-5) Awards and Moving Up Ceremony – 6:00pm

May 27

Upper School (6-9) Awards and Pinning Ceremony – 6:00pm

*I WILL LEARN
THE TRUE*

*I WILL DO
THE GOOD*

*I WILL LOVE
THE BEAUTIFUL*



Phillip Schwenk | Principal | pschwenk@nocacademy.org
Michael Kelleher | Dean of Students | mkelleher@nocacademy.org

Coffee with our Principal

Join Mr. Schwenk on Zoom on Friday, April 16 at 6:00 p.m. Please email the office (info@nocacademy.org) for the login information.

Virtue of the month

Each month we focus on a virtue and reward students for exemplifying that behavior pattern. We will focus on Wisdom as our focused virtue for April. We will cultivate a thirst for knowledge about the most important things.

New Pick-up Route

Our new *Pick-up* route has been communicated via email. We appreciate your flexibility in following the new route.



NOCA Wins 1st place in Contest

The Barney Charter School Initiative (Hillsdale College) sponsored a photo contest among all BCSI schools showing students with the Hillsdale College publication of The US Constitution. Mr. Mowry submitted this photo of 2nd grade student, May Simpson. It will be used in Hillsdale College marketing. NOCA has also been awarded a framed reproduction of Samuel J Knecht's painting, *The Signing of the American Constitution* and a set of DVDs featuring Hillsdale College's Online Courses.

ProgressBook Parent Access

Our grading software is available for parent access. You can use this resource to check on your child's progress and missing assignments. Please contact Mrs. Mowry (GMowry@nocacademy.org) for assistance in access.

Yearbook Orders

Families still have time to order yearbooks for \$25. Please send a check made out to NOCA PTO with your order form to the Main Office.

Parent Teacher Conferences

We hosted our Parent Teacher Conferences on March 18-19. We had more than 90% participation rate. We believe that the family is the primary educator and we appreciate you spending time with us as we work to develop our students.



PTO Board

President | Anna Pagal
Vice President | Patrick Pagal
Secretary | Janelle Schaller
Treasurer | Jamey Koralewski
Vices | Erin Mathias, Melanie Woolwine

Find us on Facebook:

- 👍 Northwest Ohio Classical Academy PTO
- 👍 Spartans Family Group (NOCA)

Please contact the PTO at NocaPTO@yahoo.com



Upcoming PTO Dates

March 15-April 4: Spring Spirit Wear Sale
April 1: Spartan Spirit Day
April 12-30: Spartan Sprint Fundraising Drive
April 20: Monthly PTO Meeting
May 21: 1st Annual Spartan Sprint (during regular school day)
TBD- Used Uniform Sale

Spirit Wear Dress Down Day

On Thursday April 1, students are free to where NOCA Spirit Wear instead of their regular uniforms. Any students choosing not to wear the regular uniform may wear Spirit Wear tops, jeans (no holes), and tennis shoes.

Yearbook Team

The yearbook is transitioning from the PTO to the school this year and Campus Aide, Mr. Mowry, has taken over the leadership of this project. We thank Mr. Koralewski for his work on the work he has done to begin and continue our record of history. Mr. Mowry has assembled a team of NOCA students who are photographing school events and designing the yearbook.

Lower School Awards and Moving-Up Ceremony

Our K-5th students will gather at 6:00pm on Tuesday, May 25 to celebrate a year of achievement and the joy of learning. We will conclude the evening with a moving-up ceremony to welcome these students to the next grade level.

Upper School Awards and Pinning Ceremony

Our 6th-9th grade students will gather at 6:00pm on Thursday, May 27 to celebrate a year of achievement and the joy of learning. We will conclude the evening with a pinning ceremony to welcome the 8th grade students to the high school.



Classical Education: The Agoge of the Mind

Michael Kelleher

Students of Latin rarely believe me when I tell them the real difficulty of the language is not that there are too many words, but too little. The never-ending stream of vocab lists and new and irregular verbs and nouns makes it feel like Latin is a strange and unpredictable ocean with no land in sight. But the fact is a single Latin word might be rendered variously in English. Take for example the word, *ius*, which is the basis of our English word justice. Indeed, *ius* may be translated as “justice” but also “law” and often “right” (as in Bill of Rights) as well as “that which is binding” or an “oath.” While clearly a common thread ties these meanings together, there is enough ambiguity for various shades in different contexts. In Latin *ius* is both that which protects (the law) and that which is protected (particular rights).

A similar challenge arises when we encounter the Greek word *agoge*. Liddell and Scott’s Greek lexicon lists various meanings of transport (“carrying away,” “freight,” “carriage,” “voyage”), motion (including “tempo”), guidance and instruction (for everything from armies to plants to children), and even a “method of proof” or “line of argument.” At the risk of offending better Hellenists than myself, I hazard my own suggestion: “struggle.” The struggle of carrying an object from point A to point B. The struggle of keeping pace with a frenzied but precise tempo. The struggle of constructing a coherent and well-reasoned argument.

But perhaps the most famous meaning of *agoge* is: “the public education of the Spartan youth” (Liddell, “*agoge*”). An entire Wikipedia page is dedicated to the Spartan *agoge*! And here the inherent struggle of *agoge* is most clearly evident. Spartan boys didn’t wear shoes or sandals but had to run and jump and climb the rocky slopes of Arcadia barefoot “to make their soles hardy” (*Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*, 2.3). *Agoge*. They didn’t have wardrobes stocked for every season and occasion but wore a single and sparse garment through winter and summer so their bodies would learn to “withstand variations of heat and cold” (*CL*, 2.4). *Agoge*. Even the details of their diets and exercise routines were prescribed to produce strong and tough but supple limbs. *Agoge*. And the most common form of punishment for Spartan youths: the sting of the whip. *Agoge*.

But to what end? Plutarch writes that Sparta’s legendary lawgiver, Lycurgus, regarded education as the “greatest and noblest task” of legislation (*Lycurgus*, 14). The Spartan *agoge* was the foundation of for their whole society. And clearly, Spartans were interested in the education of Spartan bodies. To produce the healthiest and most completely developed human specimens (*CL*, 5.9). That is, the most completely developed *physically*.

No provision is made for systematic instruction in the Trivium and Quadrivium. The Spartans had little use for endless hours of debate over a single proposition. Just make a decision and stick to it. They did not waste time contemplating the metaphysics of the universe. There was no Academy in Sparta, no Lyceum. No Spartan epics or day-long performances of tragic verse. In fact, Spartans prided themselves in their gift for short speech. A laconic remark – Laconia being the region we find Sparta – is concise and direct. Short and sweet. Except not often sweet. Whatever limited examples of culture Sparta manifest (art, music, poetry, etc.) were always directed towards martial and more concretely corporeal ends. For Sparta, the struggle of *agoge* was the training and improvement of Spartan bodies.

In light of these facts, what, to paraphrase Tertullian, has Sparta to do with NOCA? After all, the days of corporal punishment are long past. Instead of barefoot, our students have multiple pairs of shoes. A school pair, a PE pair, and even, for snowy days, a pair of boots. Even though we require uniforms, it is not for the same reason, for our students can wear sweaters in cold months and shorts in warm. And we certainly don't let them play in the snow without appropriate wear. As for dietary concerns, we are lucky enough to keep them from exchanging food and clean up after themselves! And it is hardly an understatement to say the rigors of present-day physical education are somewhat less demanding than those of Sparta.

But such measures would be inappropriate to our ends. After all, we are not in the business of educating bodies. We educate the intellect. Our mission is "to train minds and improve hearts." Even so, the struggle, the agoge of the intellect, is just as real and equally if not more demanding.

We do not demand our wards to struggle against the elements shoeless and coatless, but we do ask them to slog through dense forests like the Iliad and Odyssey and the formidable discourses of Aristotle. We do not tell them what they have to eat, but we do require a steady diet of Great Books that every new year asks them to try something new. Just taste it. To whet the palette for thoughts and words that force them (and us!) to rise above themselves, to venture outside their "comfort zone." And the exercise we demand is much more sedentary. To learn to be still and listen with all the attentiveness of a night-watchman on duty, and for a sword we offer a pen or pencil that is forever in need of sharpening. But this is all the more demanding for a child whose every impulse screams, "I just wanna run!"

Thus, as we brave the Long March ahead (and yes, the pun is very much intended!) and we begin to feel the effects that inevitably accompany struggle – the sore muscles on the brain, the callouses of patience worn thin, the cramping in our grading hands, let us remember who we are –

We are Spartans.

And Spartans struggle.



**NORTHWEST OHIO
CLASSICAL ACADEMY**