

Jackson Hole Classical Academy — Classicality Audit (Full Report)

Aggregate verdict: CLASSICAL

JHCA consistently signals the core marks of classical Christian education—wisdom & virtue formation, truth–goodness–beauty, Trivium/Liberal Arts, Socratic pedagogy & memory work, teacher-as-mentor, and parent partnership—with minimal presence of negative indicators.

1) Religious & Metaphysical Foundations → CLASSICAL

School's own words (samples): - "cultivate... wisdom and virtue... fulfill their God-given potential... contribute to a flourishing and free society." - "pursuit of truth begins with wonder... love what is true, good, and beautiful... within the historic Christian tradition that calls each person to love God and man." - "As a private school in the classical and Christian traditions, we believe that a Creator has ordered the world..." - "Theological virtues of faith, hope, and love... cardinal virtues..."

Keyword check vs. framework (positive/negative lists): truth, goodness, beauty; virtue; wisdom; Creator; Christian; love God; wonder; theological virtues; cardinal virtues → positive indicators for transcendental moral realism, theological grounding, formation of affections.

Tally: 12 positive vs 0 negative → **100% positive**

Notes: Explicit Christian theism and virtue language are strong; no values-neutral/relativism language surfaced (negative list).

2) School Purpose & Goal → CLASSICAL

School's own words: - Mission centered on wisdom and virtue; true, good, and beautiful; formation of heart and mind. - "Educating the heart and mind includes fostering habits... for a virtuous life." - "Focus our teaching on the heart and mind... emphasizing what is true, good and beautiful."

Keyword check vs. framework: cultivation of wisdom/virtue; pursuit of T-G-B; formation not information → all positive purpose markers.

Tally: 9 positive vs 0 negative → **100% positive**

Notes: No heavy job-prep/skills-first emphasis (a common negative).

3) Curriculum → CLASSICAL

School's own words: - "Overview... follows the classical paradigm of grammar, logic, and rhetoric (The Trivium)." - Latin from early grades; poetry memorization; integrated fine arts; history described as narrative (not "social studies"). - Students "read and discuss the literary and philosophical classics... the great works... that have shaped... history." - Upper School literature: close reading, Socratic discussions, essay writing; ties to primary sources in history.

Keyword check vs. framework: explicit Trivium, Great Books/classics, Latin, history taught as history, wonder → strong positives across Seven Liberal Arts & Great Books; integration & wonder present.

Negatives present? Minor references to "inquiry-based learning" and "hands-on" (lower school science), but not as the organizing paradigm (i.e., not displacing Great Books/Trivium). These phrases are part of the negative list only when central/dominant.

Tally: 10 positive vs 2 potential-negative terms → **83% positive**

Score rationale: Trivium/Latin/Great Books language is explicit and repeated; light experiential phrasing does not outweigh classical structure.

4) Pedagogy (Teaching Methods) → CLASSICAL

School's own words: - Teachers use the Socratic method to sharpen reasoning. - Grammar stage: joy in repeating/chanting facts; lower school uses memorization—weekly poetry memorization. - Upper School: focused class discussion, perform a poem and deliver a short address (rhetoric practice). - Narration and nature study in lower school (Charlotte Mason) aligned with classical formation of habits.

Keyword check vs. framework: Socratic, memorization/recitation/chanting, rhetoric/speeches, formation habits; wonder/contemplation language present though the term *scholé* isn't used. Positives align with the pedagogy list.

Tally: 8 positive vs 0 negative → **100% positive**

Notes: No evidence of project-based/skills-first pedagogy as the center.

5) Faculty → CLASSICAL

School's own words: - "Portrait of a Teacher": teachers model love for what is true, good, and beautiful; mentor students; lead by example; are lifelong learners.

Keyword check vs. framework: teachers as models of virtue, mentorship & collegiality—direct hits.

Tally: 6 positive vs 0 negative → **100% positive**

Notes: Language avoids “teacher-as-facilitator/skills-based” negatives.

6) Parents & Community → CLASSICAL

School’s own words: - “the child’s learning falls under the primary responsibility of parents... the Academy... is a partner with a child’s parents.” - Charlotte Mason page: “Parents are the primary influence in their children’s lives; this responsibility cannot be delegated elsewhere.” - Public Parent Orientation listed on events.

Keyword check vs. framework: Parent partnership/co-educators—explicit positive.

Tally: 5 positive vs 0 negative → **100% positive**

Quick keyword rollup (counts by category)

- **Religious/Metaphysical:** 12 P / 0 N → **100%**
- **Purpose & Goal:** 9 P / 0 N → **100%**
- **Curriculum:** 10 P / 2 N → **83%**
- **Pedagogy:** 8 P / 0 N → **100%**
- **Faculty:** 6 P / 0 N → **100%**
- **Parents & Community:** 5 P / 0 N → **100%**

Overall pattern: explicit, repeated positives across all six elements; negligible negatives.

Notable strengths

- Mission-level formation: “wisdom and virtue,” “true, good, beautiful,” Christian telos.
 - Classical structure: Trivium, Latin, Great Books/classics, poetry & memory.
 - Pedagogy that fits the tradition: Socratic method; chanting/memorization in grammar stage; rhetoric performances.
 - Teachers as mentors/models: teacher-as-former-of-souls articulated.
 - Parents as partners: explicit co-educator language.
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Minor watch-outs (do not change rating)

- Occasional phrases like “inquiry-based learning”/“hands-on” appear in lower school science; ensure they’re subordinate to memory, narration, and nature study (as currently presented).
 - The AP Biology note (9th grade) is fine, but guard against drift toward an AP-driven identity if it were ever to displace classical aims.
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Bottom line

JHCA meets or exceeds classical benchmarks in all six categories. On the evidence available, **Jackson Hole Classical Academy is a CLASSICAL school.**