



Naperville Christian Academy



Transforming Lives Through Education



Great Education Starts with Great Teachers

“What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches.”
–Karl Menninger



Jon McCord
Academic Dean

At NCA, we believe that being in the presence of great men and women impacts students significantly. Being trained by women and men who know and love their subjects impresses upon students the joys and depths of subject matter. Whether it is studying art under Mrs. Wood, a professional artist, or learning about physical education from Ms. Baker, a former NCAA sprinter, students learn from masters. This is also true outside of the academic realm. So much spiritual training is gained by spending time with men and women who are sincerely seeking after God. Through prayer with teachers, weekly chapels, and common daily interactions, students continually observe and are disciplined, simply by spending time with godly men and women. Over the course of their educational lives, students will spend 15,000 hours with their teachers. Shouldn't it be under men and women who exemplify excellence, both academically and spiritually?

Training Students for Life

“The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.”
–Robert M. Hutchins



School is not about standardized tests or lectures or sports or any one “thing”. We believe school is about training a child how to think, and this training occurs through many different avenues. If you spend a second to think about what you remember from school, you probably recall science experiments, great discussions, funny illustrations to convey a point, and perhaps above all, a few teachers who really made their subjects “come to life”. You probably still smile and remember what you learned through those projects and lessons. At NCA, we work very hard to clearly and creatively convey rich and meaningful content. We teach students to think in an orderly and creative way by starting with very basic concepts and then progressing to the more difficult. For example, an early upper school debate pits the students against one another in debating the topic: “Resolved: Blue is a better color than green”. The actual topic of the debate is inconsequential, but through such a simple topic, fun is had and basic, core elements of debating and argumentation are learned. From this humble beginning, students are able to apply their skills of composition and argumentation to unlimited topics, ranging from the religious to the political. Our goal is that the students are vempowered and enabled to engage life and continue to learn and grow for their entire lives.

Committed to Academic Excellence



Integrated Subjects and Faith

“All truth is God’s truth, composing a single universe of knowledge.”

–David Dockery

Perhaps one of the most significant problems in much of education is how fields of knowledge have been



separated from one another. Even more seriously, morality and ethics have been removed from education. In today’s society we witness children, men, and women who have not thought about key questions of right and wrong, good and bad, enduring and transitory. One of the hallmarks of how students are taught at NCA is how classes are integrated across the curriculum. There are so many examples to draw from, but a few will suffice. While our kindergartners learn about the seasons, they study Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons* in music. While taking walks in our local nature preserve, students observe the effects of the seasons like fallen

leaves and the colors of the grass and then draw them in their journals and read books on animals like the arctic hare, who uses his wintry surroundings as camouflage. And, as one student so astutely observed, “It is so neat that God made the bunny to hide from wolves!” In the upper school, students use their Latin, Greek, Bible, Literature, History, Logic, and Grammar in composing arguments and performing debates. The students know that everything they learn is “fair game” in every class. Sadly, this is not the norm in our schools today. While discussing the morality and image of the church painted in Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*, a confused student, who was new to NCA, raised her hand and argued, “But wait, this isn’t Bible class!” I let her know that at NCA, we discuss right and wrong and literature and history and everything in every class! The sad part is that many of our children, (and indeed many adults in our country) are confused about how to “fit scripture into their lives”. This makes perfect sense when we realize that most of our schools today do not bring the truth of God to speak into every context. We separate science from the gospel and get experiments with dire moral consequences! We separate the arts from the gospel and get confusion! At NCA, our masterful teachers strive to constantly make these key, integral connections, empowering and allowing our students to see their world as a coherent whole rather than parceling out different spheres for “Jesus” and “academics” and “life”.

Character Counts!

“What good is knowledge without reverence and respect for God?”

–Thomas à Kempis

The beginning of Proverbs reminds us that fearing and respecting God is the beginning of all wisdom and knowledge. How quickly many of us forget this principle when it comes to educating our children. We imagine that we can put them in schools where the truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the Lord is not taught and there will be no serious consequences. This, sadly, is not the case. We become like those we spend time with, either for our betterment or our worsening. When we choose to spend time with friends and families from church, we find encouragement in our faith, nourishing discussions, and other forms of positive reinforcement. When we don’t, we find the opposite is also true. Growing and encouraging kids in their faith and commitment to Christ is such an important part of training them to be genuine, sincere men and women. At NCA, we value and aim for spiritual discipleship, training and exhorting our students towards godliness and Biblical virtues and character.

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