



LOUISVILLE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022





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WHAT IS LOUISVILLE CLASSICAL ACADEMY?

Louisville Classical Academy (LCA) is a K-8, coeducational, secular private school and non-profit organization nestled in the Highlands neighborhood of Louisville, KY. For 15 years, LCA has provided curious, motivated students with a rigorous foundation of knowledge, solid critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, and a true community of engaged, joyful learning. We welcome students and families of every faith and philosophy. This plurality of views and backgrounds develops mutual respect, fosters unique friendships and community, and enriches our exploration of the world.

The *classical* in our name traces its meaning to the ancient Greek development of two interconnected sets of principles that we strive to cultivate: a Socratic approach to inquiry and a focus on academic and moral virtues. Classical education places great emphasis on educating the whole person - intellectually, physically, and morally. We use the timeless tools of Latin, mathematics, enduring and contemporary literature,

drama, fine arts, and music to nurture a vibrant student body that demonstrates an individual and collective understanding of, and curiosity about, learning. At the heart of LCA is our focus on developing strong reflective capacities and understanding of the self as a learner, community member, moral agent, and full person. Together and collaboratively, students learn about themselves and each other, which enhances learning in the sciences, history, drama, poetry, art, and physical education.

The *academy* in our name denotes a balance of scholastic focus and student development. Class sizes are small by design, fostering a spirit of cooperation and allowing teachers to give students the personal attention they deserve. We have intentional approaches to our learning environment: instructors rely on the Socratic method and sit, with students, around a common table (rather than separate desks), which best facilitates respectful dialogue about students' questions and ideas.

OUR MISSION

Educating curious, motivated students of all faiths and philosophies in the classical model, fostering the formation of intellectual and moral character.

OUR VISION

Rigorously and joyfully preparing passionate minds for lives of meaning and purpose.

CORE PRINCIPLES

There are nine core principles that permeate the culture of LCA that are rooted in the classical world of Plato and Aristotle, and have been developed through the great thinkers of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. These principles have indelibly shaped modern thought and culture. Because they resonate so deeply with our nature — with what it means to be a human being in relation to the world, to history, to one another, and to oneself—we acknowledge that these principles can help us understand ourselves and the world around us with greater clarity. For that reason, at the start of each day we meet as a school to reflect on one of these principles. Rotating through the principles one-by-one allows students of all ages and stages of development to see how the principles are woven across their subjects of study and into all aspects of their daily lives. They are principles to contemplate, and principles to live by.

THE HUMAN IN RELATION — TO THE WORLD —

TRUTH
GOODNESS
BEAUTY

THE HUMAN IN RELATION — TO OTHER —

LIBERTY
EQUALITY
JUSTICE

THE HUMAN IN RELATION — TO ONESELF —

COURAGE
INTEGRITY
WISDOM

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2021-2022 school year was a pivotal time in LCA's history. With the departure of the last of the school's founders, and after 15 years of building a special educational environment for families in Louisville, a confluence of new and existing challenges compelled the Board of Directors and school leadership to make some important choices about the future of the school. In particular, it was time to decide whether or not to move forward into a new era, built on the framework created by our exceptional founders: Amanda and Gerald Proietti, Richard and Angela Dworin, and Marcia Cassady. In the end, the decision was easy. We wholeheartedly believe that LCA offers something entirely unique as the only secular, classical K-8 school in Kentucky. Moving forward, our goal is to grow, to reinvigorate the school with new leadership, and to intentionally create a future-focused business model.

As part of our new business model, we are releasing LCA's first Annual Report. In it, we outline our vision for the school; discuss the obstacles we have overcome and those we continue to work through; and we celebrate our incredible collective

achievements. We also share our current financial reality and the important steps we are taking to ensure that this growing and vibrant school can move strongly into its next 15 years.

As we begin the 2022-2023 school year, we are invigorated by the challenges ahead. We are also incredibly grateful for our school community and supporters who entrust LCA with the opportunity to continue building a student body full of critical thinkers; eloquent writers; confident speakers; thoughtful leaders; and responsible, compassionate, and virtuous citizens.

With gratitude,

The LCA Board of Directors:

Michael Buckman
Tiffany Calvert
Jamie Cox
Lauren Freeman
Christy Hoke
Kristan Milam
Rebecca Siegel

CELEBRATING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

GRAMMAR SCHOOL ACADEMIC TEAM:

LCA competed in the Governor's Cup, winning the Quick Recall event in the district competition, placing third at regionals, and placing first in three of five categories.

NATIONAL MYTHOLOGY EXAMS:

Of the 9,000 students in 400 schools nationally and internationally who took this exam, two fourth-grade students boasted perfect scores and several others merited distinguished rankings.

NATIONAL CLASSICAL ETYMOLOGY EXAM:

This exam tests a student's ability to handle both Latin and Greek derivatives and their usage in the English language. LCA students won one gold, two silver, and two bronze awards.

NATIONAL LATIN EXAM AND EXPLORATORY LATIN EXAM:

LCA students participated in this international exam taken by over 100,000 students from all 50 states and 21 foreign countries. Two of our students earned a gold medal, two of our students earned silver medals, and five of our students placed *cum laude* and *magna cum laude*.

JUNIOR CLASSICAL LEAGUE:

In this high school level competition, eight of our grammar and middle school students placed in the top five places in the Mythology and Mottos and Abbreviations exams.

KET YOUNG WRITERS COMPETITION:

Out of the 1,200 entries in multiple categories from across the state, three LCA students were finalists.

KENTUCKY STATE POETRY SOCIETY'S STUDENT CONTEST:

LCA had several submissions and one of our sixth graders had a poem chosen for publication in *Young American Poetry Digest*.

HORSING AROUND WITH ART COMPETITION SPONSORED BY THE KENTUCKY DERBY MUSEUM:

Of LCA's five submissions, three received distinguished awards and one was selected by the Jane Chancellor Moore Gallery in Frankfort for a special exhibition.

APPROPRIATE AUDIENCE BEHAVIOR:

LCA chose this as its school play, on which students from grades 4-8 worked all year. The performance was attended by over 50 people. It was a smashing success!



OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TOGETHER

The 2021-2022 school year presented major challenges and exciting opportunities for LCA. Most significantly, there was an unexpected turn-over of administrative staff, leaving gaps that created challenges for the remaining team members. Despite this, all key functions were covered by existing staff or with volunteer support from parents within the community. While this kind of challenge is never welcome, the effort made by multiple people to keep the school operating safely and smoothly was testament to our community's commitment to making LCA a successful learning environment.

In addition to the turnover in the administration, the last of LCA's organizational founders, Amanda Proietti, retired. Her departure initiated a time of reflection with the leadership team, to evaluate our mission, our purpose, and our aspirations for the coming years. During that time of reflection, the school leadership, the Board,

parents, and other supporters of the school affirmed our fundamental belief that LCA continues to fill an otherwise unfilled niche as Kentucky's only K-8, secular classical academy. And while new leadership means new ideas and, at times, a new direction, there is a firm commitment to stay true to the school's original mission and values.

And so, a new era has begun at LCA. Our firm appreciation of the past will bridge our commitment to the future: that LCA will continue providing an exceptional classical learning experience and will leave a lasting imprint on our community. Our core principles, small classes, caring faculty, and our focus on excellence, serve as a reminder to our community that there is a unique choice for educating our youth. We value and educate the whole student allowing them to maintain their individualism and chart their own course for the future.



In addition to the internal challenges, LCA also grappled with external ones. As the pandemic entered its second year, our community continued to exhibit resilience and flexibility as protocols evolved and faculty, staff, students, and parents worked together to keep LCA safe and compliant. Our COVID committee made thoughtful, evidence-based decisions on behalf of the school and regularly updated the school community on policies and procedures. These actions resulted in LCA being totally outbreak-free until April 2022 and going the full academic year without a school-wide closure. Our collective efforts

were a major success: we are proud of LCA's focused commitment to staying open, while also staying safe.

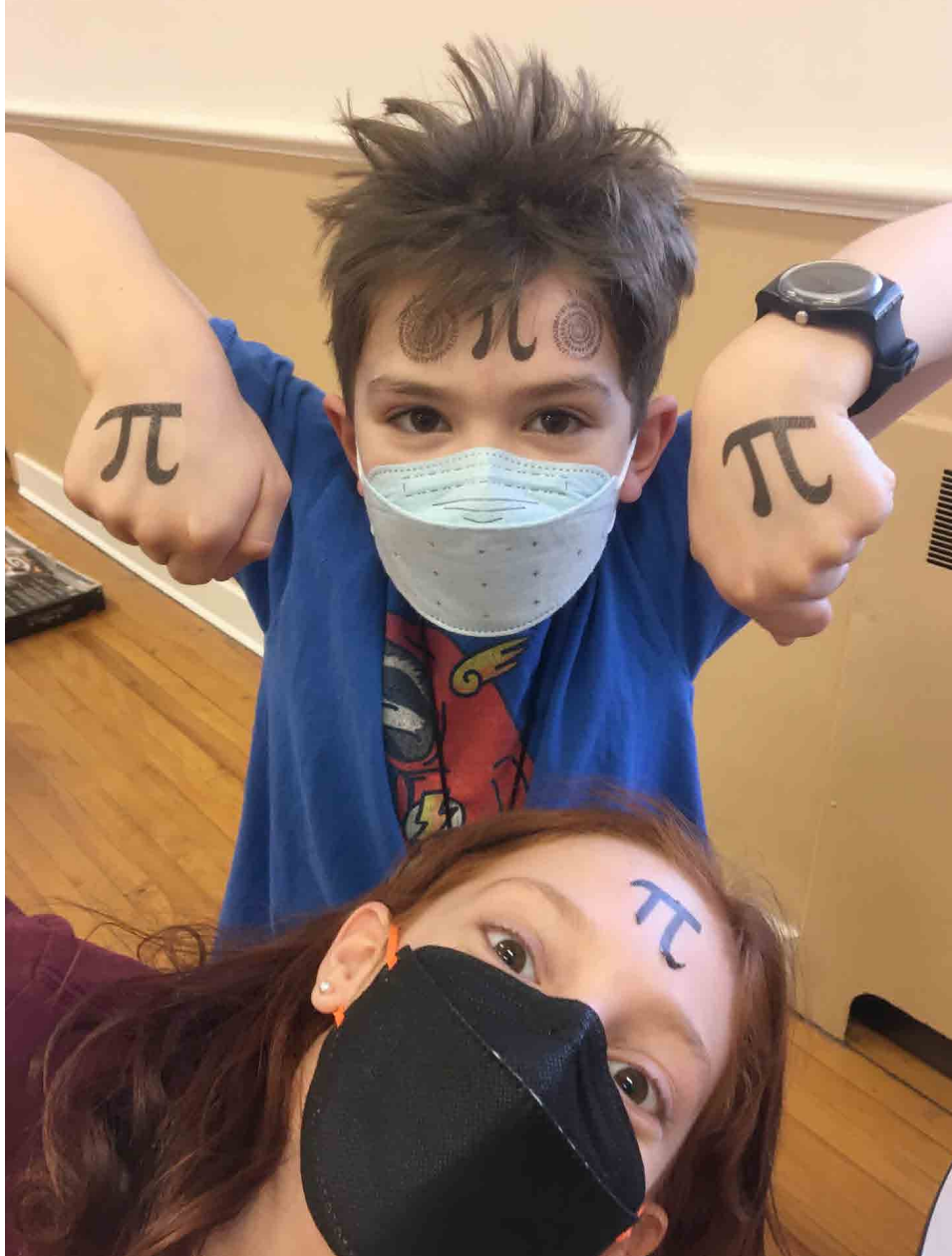
In a time of difficult transition and many challenges, the LCA community has embodied the virtues of tenacity, resilience, and courage, moving powerfully forward into a new and exciting phase in the history of the school. Greek mythology teaches us that Pegasus battled and made its way to the heavens despite the many challenges along the way. We too, like Pegasus, face many uphill battles. We too, will overcome and take our place amongst the stars.

A photograph of four children, three boys and one girl, dressed in scout-like attire including red bandanas and a camouflage vest. They are sitting on a blue tarp, smiling at the camera. The boy in the center is wearing a red bandana and a grey shirt. The girl to his right is wearing a red bandana and a blue shirt. The boy to the left is wearing a blue shirt. The boy at the top is wearing a red bandana and a grey shirt. The girl at the bottom right is wearing a red bandana and a blue shirt. The background is a blue tarp.

OUR PATH FORWARD

In an effort to make a classical education affordable for as many families as possible, LCA has kept its tuition significantly lower than most private schools in Louisville. Generous financial aid has been provided to all families with demonstrated need (40% of families for the 2022-2023 school year), with the average award covering more than half the cost of tuition. While this puts pressure on the operating budget and requires significant outside fundraising, this core commitment to affordability and accessibility continues to be at the heart of LCA's mission as a non-profit. However, remaining committed to as-low-as-possible tuition means that there have been budget shortfalls. In past years, these shortfalls have been covered primarily by generous donors who believe in the school enough to give, sometimes repeatedly.

However, after 15 years of operation, the Board is seeking a better balance between outside donations, maintaining tuition assistance, and enrollment. We anticipate that it will take time, so we are putting measurable goals and strategies in place that will help us reach our short- and long-term targets. Importantly, our strategies allow us to continue providing the same level of financial aid to families. However, in order to increase income, without significantly raising tuition or cutting financial aid, we must focus on increasing enrollment across the grades. Our strategy seeks to balance the increased push for enrollment with our firm commitment to maintaining small class sizes and the favorable teacher-to-student ratio.



Our plans for coming year include the following:

- Maintaining and increasing active outreach such as visiting pre-schools, kindergartens, and other institutions to speak with educators and parents about LCA and the classical approach to education.
- Expanding the school to include a junior kindergarten.
- Empowering and supporting our new director of admissions as she oversees and expands the recruiting process.
- Hosting child-centered social events such as monthly Pegasus play dates and fall and winter festivals to welcome families into our community.
- Hosting information nights, special speakers, and other events to raise awareness about the school.
- Updating our logo and messaging to better communicate LCAs strengths and uniqueness within the Louisville school community.
- Ensuring consistent messaging in our publications and other materials to clarify our niche, mission, and values.

In conjunction with this focus on increasing enrollment, we will continue working with our student body and families to proactively increase and improve communication, transparency, and accountability.

WHY LCA?

- LCA is the only secular, K-8 classical academy in the state.
- LCA is significantly less expensive than most other private schools in Louisville.
- LCA provides a unique nurturing environment with a low student-teacher ratio and small class sizes, which facilitates small group discussion and an individualized learning experience for each child.
- At LCA, students are taught to think critically about their world, their immediate environment, and about themselves as individuals. Our teachers guide students to use their knowledge, reasoning, and strategic thinking to solve problems independently. Students are not the passive recipients of knowledge, but active participants in the discussion. Each school day starts with reflection on one of the Nine Principles, and classes throughout the day are geared toward the development of well-rounded, analytical, and inquisitive minds.
- LCA recognizes that learning must focus on the whole child. Thus, in addition to academic subjects, the arts and physical education are crucial. All LCA students learn a new instrument every year, participate in choir, engage in robust fine arts and drama programs, and have two recesses each day.
- LCA is committed to interdisciplinary education. While we recognize the enormous importance of expertise and specialization at the collegiate and post-graduate levels, we hold that in primary and middle school, students are most driven by a wide-ranging curiosity that often freely jumps between subjects, and we foster the free spirit of that curiosity. Mathematics, history, music, science, and language studies are equally relevant skills for all students of these ages and ought to mutually inform each other. This is fully in line with the classical doctrine that knowledge is itself one discipline with many forms.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

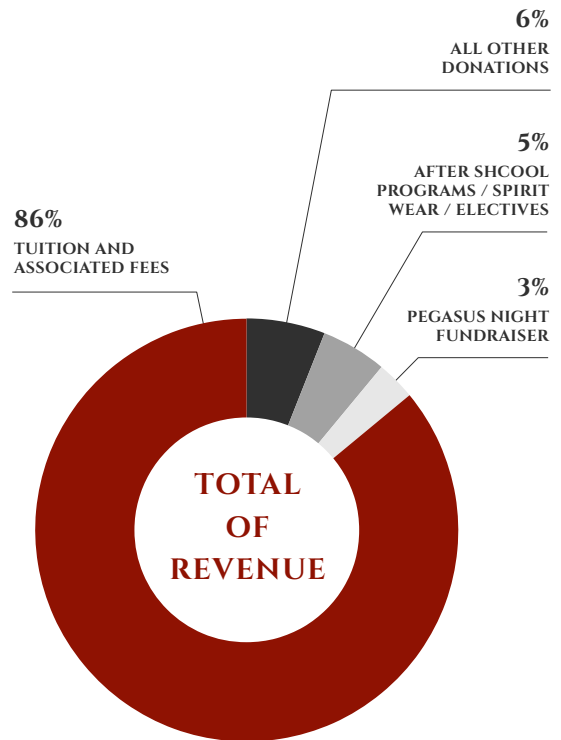
2021-2022

ACADEMIC YEAR

REVENUE

LCA began the 2021-2022 academic year with cash reserves amounting to just over \$171,000. The charts below provide an overview, and brief analysis, of the current financial landscape for the school.

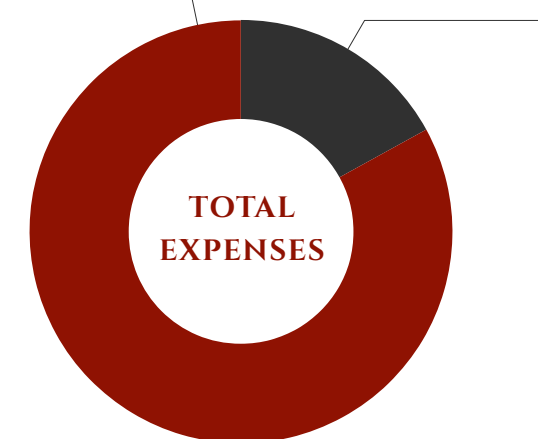
During the academic year, LCA received \$559,619 in total revenue which includes all tuition, activities, and donations.



83%

PAYROLL
(IND PAYROLL TAX
AND BENEFITS)

17%

OPERATING
EXPENSES

EXPENSES

Total expenses for the year were approximately \$629,000, leaving a budget deficit of just under \$70,000. This deficit was entirely covered using available cash reserves. Of the 2021-2022 expenses, the primary costs were related to payroll and the associated costs including payroll tax and health benefits. Other expenses included books and materials, office supplies, operational costs, rent and utilities, marketing and outreach, and professional development.

A FOND FAREWELL AND SALUTE TO OUR FOUNDERS

BY ANDREW RABIN, FORMER CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Every superhero needs an origin story. Were they bitten by a radioactive spider? Did they come from a distant planet? Whatever it was, those powers, that dedication, that desire to do good—it all had to come from somewhere.

At LCA, we have our own origin story. It's the tale of a few dedicated families, a house in Prospect, and the belief that a true classical education—untainted by religion or partisan politics—still has value in the contemporary world. In this tale, the heroes are those who took that belief and used it to found a school like no other, one emphasizing the value of a well-rounded education and the goal of instilling in every student a love of learning and a desire to make the world a better place. LCA has thrived because of the heroic efforts and superhuman dedication of our founders, Richard and Angela Dworin, Marcia Cassady, and Amanda and Gerry Proietti.

This year marks the first time in LCA's history in which we have no founders on our board or as faculty. The responsibility for giving LCA its power and its purpose now falls on a new generation of teachers and families. It's up to us to ensure that LCA remains true to its mission and committed to its values. But we could do none of this without the efforts and imagination of the families who first made this school a reality. This is our origin story. And to our founding families, we can only say thank you for your leadership and vision. Thank you for supporting and inspiring our teachers. And most of all, thank you for all that you have given to our children.

A FINAL WORD FROM OUR NEW ACADEMIC DEAN

LCA has successfully moved into a new chapter of its story. After 15 years of careful nurturing and leadership by its founders, we are now privileged to witness the strength of the school as it stands on its own. That strength is marvelous to behold. We have seen an outpouring of generosity and goodwill from our families, a joyous exploration of the school's values by our students, and a firm recommitment to classical education by our faculty.

Our families are eager to witness LCA succeed not only because they are invested in their children's learning and development, but also because they believe in the positive impact that secular classical education has on our community. That belief has sustained us and the school itself is now in a position to do what LCA asks of all its students: to grow.

In the coming year, we are expanding to include both a junior kindergarten and kindergarten; we are revising our curriculum for the next generation of students; and we are building a faculty of exceptional professionals who are excited to work at a school as experimental, and yet simultaneously traditional, as LCA.

It is an honor to be a part of this beautiful community. To the next fifteen years of LCA!





LOUISVILLE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

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