



Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County

Family and Site Guidelines

Updated July 2025

2025-2026 School Year



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

VISION

Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County develops the moral and intellectual skills, habits, and virtues upon which independent, responsible, and joyful lives are built, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis for a free and flourishing republic.

MISSION

Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County trains the minds and improves the hearts of young people through a classical, content-rich education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue in an orderly and disciplined environment.

CORE VIRTUES

Courage • Moderation • Justice • Responsibility • Prudence • Friendship • Wonder

MOTTO

Ad maiora ex tenebris

Out of the darkness towards the greater things

LOCATION

10004 Park Meadows Drive

Lone Tree, CO 80124

Interim Headmaster: Aaron Southwick

Contact: office@dc.ascentcolorado.org

This document collects the procedures that ACADC uses to implement the policies identified in the Family Handbook. The material in this document is site-specific and will not apply to other Ascent schools.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Table of Contents

2025 - 2026 School Calendar	4
Introduction to Guidelines & Education Philosophy	5
Carline Procedures	7
Attendance	10
Academic Support	12
Testing	14
Fees and Finances	16
Parent Engagement	18
Student Discipline	22
Student Health	25
Student Life	27
2025-2026 ACADC Staff Directory	31
Family and Student Acknowledgement Page	35



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County



2025-2026 School Calendar

Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County

FIRST DAY UPPER	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL (Faculty/Staff Work Day)	NO SCHOOL (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
FIRST DAY GRAMMAR	EARLY RELEASE (Finals Week)	EARLY RELEASE (Teacher In-Service)	

Important Dates

SEP. 1	LABOR DAY	JAN. 19	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY
OCT. 13-17	FALL BREAK	FEB. 13	PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES
OCT. 20	PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES	FEB. 16	PRESIDENT'S DAY
NOV. 24-28	THANKSGIVING BREAK	MARCH 16-20	SPRING BREAK
DEC. 19 - JAN. 2	WINTER BREAK	APRIL 16,17	SPRING INTERMISSION (MAKE-UP DAYS)

JULY 2025						
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AUGUST 2025						
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SEPTEMBER 2025						
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NOVEMBER 2025						
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DECEMBER 2025						
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JANUARY 2026						
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MARCH 2026						
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APRIL 2026						
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MAY 2026						
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JUNE 2026						
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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Introduction to the Family Guidelines

The ACADC Family Handbook is a site specific document that details the policies and procedures of our campus. This document complements and is in alignment with the Ascent Classical Academy Charter Schools Board Policy Handbook. For Board level policies, which include grievance policies, expulsion, retention and promotion, etc. please see the ACACS Board Policy Handbook. For all Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County, site related policies, please review this handbook in detail.

ACA Educational Philosophy

Philosophy

Ascent Classical Academy Charter Schools' mission is derived from the history and philosophy of liberal education in Western Civilization and in America. Currently, traditional, classical education is experiencing a renaissance in this country after decades of neglect. Within this broader reform, Ascent Classical Academy Charter Schools follow the principles and curriculum of what might be called an American classical education, whose mission encourages the formation of human beings and citizens who will flourish in life and serve their communities and country in a manifold way. To embrace the mission, the school holds certain essays and texts to be the foundation. Among these are the following:

- *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them* by E.D. Hirsch
- *The Making of Americans* by E.D. Hirsch
- *The Great Conversation* by Robert Maynard Hutchins
- *A Classical Education for Modern Times* by Terrence O. Moore

Important Historical Sources:

- *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania* by Benjamin Franklin
- *Virginia Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge* by Thomas Jefferson
- *A Plan for the Establishment of Public Schools* by Benjamin Rush



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Hillsdale College Candidate Member School

Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County is proud to be a Hillsdale College Candidate Member School. As a candidate member school, ACADC employs the Hillsdale College K-12 curriculum and receives training and support from the Hillsdale K-12 academic team. Hillsdale College was founded to provide the kind of sound learning necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty. For over 175 years, it has offered an outstanding liberal arts education for undergraduate students. Restoring excellence to American K-12 education is a natural extension of the College's mission, and Hillsdale has been helping K-12 schools for over three decades.

Hillsdale teaches K-12 schools to provide an education that is both classical and American in its orientation; one that is rooted in the liberal arts and sciences, offers a firm grounding in civic virtue, and cultivates moral character.



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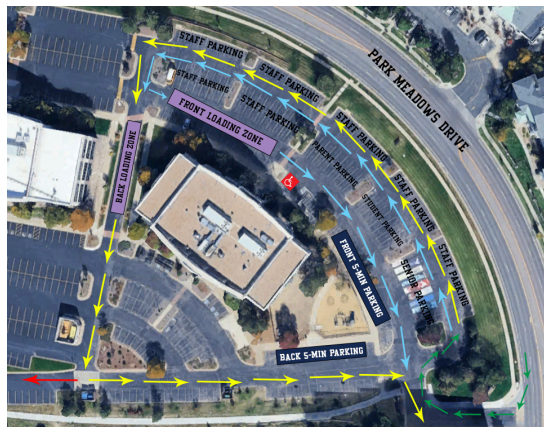
Classical Academy of Douglas County

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Morning Arrival Carline:

- All vehicles enter through our main entrance on Park Meadows Drive. This is located between our property and the apartments next door near the sign that says Park Meadows Corporate Center.
- All vehicles will follow along the parking lot to the very right (green arrows in the diagram). As drivers follow the north edge of the parking lot, parallel with Park Meadows Drive, the route will split into two lanes. Choose either lane unless you have a Red Tag (see below for a full explanation) in which case you must proceed to the back carline route (yellow arrows in the diagram).
- The lane on the left (light blue arrows) is for drop off in the front loading zone. The front loading zone is from the picnic tables to the front crosswalk before the route continues to the main exit.
- The lane on the right (yellow arrows) drops off in the back loading zone which is located between our building and the Canvas building next door. The back carline route continues to the very back of our lot then turns to the left towards the main exit (past the construction).
- Vehicles with a Red Tag may turn right instead and exit at the Canvas light (red arrow).

Both loading zones are marked in purple rectangles on the diagram.





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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Carline Safety

Parents in carline are expected to be cautious and alert whenever driving on campus, especially during carline, following all traffic regulations and rules of the road unless otherwise directed by ACA staff. Technology should never be used while in the carline. ACA staff will direct parents, who are using technology in the carline to put the device away before the vehicle proceeds.

Parents arriving before the specified carline start time may be asked to leave the property and return at the appropriate time. When arriving in the carline, there will be a wait as we load students into cars. While parents are waiting, they are expected to help ACA fit as many cars in the driveline as possible by getting as close to the car in front of them as possible. When students are loading or unloading in the loading loop, cars must be in park.

Afternoon Pick-up:

VEHICLES WITH ONLY UPPER SCHOOL STUDENTS

Driver Instruction: Drivers of these students may enter the lot no earlier than 2:50 p.m. These drivers should coordinate with their students to pick them up in a loading zone they prefer, but must use the same loading zone each day going forward (please indicate this on the carline survey below). If you have a Red Tag (see below), you must use the back carline route for pick-up.

Student Instruction: Upper School students will be released at 3:00 p.m. Students should head directly to the pick-up waiting areas upon release. For the front loading zone, this is the picnic table area. For the back loading zone, this is on the grass at the northwest corner of our building.

VEHICLES WITH UPPER & GRAMMAR SCHOOL STUDENTS

Driver Instruction: Drivers of these students may enter the lot at 3:10 p.m. Pick-up can be in the front or back loading zone, see the section below regarding Grammar School pick-up locations depending on the grade(s) of your child(ren).

Student Instruction:

- **Upper School Students:** These students will proceed to the Multi-Purpose Room (MPR) at 3:00 p.m. to wait for Grammar School to end. There they will wait for their sibling/carpooler to come through to meet them and head to carline.



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

- **Grammar School Students:** These students will be released as early as 3:10 (according to the arrival of their driver per the PikMyKid app) to find their sibling/carpooler in the MPR and head out to the carline. Kindergarteners will receive assistance from their TA or a parent volunteer.

VEHICLES WITH ONLY GRAMMAR SCHOOL STUDENTS

Driver Instruction: Drivers of these students may enter the lot at 3:20 p.m. Pick-up can be in the front or back loading zone, see the section below regarding Grammar School pick-up locations depending on the grade(s) of your child(ren).

Student Instruction:

- **Kindergarten:** Beginning at 3:20, students will wait outside with their class and direct supervision until their vehicle arrives (as indicated by the app).
- **Grade 1 - 6:** Beginning at 3:20, these students will be released according to the arrival of their driver (as indicated by the app).

TWO-LANE PICK UP IN LOADING ZONES

Beginning at 3:20, there will be two lanes in both loading zones picking up students at the same time. ALL VEHICLES must be stopped and in PARK prior to any students entering the loading zones. Drivers will confirm that they have picked up all their students by removing their carline placard from their front mirror. Carline attendees will confirm that all vehicles are filled appropriately before instructing vehicles to exit the loading zone. The next batch of vehicles can then enter the loading zone and the process repeats until all students have departed.

Any vehicles who have not yet received their students when other vehicles in the loading zone are ready to depart will be directed to the 5-minute parking area for assistance (see below). Students will be directed to this area by radio.

Carpooling

We understand that many of our families are driving great distances to reach our school, and we encourage them to coordinate carpooling with each other. Parents will need to add carpool drivers to their approved list of pick-ups by contacting our Registrar, Mrs. Renee Rogers, or the front office.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Attendance

Late Arrivals

Students arriving after their official start time (7:30 for HS, 7:45 for MS, and 8:00 for Grammar) will be asked to check in at the front office before going to class. Parents **must** sign students in if they are late.

Three late arrivals are considered a single unexcused absence for attendance purposes.

Early Pickup

Parents wishing to pick up students early from school must pick their child up before 2:30 PM. Our office staff are unable to assist with early pickups after 2:30 PM as they are preparing for carline and general dismissal. Pick-ups after 2:30 PM will need to join the carline.

To pick up your child, please park and walk into the Front Office with your photo ID. A staff member will verify your identity and call your child down to the office. We encourage parents to email the teacher ahead of time to notify them that the child will be leaving early. Please note that we do not pull students early from class to wait for early pickup in order to maximize their learning time; anticipate up to a five minute wait for your child to walk to the office from class.

Late Pickup

To respect the time of our teachers and staff who must remain on site to supervise students, parents must pick up their students promptly at the end of the school day and/or afterschool activities. Late pickup is defined as arriving on site to pick up a student after the school office has closed, OR 15 minutes after the end time of the after-school activity should it extend past the time the office closes (e.g., if sports practice ends at 5 PM, parents must pickup by 5:15 PM).

Front office staff will contact parents/emergency contacts by phone once this window has passed. Students who are not picked up on time may be suspended from attending tutoring or other after-school activities following the third occurrence of late pickup.

Elective Absences

Per the Family Handbook, ACADC tracks student attendance in order to comply with state and federal expectations for student contact and expected academic progress. Whether excused or unexcused, repeated or extended absences from school are detrimental to a student's ability to



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

succeed academically. Assignments may be made up or notes copied, but the benefit of learning directly from the teacher can only be accomplished in the classroom.

Obviously situations arise necessitating that students miss school (e.g., illness), and we are not insensitive to mitigating circumstances. Of greater concern are repeated absences for elective or unexcused reasons, e.g., tardies or vacation. While parents are welcome to take their children from the classroom at any time, they must understand that doing so negatively impacts their child's education and may impact their ability to proceed to the next grade level. If students will be gone 5 or more consecutive days, parents will need Dean approval to be counted as excused, and the teacher must be notified.

Makeup Work

Per the Family Handbook, it is the student's responsibility to coordinate makeup work due to absence. Work that is missed due to unexcused absences may not be made up for credit. Makeup work is not to be coordinated during class time. Class time is intended for the instruction of all students, not to coordinate one student's missed work.

Students have one day for each day they missed to inquire about, complete, and submit missing work. For example, if a student misses Tuesday, he should ask about missed assignments on Wednesday and turn that work in on Thursday. Assignments turned in late will receive % off their grade. Assignments or assessments of which students are aware in advance are still due on the scheduled date, with possible exceptions for extreme circumstances. For example, if a student is aware of a test on Friday and misses school on Thursday, the student is still responsible for taking the test on Friday (provided they are in school).

Questions about makeup work should be directed to your child's teacher.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Academic Support

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Communication between parents and teachers is of critical importance in supporting student learning. In addition to routine communications through the online gradebook, weekly newsletter, and parent emails, parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers to schedule phone conferences or in-person conferences as needed to support their child.

Twice a year, ACADC hosts formal parent-teacher conferences. These conferences typically take place between quarters and allow parents and teachers to discuss habits of conduct and patterns of success or struggle seen throughout the previous quarter. Parents will be sent information about how to sign up for these formal conferences through the school newsletter, the Courier. Please note that teachers are unable to accommodate walk-in or last minute conferences on these formal days. Appointments allow teachers to prepare materials to make conferences as productive as possible.

Homework

One of the best ways for parents to be involved in their child's education is to provide support and structure for homework. As a general guideline, the homework assignments set by our teachers should be tasks the average student could complete in ten minutes times their grade level, plus reading. This number represents the total homework time across ALL subjects that the average student should spend per grade level:

Average Time for ALL Homework Assignments, By Grade:

K-1st: no more than 10 mins (other than parent read-aloud)

2nd: 20 min (other than parent read-aloud)

3rd: 30 min

4th: 40 min

5th: 50 min

6th: 60 min

7th-8th: 80 min

9th-10th: 100 min

11th-12th: 120 min

Note that a student outside of the average could take more or less time to complete all their assignments. Students requiring far more time than these guidelines to complete their work should talk with their teacher.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Grades and PowerSchool

The PowerSchool Parent portal is the primary means of communication regarding student academic progress. Parents have 24-hour access to their child's online gradebook through the parent portal, and are able to see scores as well as teacher comments on assignments. Parents are encouraged to check PowerSchool regularly to make sure they are aware of their child's progress and potential academic needs.

ACADC encourages parents to provide gradebook access to students in grades 7-12 so that students can take responsibility for their own academic success. A student who can see their missing assignments and scores is better equipped to seek out additional support from their teacher. Upper School students are also invited to visit the Post-Graduate Advisor to check their grades during lunch time or conference.

Should parents be unable to log into PowerSchool, they should immediately contact our Registrar to have their password reset.

Ascent Classical Academy offers a rigorous education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue. In keeping with the rigor of the ACA curriculum, each high school course is officially designated as an Honors course and, as such, is reflected in official transcripts by a 5.0 GPA scale. However, we strive for rigor in prudence, with an eye for inspiring a love of the classics.

To better integrate our GPA and grading scales, 50% constitutes the absolute minimum – barring cases of dishonesty or missing work – a student can receive on assessments or coursework. This does not award the student for work they do not do, nor does it encourage or allow students to attempt to game the system. Rather, it recognizes that since the 'A' scale comprises the band of 90-100%, and the 'B' scale comprises the band of 80-90%, and so on, that the 'F' scale comprises the band of 50-60%.

By limiting failing grades to 50%, we aim to ensure that students do not give up or give in to discouragement after failure. Rather than being stuck in a situation where there is no mathematical possibility of recovery, the consistent enforcement of the mathematical principles behind our grading scale and GPA scale encourages students to continually strive to improve and master the material, further reinforcing the cultivation of responsibility and courage.



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Testing

Philosophy and Purpose of Standardized Testing at Ascent

When standardized state assessments are used as accountability measures, schools are incentivized to prioritize test results, “teaching to the test” to ensure tested standards are mastered above all else. We don’t do this because it has the potential to limit the breadth and depth of a school’s curriculum, as well as place undue pressure on students to perform within a narrow set of prescribed standards. At Ascent, we are fortunate to have a classical, content-rich curriculum that more than meets the limited scope of state requirements, and we trust that our students will perform well on the standardized assessments as a matter of course.

State tests can offer a useful snapshot of student achievement to help us identify potential holes in our instruction. This is also an opportunity for our students to practice virtue in pursuing excellence in anything they work to accomplish, as well as aid in preparation for high-stakes tests, such as the PSAT, SAT, CLT, or ACT, that our students will take in the future. These assessments are often how our school is judged in the public arena, including in the charter renewal process.

Opt-Out

Per the Family Handbook, parents may opt their children out of the PSAT and CMAS state assessments. Opt-out instructions are provided by ACADC in the weeks leading up to CMAS testing. Parents are not able to opt their children out of internal school assessments.

Due to limited internal resources, especially on testing days, students that have opted out of testing but are still attending school on testing day, will be required to silently read while their peers are testing.

With that being said, we would like to highly encourage all students to participate in the various assessments listed above. ACADC is evaluated at the state level by the CDE based on our overall scoring and participation rates. Lower scores and/or lower participation rates can have an adverse effect on the school’s rankings and how we are perceived (in terms of academic success) by prospective families.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Standardized Tests at ACADC

ACADC participates in several different standardized tests throughout the school year, including NWEA MAPs, CMAS, DIBELS and CLT testing. Ascent does not teach to the limited scope of these tests, but we use the data collected from these assessments to evaluate and improve the delivery of our classical education program. Per Family Handbook, ACADC administers standardized tests via paper-based testing whenever possible.

Questions about standardized testing at ACADC should be directed to our Grammar and Upper School Deans and/or our Testing Coordinator.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Fees and Finances

Financial Support

ACADC does not wish student fees to present a financial hardship or obstacle to attendance for families in need. To that end, we waive student fees and offer additional financial assistance towards uniforms and lunches for qualifying families. Families interested in receiving financial assistance may complete the Family Economic Data Survey, which can be found in the front office. Families may qualify for either Tier 1 or Tier 2 assistance. This is based on the same rubric as Free and Reduced Lunch standards.

Questions about exemptions to student fees should be directed to our Registrar. Questions about paying student fees, including payment plans, should be directed to our Business Manager.

Lost and Damaged Textbooks Procedures

Should an item not be returned, school staff will contact the parent via email to note the missing item and offer a window for the book to be found and returned. A form will also be sent home with the student for the parent to sign and return acknowledging the book is lost.

Should an item be returned in a damaged condition, school staff will note the damage and provide evidence of the damage to the parent, as well as evidence that the book was assigned to their student. School staff will determine if damage reaches a level beyond regular wear and tear that requires replacement.

An invoice for lost or damaged items will be sent to parents over email from our Inventory and Finance Specialist. We offer a variety of payment options. If payments represent an undue financial burden for your family, please speak with our Inventory and Finance Specialist regarding alternate arrangements.

Questions regarding lost or damaged textbooks should be directed to our Inventory Specialist.

School Supplies

ACADC purchases school supplies for its students using a portion of student fees. Students are expected to treat school supplies with respect to ensure that supplies last for the expected life of that particular item. Students will be provided with required materials at the start of the school year. Replacement or additional supplies are made available by request through the teacher.

Intentional destruction or misuse of supplies will result in disciplinary action.



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Student Responsibility for Textbooks

Students who lose textbooks or return them in damaged condition may be held responsible for replacing the item. Allowances are made for normal wear and tear on textbooks. Teachers will expect students to legibly write their names on the inside front cover of their textbooks, using a ballpoint pen, to indicate responsibility for each particular textbook. Teachers will also train students in how to properly and respectfully handle books and other school materials.

Workbooks (i.e. Dimensions Math) and literature books are considered textbooks that students use during the year for their education. If a student loses their workbook or literature book and needs a replacement, a parent/guardian will need to pay for a replacement book.

Student Fees

ACADC collects student fees from families each year to provide expendable supplies and materials to students. A detailed description of what items are covered by the student fee is available to parents by emailing the Inventory and Finance Specialist.

Fees can be paid via check or cash delivered to the front office, or online through the registration process.

Field trips or extracurricular activities such as athletics, clubs, or House activities may involve additional fees, to be paid through the Front Office or the RevTrak system. Elective classes such as band, orchestra, or studio art may also charge additional fees to cover the cost of specialized instructional materials.



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Parent Engagement

Visitor Expectations

Class observations must be scheduled ahead of time through the Front Office.

- Visitor dress is appropriate for a school setting and non-distracting, keeping within the spirit of our student uniform and faculty/staff dress code.
- Observations should be for a set time and not the whole day. Visitors may not wander the building to observe other classes unannounced. Visitors found doing this will be asked to leave by a member of our administration and visiting will not be permitted again.
- Visitors should not interject into the class discussion or offer to assist students in their learning during class time.
- Visitors are not permitted to grade assignments at any time.
- Visitors should not at any time take photographs or videos during their observation. This is a direct breach of student privacy and visitors will be removed immediately. Exceptions will be made only for parents attending an Opening Ceremony where their student is performing or being recognized for an award. At that time, photos and videos must be only of their student(s).
- Observations are different from volunteering in a class. Those desiring to volunteer on campus should reach out to our Front Office.

Questions about visiting campus can be directed to our Receptionist.

Campus Meetings

Drop-in or same-day requests for meetings of any kind cannot be accommodated at our campus. Parents wishing to schedule a meeting with a teacher should contact that teacher directly and understand that such meetings are likely to be scheduled after school rather than during the school day. Parents wishing to schedule a meeting with an administrator should contact the administrator by email to request an appointment. Please be sure to provide a short summary of what needs to be discussed so that the meeting can proceed productively.

We often find that phone calls can be accommodated in a shorter turnaround time than in-person meetings. If there is a concern that a meeting will take too long to arrange, a phone call may be requested instead. We want to be sure to address any concerns as soon as we can!



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Classroom Observations

Parents are always welcome to visit our campus and observe classes in session. Please notify teacher(s) at least 24 hours in advance of observation. Visiting a classroom can be a great way for parents to gain perspective, see our faculty in their elements, as well as have a framework for which they can speak to their children about what they are learning. Please visit the front office to sign the Classroom Observation Agreement prior to observing in a classroom.

Before visitors arrive, they must understand the expectations in order to have a valuable observation experience, but also allow for continued decorum in our classrooms. The purpose of a classroom visit should never be to critique the teacher.

Parent-Teacher Communications

Communication regarding school behavior or academic performance rests primarily on the student, as behavior and performance is a direct result of their work and effort. As a school, we recognize that if a parent's and a student's story differ, it is natural and fitting that the presumption be on the side of the parent. Similarly, it is natural and fitting that the presumption be on the side of a teacher when assignments are missing, homework is late, or other circumstances arise over the course of a school year.

Teachers and office staff will make every effort to respond to parent communications within 24 hours, with 48 hours allowance over the weekend. The Headmaster and Deans may have pressing responsibilities that may prevent immediate response, but will make every effort to reply within 48 to 72 hours.

Out of respect for our employees, we ask parents to use official ACADC communication channels (school email accounts) to discuss school business. As a close community, many ACADC teachers and staff may have personal connections to our families from outside of school. ACADC employees are not permitted to discuss school business through personal channels, such as social media accounts and text messaging.

Communications and “Hand Grenades”

As a campus, ACADC has adopted a “no hand grenades” approach to communications. A “hand grenade” is a communication sent in haste and/or heightened emotional state that is intended to cause harm rather than bring about a solution to a problem.

What we have found is that such communications are not only unproductive but damaging to the parent-teacher partnership, and indicative of a buildup of frustration or breach of trust and



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

respect in the relationship. When “hand grenades” are sent or received, ACADC will support parents and staff in pausing all communication until a face-to-face meeting can be had and these interpersonal issues resolved. Only when parents and teachers are working together for the betterment of students can real progress be made on solving problems.

Responding instead of Reacting:

In general, we would never recommend AGAINST someone taking a 24-hour pause before reaching out. This is especially important if you find yourself in a situation where you are upset at an event or decision, and have all the facts and information. Choosing to pause is an exercise in wisdom, reflection, and self-control. You can then initiate contact to make a ‘Wise Appeal’, which in itself already leans more towards a *Response* instead of a *Reaction* to any given situation.

Newsletter

To maintain communication with our families about upcoming events and important announcements, ACADC publishes our e-newsletter (The Courier) once a week. Parents are strongly encouraged to read it carefully. Out of courtesy to our busy office staff, please make sure to consult it and/or any of our handbooks and guide documents, such as these guidelines, before reaching out with questions.

Parental Code of Conduct

Every effort is made to hire a faculty and staff of the highest moral character so as to set examples of virtue and wisdom for our students. We ask our parents to partner with us in upholding the following standards of conduct:

- Demonstrate good character at all times and in all circumstances.
- Understand the mission and philosophy of Ascent Classical Academy.
- Not speak poorly of teachers or other staff in order that students may have the best opportunity to learn from all teachers.
- Follow school procedures as outlined in the Site Guidelines document.
- Hold high expectations of student performance - regardless of final grades, students should be putting forth their best effort in all their educational endeavors.
- Encourage students in their learning by asking questions and discussing what they have learned on a regular basis.
- Help your children develop effective study skills and work habits.
- Oversee your child’s progress.
- Support the school by getting children to school on time.



A S C E N T
Classical Academy of Douglas County

Volunteering

Volunteers are critical to the success of Ascent Classical Academy, and we are deeply appreciative of the time and effort our parents and community members invest in us. We know that children enjoy greater success in school when the adults they admire most take an interest in their education. No matter what kind of volunteer work a parent does, or who they do it for, there are some common qualities that will help them be a successful volunteer at Ascent Classical Academy.

Volunteers must complete a background check through our Raptor system before they may volunteer on campus. Volunteers must also read and sign the Volunteer Agreement and the Student Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement before volunteering. These documents provide important expectations, procedures, and information about volunteering on our site and can be gathered from the Front Office.



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Student Discipline

ACADC's Mission and Vision Drives ACADC's Discipline Policy

Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County's (ACADC) Mission is to train the minds and improve the hearts of young people through a classical, content-rich education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue in an **orderly and a disciplined environment**. ACADC's Vision is to develop within its students the moral and intellectual skills, habits, and virtues upon which **independent, responsible, and joyful lives are built**, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis for a free and flourishing republic.

Accordingly, one of ACADC's primary goals for educators is to create orderly and disciplined learning environments so that one day students will live independent, responsible and joyful lives. ACADC's educational calling contains both short-term and long-term goals as goals incorporate student character development, which can often take years to fully fortify. From a discipline perspective, we must honor both the short-term and long-term goals.

The discipline policy should first and foremost provide and foster a safe learning environment. All students should be, and feel, safe at all points while on campus to maximize their learning potential. With this environment established, the discipline policy should help create order and structure in the classroom while simultaneously laying the foundation for the realization of joy in the student's character. The end goal of discipline at ACADC is to develop students of character who embody our seven virtues (Courage, Moderation, Justice, Responsibility, Prudence, Friendship, and Wonder) and, as a direct result, live productive, flourishing lives.

We are not in the punishment business as punishing students corrodes trust and is counterproductive to both the mission and vision. Our goal is to build relationships, to hold students accountable for their behavior and decisions, and to facilitate the change of negative behaviors to positive behaviors. If a student needs corrective action based on their disruption of a safe, orderly, and disciplined environment, which will impede virtue development, then the escalation policy is implemented, which will be outlined below.

Escalation Policy

To establish consistency and to help distinguish between typical behaviors needing redirection, versus ongoing and/or increasing behavioral issues, ACADC uses an escalation policy to help with student behavior and discipline.

Faculty and staff all use the same classroom expectations at ACADC. These include classroom rules, norms, and cultural expectations. This provides overall consistency and predictability from class-to-class and grade-to-grade, which benefits all students (and teachers) as we all thrive on consistency and predictability. Moreover, clear tracking of behavioral concerns is paramount to a



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

data driven decision-making approach. Accordingly, teachers are instructed to clearly document behavioral concerns using the behavior tracking document.

3 Strikes and You're Out (Escalation activation)

Before escalation activation, it is assumed and understood that typical classroom communication and direction/redirection is being used regularly. The escalation activation should never be the first step in the process unless the student's behavior involves level two or higher policy violations as described in the Grammar School and Upper School Discipline Policy documents.

First steps, or strikes, are reminders, redirections, and classroom management techniques that are going beyond normal classroom management. For example, if a teacher is having to spend extra time, and/or attention, on a particular student because of their behavior in the classroom which in turn is disrupting order. These will often be verbal and part of the day-to-day instruction and training of students. These are warnings. Warnings are aimed at providing clear feedback on student behavior. All warnings are logged in the Discipline Tracking document. Warnings are synonymous with strikes.

If a behavior is repeated in nature (i.e., two strikes) the faculty or staff member should call home. Communication is the key to partnering with the student and the home and keeps ACADC in the spirit of loco parentis. Calling home should be a normal thing (both for praise and concern), but this will happen after a particular behavior has been observed on more than one occasion.

If classroom redirection, calls home, and warnings are not working, and the student has received three strikes, then the escalation policy will be activated. The faculty or staff member will need to call parents and follow up with an email to parents (cc DOS) to inform them that the escalation policy was initiated. In this email, a history of the student's behavior should be noted in the email that led to the activation.

IMPORTANT-Escalation activation should only be issued after the student has received "three strikes." Strikes include classroom redirection, warnings, etc. if they are documented in the shared drive Discipline Tracking document.

Again, strikes that then develop into escalation activation include but are not limited to minor classroom disruptions such as inappropriate behavior, repeated dress code violations, repeated tardiness to class, not following directions, horseplay, passing notes, or repeatedly not being prepared for class.



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Consequences

The escalation policy is clearly outlined in both the Grammar School Discipline Policy and the Upper School Discipline Policy. Please see the attached documents for more information as to the escalation policy. In closing, the discipline policy at ACADC should provide a clear code of conduct, allow for clear tracking of behavior concerns, and maintain consistent consequences based solely on the student's behavior and no other factors (i.e. gender, grade, etc.). Please, reach out to our Dean of Students for further questions.



ASCENT
Classical Academy of Douglas County

Student Health

Health Office

Our Health Office strives to create a safe and healthy environment for all of our students. Per the Family Handbook, students who are sick with contagious illnesses or communicable diseases may not attend school. Common signs of contagious illness include:

Coughing/Sneezing - If a student has a persistent cough, he or she must remain at home until it eases. If a student comes to school with a cough or sneeze that is a disruption to the class, he or she will be sent home.

Diarrhea - If a student is having diarrhea at home or school, he or she needs to remain at home for 24 hours when he or she stops having symptoms. Please do not bring your child to school with diarrhea.

Fever - If a student has a fever above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, keep him or her at home. Students with fevers above 100.4 degrees at school will need to be picked up immediately. Students must be fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours before returning to school.

Vomiting - If a student is vomiting at home, he or she must remain at home for at least 24 hours from the last time he or she vomited. If a student vomits at school, he or she will need to be picked up immediately.

Medications on Campus

In order to have student medication on-campus, the Health Office must have a medical, allergy, and/or asthma form completed by the student's doctor. Authorized providers who can complete this form are MD, DO, PA, NP, NPP, DDS. No other types of providers are accepted on this form.

Once this form has been completed, parents may bring the form and medication into the Health Office and sign a medication form. Medications must be in their original bottles and be labeled with the student's name. All forms of medication, including Tylenol or ibuprofen, must have a doctor's note. Middle school and high school students may carry a one day supply of over the counter medication without a form.



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

If a student would like to carry an inhaler or epi-pen, parents must still have the student's doctor fill out a form to bring to the Health Office. The student must then meet with the Health Aide and School Nurse to sign a self-carry form and demonstrate knowledge of use for the inhaler or epi-pen.

Any student who has a health condition that needs medication may warrant a meeting with the Nurse and Health Aide. If parents have a plan from their student's doctor, this must be brought into the Health Office for record-keeping and adherence to the plan.

Immunizations

Per Colorado state law, all Ascent Classical Academy students are required to be immunized against specific diseases. Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County complies with state law regarding exemptions from immunization requirements.

Parents seeking a certificate of non-medical exemption may be required by state law to complete an online government course and submit proof of completion to the Health Office. Information on non-medical exemptions may be found online through the Colorado Department of Education at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/nonmedical-exemption-nme>.

“Frequent Flyers”

Students who are found repeatedly visiting the health office during the course of a school day will have their parents contacted and may need to be picked up if they cannot remain in the classroom.

Students who repeatedly visit the health office over multiple days may have their parents contacted about missing excessive class time. School administrators may ask for a meeting with parents, students and teachers to discuss strategies to improve a student's class attendance.



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Student Life

Formal Day

Each Wednesday of the school week is designated as Formal Day. We ask students to wear their formal uniforms on this day. On the other days of the school week, students may wear formal day attire but are welcome to wear other uniform clothing.

Students who forget or are missing formal-day attire will be asked to call their parents from the front office to bring them the missing garments.

Opening Ceremonies

Each grade holds opening ceremonies once/twice a week. These include the grades reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and the Student Pledge. Often these opening ceremonies include a teacher-led reflection on virtue and character, frequently through reading a short story or poem, and award ceremonies.

Opening ceremonies are also a time for class recitations. If a class is reciting a poem or performing a short scene from a play, parents of students in that class are invited to join us to watch.

Lunch and the Lunchroom

The Great Hall is used for lunches between 11:30 and 1:10pm. ACADC has partnered with an outside lunch provider, Grateful Plate, for parents to purchase meals in advance. Links for this can be found in our weekly school newsletter and on our website. Families who qualify for financial assistance for meals should contact our Registrar with questions about payment for school lunches.

Many of our students bring their own lunches. We provide basic utensils, napkins, and cups of water as-needed to students without them.

Our lunchroom is managed by a lunch supervisor, a handful of teachers and staff on rotation, and parent volunteers. While lunch is free time in the students' day, we expect our students to maintain the decorum proper to our school and to respect each other and the building.

Due to food allergies, students may not share or trade food with each other. Grammar school students do not have access to microwaves in the lunchroom.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Recess

Our playground is the enclosed gated space on the south side of the building. Students in 6th grade and lower may play on the playground equipment. All students are welcome to play with recess equipment (balls, jump ropes, etc.).

Students have recess periodically throughout the day. Recess is supervised by a rotation of teachers, staff, and parent volunteers.

We expect students to remember and live out our core virtues while at recess. This includes:

- Treating others the way you would like to be treated.
- Respecting school property.
- Staying in the designated playground area, in the sight of an adult.
- Reporting injuries or mishaps as soon as possible to an adult.
- Lining up quickly and silently when the whistle blows to end recess.
- Taking responsibility for personal items brought to recess.

ACADC is not responsible for items lost or damaged at school. We recommend parents be aware of what their children bring to school and avoid sending them with valuable or sentimental items that may be damaged or lost. Common items that are best left at home include:

- Money
- Trading cards (including Pokemon cards)
- Electronic devices
- Digital watches that make noise
- Board games
- Anything expensive or fragile
- Anything your child values deeply or holds special

Personal sports equipment - soccer balls, footballs, frisbees, etc. - may be taken to school for outdoor recess use but should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Lost and Found

Items left outside at recess or in the lunchroom or classrooms will be gathered at the lost and found in the lobby. If you discover your child is missing something, please check there first. We recommend labeling clothes on the tags so that you can identify which items belong to you. Sweaters, fleeces, jackets, and water bottles are frequently left behind at recess.



A S C E N T
Classical Academy of Douglas County

Periodically throughout the school year, items in the lost and found will be donated.

Special Events and Parties

Special events or parties must be directly tied to the curriculum and add to the instructional environment. Typically, we do not change our routines to commemorate historical holidays out of the context of their historical period. We may recognize these as part of our opening ceremonies in the classroom. Any special event or party must be approved in advance by the Headmaster or Dean.

Instructional time should not be interrupted for birthday parties. Parents may bring a treat to their child/class to enjoy at the end of the day or stop by the lunchroom to spend time with their child. Balloons, flowers, or other gifts delivered to the Front Office for a student's birthday will be kept there until the end of the school day if deemed distracting for a classroom.

We recognize that birthdays are important and significant events, especially for younger children, and teachers are able to recognize them in smaller, non-distracting ways at the teacher's discretion.

Invitations to parties or events that are brought to school for distribution must include an invitation for each student in the class. Invitations for exclusive parties or events may not be handed out on campus.

Field Trips

Teachers schedule field trips for their classes. We encourage our teachers to plan 1 field trip per year for their class. Classes have been to the 4 Mile Park, the Denver Museum of Science and History, and the Denver Aquarium.

Teachers will request parent chaperones and parent support with transportation. All chaperones will be required to complete a background check with our front office. All parents driving students for field trips will be asked to submit proof of license and insurance before the day of the field trip.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

Common Uniform Concerns

Our dress code expectations provide an opportunity for our students to practice virtue in the small things. Our dress code is available on our school website, with pictures of the different pieces of the uniform. To help parents understand uniform expectations, this short list provides an example of the most common uniform violations:

All Students:

- Belts are required for all students wearing pants or shorts in Grades 3 and up.
- Collars of uniform shirts must be visible under sweaters and jumpers.
- Jackets and non-Ascent hoodies may not be worn indoors.
- Long sleeve undershirts may not be worn with short sleeve uniform shirts.
- Polo shirts are not part of the formal uniform.
- Shirts must be tucked in.
- Ascent hoodies are permitted, but the hood must remain down.
- Shoes may not have open toes, heels, or other accents, and shoe colors must be aligned with dress code requirements.
- Socks with bright colors or patterns may not be worn to school.
- Students may not write or draw on their skin.
- In grades 7 and up, students must change into uniform PE clothes for PE.
- Even on field trips, students should be in uniform. Exceptions may be made for which dress expectations will be communicated in advance.

Boys:

- Khaki pants must be worn, not shorts, on formal days.
- Shirt length should be long enough to tuck in.
- Undershirts must be in uniform colors.

Girls:

- Earrings must be stud only - no dangling or drop earrings (1 inch hoop earrings okay).
- Nails should be a natural length so as not to interfere with school activities (e.g., PE or handwriting in class).
- Piercings on parts of the face or body besides ears are not permitted.
- Hair color should be natural and not include sparkles or additions.



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Classical Academy of Douglas County

2024-2025 ACADC Staff Directory

Faculty/Staff Name	Position	Email Address
Southwick, Aaron	Interim Headmaster	Aaron Southwick
Lenhart, Chris	Director of Operations	Chris Lenhart
Lauro, Reno	Dean of Upper School	reno.lauro@dc.ascentcolorado.org
Pennington, Angela	Executive Asst. - Dean of Upper School	Angela Pennington
Sherman, Julia	Dean of Grammar School	Julia Sherman
O'Melia, Sean	Assistant Dean of Grammar School	Sean O'Melia
Skagerberg, Jessica	Teacher Assistant Coordinator	Jessica Skagerberg
Blaha, Robert	Dean of Students/ Post Graduate	Robert Blaha
Spykstra, Seth	Asst. Dean of Students/ Science Teacher	Seth Spykstra
Glotzbach, Brian	Athletic Director	Brian Glotzbach
Burke, Mike	Assistant Athletic Director/ PE Teacher	Mike Burke
Harris, Kendra	Dean of Student Services	Kendra Harris
Repke, Tyson	Dean of Fine Arts/HS Choir	Tyson Repke
Ulfers, Angela	Purchasing Finance Specialist	Angela Ulfers
Flemming, Tammi	Marketing/ Communications	Tammi Flemming
Rothermich, Cassie	Front Office Manager/ Executive Asst. - Headmaster	Cassie Rothermich
Blackford, Mari	Fundraising Coordinator	Mari Blackford
Graham, Rachel	Attendance/ Athletics Coordinator	Rachel Graham



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Thompson, Briana	Attendance/ Front Office	Briana Thompson
Rogers, Renee	Registrar	Renee Rogers
Peil, Grace	Testing Coordinator/ Upper School Math	Grace Peil
Ingram, Jessica	Inventory Finance Specialist	Jessica Ingram
Flechtner, Colton	Upper School Literature/Grammar	Colton Flechtner
Benson, Christopher	Upper School Literature/Senior Thesis	Christopher Benson
Leonard, Mary Kate	Upper School Grammar/Comp	Mary Kate Leonard
Redman, Maria	Upper School Math	Maria Redman
Wilderman, Paula	Upper School Math	Paula Wilderman
Walton, Michaela	Upper School Math	Michaela Walton
Spykstra, Seth	Upper School Science	Seth Spykstra
Sandeno, Craig	Upper School Science	Craig Sandeno
Meixner, Anna	Upper School Science	Anna Meixner
Salcedo, Tim	Upper School History/Senior Thesis	Tim Salcedo
Bitter, Derek	Upper School History/Moral Philosophy	Derek Bitter
Wilcox, Kate	Upper School Latin	Kate Newell
Denton, Tyler	Upper School Latin/Grammar	Tyler Denton
Battenfield, Rick	Upper School Latin	Rick Battenfield
Turner, Joseph	Upper School Literature /History/Latin	Joseph Turner
Gluekert, Ian	Upper School Literature /Grammar/Comp.	Ian Gluekert
Shipman, Chantel	Upper School Rhetoric//History	Chantel Shipman



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Gulley, Tina	Kindergarten	Christina Gulley
Randall, Diana	Kindergarten	Diana Randall
Bremer, Carin	First Grade	Carin Bremer
Hobbs, Adrienne	First Grade	Adrienne Hobbs
Lemont, Jessica	First Grade	Jessica Lemont
Nguyen, Melissa	Second Grade	Melissa Nguyen
Leyva, Cassidy	Second Grade	Cassidy Leyva
Hintze, Taylor	Second Grade	Taylor Hintze
Marmaro, Sarah	Third Grade	Sarah Marmaro
Bosman, Natasha	Third Grade	Natasha Bosman
Bissonnette, Laura	Third Grade	Laura Bissonnette
East, Caitlynn	Fourth Grade	Caitlynn East
DiNatale, Diana	Fourth Grade	Diana DiNatale
Anderson, Kayla	Fourth Grade	Kayla Anderson
Davis, Katie	Fifth Grade	Kathleen Davis
Nati, Monica	Fifth Grade	Monica Nati
Kidder, Kierney	Fifth Grade	Kierney Kidder
Nagy, Ted	Sixth Grade	Ted Nagy
Adele, Yvette	Sixth Grade	Yvette Adele Spratt
Merrill, Sarah	Sixth Grade	Sarah Merrill
Plantell, Laura	Art Teacher	Laura Plantell
Sheets, Candaise	Art Teacher	Candaise Sheets
Pippert, Mia	Art Teacher	Mia Pippert



ASCENT

Classical Academy of Douglas County

Battenfield, Sian	Music/Orchestra	Sian Battenfield
Walsh, Joe	Music/Band	Joseph Walsh
Wright, Ashley	Theatre	Ashley Wright
McKee-Pauley, Rayana	Music/MS Choir	Rayana McKee-Pauley
Neiman, Chris	PE Teacher	Christopher Neiman
Bagley, Doug	PE Teacher	Douglas Bagley
Poston, Robin	Occupational Therapist	Robin Poston
Cazan, Perri	Speech Language Pathologist	Perri Cazan
Jones, Roy	Student Services Teacher	Roy Jones
Ryan, Heather	Student Services Teacher/Case Manager	Heather Ryan
Mbelenga, Bella	Student Services Teacher/Case Manager	Bella Mbelenga
Jones, Kathy	Reading and Literacy Coordinator	Kathy Jones
Anderson, Megan	Reading Intervention	Megan Anderson
Merrill, Catherine	Math Intervention	Catherine Merrill
Lucero, Samantha	Student Services Teacher/Case Manager	Samantha Lucero
Beightol, Libby	School Social Worker	Libby Beightol
Mbelenga, Bella	Student Services Teacher	Bella Mbelenga
Huston, Vanessa	Student Services Program Coordinator/ 504/ MLL	Vanessa Huston
Schmidt, Bob	School Psychologist	Bob Schmidt
Cohn, Vicki	Lunch and Recess Lead	Vicki Cohn
Hutchins, Lori	Health Aide	Lori Hutchins



A S C E N T
Classical Academy of Douglas County

Taylor, Kelly	Health Aide	Kelly Taylor
Yost, Andrea	Health Aide	Andrea Yost

ACADC Family and Student Acknowledgement Page

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and read the guidelines for students at Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County. I agree to adhere to and abide by the procedures and guidelines outlined in this document.

Parent Printed Name

Parent Signature

Date

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

Date