

Ministry of Education approves new public charter school

The Calgary Classical Academy will be Canada's first public and non-denominational classical education program

CALGARY — Alberta's Ministry of Education has given approval for a new tuition-free, public charter school serving Calgary students. The school plans to offer grades K-6 beginning in the 2022/2023 academic year, and will expand thereafter to include middle and high school programs.

The Calgary Classical Academy will offer an academically rigorous liberal arts education focused on developing “the knowledge, virtues, and habits befitting free citizens.” Among the school's distinct features are a smartphone-free environment; its embrace of traditional pedagogy and teacher-led classrooms; ancient and modern language offerings; a focus on character and the nurturing of virtues; classical fine and performing arts; and an explicit commitment to the pursuit of truth and beauty.

Students attending the school will benefit from a knowledge-rich curriculum that is highly integrated across grade levels and disciplines. The program will adopt the “trivium” progression, wherein pupils achieve mastery of grammar, formal logic, and finally rhetoric. They will study classic and enduring works of literature, philosophy, arts, and sciences from around the world, so that they may benefit from the wisdom of the past, and preserve and build upon it for posterity.

“A classical education prepares young people for both citizenship and the workforce, but more importantly, its purpose is to cultivate virtue, a sense of wonder, intellectual integrity, and a love of wisdom,” says Superintendent-designate John Picard.

Over the last several years, there has been a resurgence of interest in classical education in the United States, with an estimated 750,000 - 1 million American students now enrolled in classical education programs. Canadian families seeking this style of education for their children have had few options, however, being limited to either homeschooling or a very small number of private or religious programs.

As a tuition-free charter school, the Calgary Classical Academy will be the first public and non-religious classical education program in Canada.

“In Alberta we are proud to have a vibrant school system that supports a parent's right to choose the type of education that is best for their child,” says Minister of Education Adriana LaGrange.

“Our government is proud to maintain this long and successful tradition of supporting school choice, which is why we introduced the Choice in Education Act. I'm very pleased that Calgary parents will now have an additional option of sending their children to a new charter school that offers a classical education program unique to Alberta.”

The school has begun recruiting faculty members, and is now accepting pre-enrolment applications for students entering grades K-6. Discussions are underway with the Alberta Ministry of Education and local school boards to identify a facility that will house the program.

For more information, visit <https://www.calgaryclassicalacademy.ca>. Media inquiries can be directed to info@calgaryclassicalacademy.ca.