



Ad Fontes Academy Frequently Asked Questions

MISSION

1. What are the Ad Fontes Academy Mission and Statement of Faith?

“To glorify God by assisting Christian parents in equipping their children to be servant leaders through a classical education based on eternal biblical truth.”

“We believe that the God of the Bible is the source of all truth; thus, all genuine intellectual pursuits lead logically to God. The Bible is the infallible Word of God, and as such it, and not man, is the standard of truth. Furthermore, we consider the primary goal of all life and education to be the glory of God and the revelation of Jesus Christ, the hope of glory.” The entire AFA statement of faith is listed on our website: adfontes.com.

2. What does “Ad Fontes” mean?

Ad Fontes is a Latin expression which means “to the sources” (literally, to the fountain). It is historically associated with the renewed study of Greek and Latin classics, and the return to the Bible as the primary source of Christian faith.

3. What are the core components of a Christian Education at Ad Fontes?

All leaders and teachers at Ad Fontes have a mature walk with Christ and a commitment to honor God and the Scriptures in all of life. Thus, the community and culture at Ad Fontes focuses on glorifying God in every aspect of the school. Prayer is foundational to all we do. This commitment creates an environment of love, encouragement, grace, and respect.

Ad Fontes is a discipleship school that partners with Christian parents so the students experience a consistent worldview at home and at school. Students have high expectations to treat all with love and respect.

Students will have a bible/theology class in every grade to deepen love and understanding of the Bible and its application to their daily living. Students have chapel each week to worship together through prayer, music and a message. Each classroom is led and subject is taught from a biblical foundation and in pursuit of what is true, good, and beautiful. As students mature, they learn the skills of discernment and wisdom as they encounter increasingly challenging issues and how to live biblically in our society.

4. What are the core components of a Classical Education at Ad Fontes?

Ad Fontes Academy classical curriculum is unique in both content and method. Students receive excellent core instruction in math, science, literature, grammar, writing, history, Latin, Bible and the arts. Students are taught in an interactive and engaging classroom setting that develops student curiosity, interest and ability.

A core concept of classical education is the Trivium, a historic teaching model that seeks to tailor instruction to a student’s cognitive development. The Trivium emphasizes concrete thinking, memorization of facts and skill development in Lower School (Grammar stage); deeper analytical thinking and understanding in Middle School (Logic stage); and the engagement of ideas and persuasive writing and speaking in High School (Rhetoric stage).

Grammar School students will receive phonics-based language instruction and be immersed in great literature and history, committing foundational facts to memory through songs, chants, poems and skits. Students develop strong foundational skills in math, reading and writing.

Latin instruction begins in 4th grade and develops strong thinking and learning skills, vocabulary and cultural understanding. Latin courses are offered through 12th grade.

Classical Composition/Rhetoric (writing and oral presentation) begins in 4th grade. Ad Fontes Academy is unique in providing a separate writing and speaking class from 4th to 12th grade. Ad Fontes students are strong writers. Students take a full year of Logic in 8th grade and Rhetoric in 11th and 12th grade.

Students are immersed in great literature and original source documents throughout the program and are not dependent on textbooks in humanities courses. In the Upper School, students are engaged in the material through dialogue, Socratic questioning and debate. Students develop strong skills in math and science. Ad Fontes become adept at thinking clearly and forming coherent opinions on issues of significance.

In 12th grade, the capstone of an Ad Fontes Academy education is the Senior Thesis, a year-long research project combining their Christian worldview education with their logic and rhetoric skills to complete a 15+ page research paper on a major issue of the day and present before a faculty and subject expert panel.

Ad Fontes students average 300-400 points above the national average on SATS, and has graduates who have the skills to excel at the university level and in the marketplace in humanities, science and technical fields.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

5. Is Ad Fontes Academy accredited?

In 2002, Ad Fontes Academy received accreditation from the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS) (www.accsedu.org). In the Spring of 2013, ACCS renewed our accreditation for five years through 2018.

6. How many students are at AFA? How many graduates? What is your class size? Teacher/Student ratio?

AFA has 214 students enrolled in Grades JrK-12 for the 2015-16 school year. Ad Fontes has graduated 132 students in its history. Currently, we average 16 students per class. The target class size is 18-20 students per class.

7. Why Latin?

Latin is the root of 60% of our English words. It makes sense, then, that Latin is the surest way to gain mastery over the English language. Latin teaches the student the foundation on which English is built. Latin students actually learn English grammar more effectively and comprehensively in Latin than they do in English grammar class. A strong Latin foundation prepares students for diligent study, to think and write well, and to study romance languages (e.g. Spanish, French). Latin study provides access to great literature and develops a rich understanding of our society's history and culture. Ad Fontes students excel on the National Latin exam and other national Latin competitions.

8. How much homework do you assign?

Ad Fontes Academy assigns homework as an integral part of the curriculum. Homework at AFA is very purposeful and not just busy work. We seek to balance hard work with leisure time. Primary reasons for homework being assigned are:

- Students need extra practice in specific new concepts, skills, or facts.
- Repeated short periods of practice or study of new information is often a better way to learn than one long study period.
- Reading assignments by nature cannot usually be completed during school hours and will, therefore, be routinely assigned as homework.

Here are AFA homework guidelines for the average AFA student proceeding with due diligence:

Grade	Daily Average time	Weekly Average
K	20-30 min.	60 min
1	30-45 min	80-160 min
2	30-45 min	120-180 min
3	30-45 min.	120-180 min
4	45-75 min.	180-300 min
5	45-75 min.	180-300 min
6	60-90 min	240-360 min
7-9	90-120 min	Up to 10 hours
10-12	120-180 minutes	Up to 15 hours

9. Do you offer art, music or physical education?

We provide one hour per week of instruction in art, music/drama and physical education in Grades K-8. Art and music are integrated to complement the classroom curriculum, particularly in history. Students also have daily recess. Students perform their music at regular presentations throughout the school year. High school students are offered clubs and electives in athletics, music, drama, art, and mock trial.

TRANSFERS AND STUDENT PROGRAM

10. Ad Fontes Academy seems like a challenging program. Can my child succeed?

Most students thrive in the Ad Fontes Academy program. We believe students of average and above ability benefit from a classical education. AFA does have high academic and behavior standards. We provide students with the individual attention, support and tools to be successful. AFA teachers love their students and are proactive in helping them to learn and thrive. AFA also offers weekly teacher tutoring time and individual support for students with learning differences.

11. My child would be transferring to Ad Fontes Academy in the upper grades. Can he transfer successfully? How does he catch up in Latin?

We have students every year who transfer to Ad Fontes Academy and are successful. During the application process, the student will have an assessment and Ad Fontes staff will provide specific academic recommendations for students to sharpen skills during the summer. Students typically adjust within a few months of starting the program. Ad Fontes Academy offers a summer grammar and writing program to assist transfer students with their transition to the AFA High School. New High School students will start in Latin I and do not need previous Latin experience.

12. Do you have a dress code?

Yes, we have school uniforms through Land's End. The dress code can be found in the Resources and Documents page of the website.

13. What do students do for lunch?

Students bring their own lunch and snack to school. Tuesday is Chick-Fil-A day and Thursday is pizza day. Students may place orders at the beginning of the semester for one or both of these meal choices.

PARENT QUESTIONS

14. Is tuition assistance available?

Yes, we are committed to assisting families who are unable to afford the full tuition of the school. If you desire a Christ-centered classical education for your child and finances are a concern, we encourage you to apply for financial assistance through FACTS, an independent, third-party, completely confidential needs assessment.

15. How involved are the parents?

We view parents as leaders and partners in their child's education. We endeavor to have exceptional communication with parents and to provide ongoing opportunities for parents to see the students in presentations or in the classroom. We actively encourage parents to be involved in all aspects of the school from the Board to committee leadership to the classrooms. Ad Fontes Academy has a Parent Volunteer Association to engage as many parents as possible in school activities. There are multiple ways to serve: from driving on field trips to serving lunch on pizza days, from being a class parent, to committing to pray for the school. Parents can work in the classroom or volunteer at home.

16. Where are your facilities? What are your future plans?

Our 2015-16 school year began with the fulfilled dream of our own facility and one K-12 campus. Our JrK-6th grade students entered the new facility on the same campus with our Upper School at Centreville Presbyterian Church, 15450 Lee Highway in Centreville.

The addition of this modular facility has increased classroom size and our enrollment capacity to 265 students. Ad Fontes is also actively seeking to acquire land towards a permanent K-12 campus in the Centreville area for future development.

17. What is your school schedule and calendar? Do you follow local schools?

Our five day-a-week Junior Kindergarten class begins at 8:00 and ends at 11:45 a.m.
Grades K-6 begin class at 8:00 a.m. and end at 2:45 p.m.
Grades 7-12 begin class at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m.

Our calendar generally follows that of Fairfax County School system though we begin the week before Labor Day. School ends the first week in June with a week long holiday for Thanksgiving and Easter and two weeks at Christmas.

We encourage you to reference our website at www.adfontes.com for further details on Ad Fontes Academy.