Annual Report

Angel Hennig | *Headmaster*

HEART OF OHIO
CLASSICAL ACADEMY

A Founders Classical Academy® School

2025–2026



Message From the Board President

Since its inception, the Heart of Ohio Classical Academy (HOCA) has developed through an effective three-way partnership among HOCA, Hillsdale College, and Responsive Education Solutions (ResponsiveEd).

HOCA was founded in 2023 by a group of concerned citizens seeking to offer students a high-quality classical education as an alternative to what was being taught in public schools. To ensure our school had access to the best-in-class classical education curriculum, HOCA began by affiliating with Hillsdale College and becoming licensed to use the Hillsdale K–12 classical education curriculum.

2024–2025 was our first school year during which HOCA operated independently, teaching grades K–6. However, over that year, we learned that we could better serve our students if we partnered with a management company to relieve our staff and faculty of many of the day-to-day administrative, logistical, and facility-related distractions from our academic mission. To that end, we contractually partnered with ResponsiveEd via an Education Management Organization Agreement executed on July 1, 2025.

ResponsiveEd was a particularly attractive company with which to partner because the organization has long been affiliated with Hillsdale College and has extensive experience operating Founders Classical Academies, its own network of K–12 classical schools. Per our agreement, they managed HOCA over the 2025–2026 school year, during which we grew to grades K–7, and our expectations of and confidence in the partnership were more than validated. As such, they will continue to manage HOCA going forward.

This 2026–2027 school year is HOCA's third year of operation, in which it has grown to grades K–8. Our strong belief is that the three-way partnership as described above will continue to meet the vision of our founders, which was to prepare our students to become virtuous, well-educated, and productive members of society, whatever paths they follow through life. Our commitment to all of you, our stakeholders, is to continue delivering on that vision and earning your trust every day in this extremely important undertaking.

Bob St. Germain
President
Governing Authority
Heart of Ohio Classical Academy



Message From the Headmaster



When you walk down our hallways at Heart of Ohio Classical Academy, you hear something truly special: children chanting history timelines, laughing over timeless stories, and eagerly asking questions about the world around them. At its simplest, classical education is not about rushing children through standardized test preparation or treating them as future economic units for the workplace. It is about honoring who they are right now, cultivating whole human beings with curious minds, kind hearts, and noble character.

Every day, our dedicated teachers walk alongside our students to nurture a genuine, unhurried love of learning. We believe that school should bring peace, wonder, and joy into a child's life. By meeting children where they are developmentally, building rich foundational knowledge in the grammar years, guiding clear reasoning in middle school logic, and helping them express their thoughts with grace in rhetoric, we give them tools that will serve them for a lifetime.

Even more than academic growth, we care deeply about who our students are becoming as people. Virtue is not something taught out of a textbook; it is woven into the daily life of our school. Through inspiring literature, historical role models, and simple daily habits, our scholars learn what it means to practice courage, courtesy, honesty, respect, and responsibility. It is caught in those quiet, everyday moments when a student encourages a classmate, tries again after a setback, or chooses kindness on the playground. This past year, that shared commitment yielded encouraging, tangible fruit. Thanks to the diligent efforts of our students and faculty, HOCA achieved a 3.5-star overall state rating, earned 4 stars in Gap Closing for helping every child make meaningful progress, and reached an 84% promotion rate in early literacy. We do not share these milestones to boast, but to celebrate what happens when children are surrounded by truth, goodness, and beauty: they thrive. Academic rigor and student delight do not pull against one another; in the right environment, they grow together.

A school like ours can only flourish through a close, supportive partnership with our families. Thank you for entrusting your children to us, for helping with homework, and for building this warm community with us every day. As we look toward the future, we are filled with immense hope for our scholars, not only for what they will achieve academically, but also for the thoughtful, virtuous, and compassionate citizens they are growing to be.

Angel Hennig
Headmaster
Heart of Ohio Classical Academy

Message From the Superintendent

To carry the designation of a Hillsdale College K–12 curriculum program is no small commitment. Along with Founders Classical Academies, Hillsdale is a preeminently knowledgeable source of guidance when it comes to the content and purpose of American classical education. To teach from the big, blue Hillsdale program guide is to embrace the great ideas of Western Civilization. There are a few really important concepts that I don't have space to unpack here, but one of the essential lessons throughout the guide is that there is a best way to live in order to be happy. I know this is a highly controversial statement to make in a society where our standards have been reduced to subjective judgments based on feeling. But deep down, we all know there is a best way to live. There are examples all around us.

Take virtue for example. It's not a word we use much outside of our school. But it is a word with deep historical and philosophical meaning. In its simplest sense, "virtue" means the act of doing good. We believe it, and we teach it. But many parents come to us with questions. Conversations about virtue with inquiring parents often go like this: "Who defines the good?" they ask. I respond that the good is a gift that has been given to us. "Who gave the gift?" I reply that it's not our business here at the school. Our business is to teach the virtues because they are self-evident. Then comes, "What are these virtues you say are so important?" "I will list them," I respond, "and you tell me if you think they are true."

"Is courage important?" I begin. "Of course," the parents respond, wondering where the list is going. "What about honesty?" I ask next. "Obviously," the parents say. "What about justice, humility, and responsibility? Are these good things? Do you want your children to embody them?" "Yes, yes we do." "Do I need to give you an explanation about where these originate?" Typically, by now, a parent will see my point. There are things that are true and good that, even in their skepticism, the parents want their children to know because they believe such qualities are real and important.

Hillsdale has shown us over the years how to teach these things well to children. It is not all the College offers, but we would be a little less anchored in our purpose without the its help in this and many other vital areas.

But carrying around the big, blue program guide and posting the logo on the website isn't enough. To honor the intent of the Hillsdale program, we must train our teachers. They must know their content and understand its place in the American educational canon. The teachers must know why reading is important and why we teach our students to write in cursive. They must know about the formative events in American history and what ideas underpinned them. They must model virtue and gently guide our students towards their own virtuous behavior. All of these things come with being a Hillsdale curriculum school. It's at the very core of what Heart of Ohio Classical Academy aspires to be. It is a worthy endeavor, and I consider it a privilege to be a part of it.

Michael Terry
National Director of Classical Education, ResponsiveEd
Superintendent, ResponsiveEd Ohio

Mission Statement

The mission of Heart of Ohio Classical Academy is to provide a content-rich education that stimulates the mind, feeds the hunger for learning, and nourishes the heart through a fully integrated liberal arts and sciences curriculum that includes instruction in moral character and civic virtue.

Our Virtues

COURAGE
Strength in the face of adversity or pain.
"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. It is also what it takes to sit down and listen." — Winston Churchill

COURTESY
Politeness.
"Courtesies of a small and trivial character are the ones which strike deepest in the grateful and appreciating heart." — Henry Clay

HONESTY
Integrity and truthfulness.
"To thine own self be true." — Polonius, Hamlet

RESPECT
To hold in high regard and to act accordingly.
"All I'm asking for is a little respect." — Aretha Franklin

CITIZENSHIP
Participation in civic life.
"You will ever remember that all the End of study is to make you a good Man and a useful Citizen—This will ever be the Sum total of the Advice of your affectionate Father." — John Adams, letter to John Quincy Adams

TEMPERANCE
Moderation.
"Moderation in all things." — Aristotle

FORTITUDE
Strength and resolve.
"Fortitude is the capacity to say no when the world wants to hear yes." — Erich Fromm

JUSTICE
Before the law, it is what we deserve. In life, simple fairness.
"Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are." — Benjamin Franklin

HUMILITY
Humility is born in empathy and reflects an awareness that other things, as well as you, matter.
"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less." — C.S. Lewis

RESPONSIBILITY
Its origins in Latin are linked to fulfilling a promise. We understand it to mean fulfilling a duty.
"In dreams begin responsibilities." — William Butler Yeats

Our Culture

HOCA is a school set apart from the usual public school environment. As a classical community school, we expect and promote moral virtue, decorum, respect, discipline, and studiousness among the students and faculty. Simultaneously, we produce a spirit of wonder and a desire to know that which is good, true, and beautiful.

Our Board

Bob St. Germain - *President*
Shawn Parker - *Vice President*
Michele Coldiron - *Secretary*
Greg Lawson - *Member*
Carol O'Brien - *Member*

ResponsiveEd Leadership

Michael Terry – *State Superintendent (ResponsiveEd Ohio)*
Shannon Hyde – *Operations & Facilities Coordinator*
Katie Stephens – *Executive Director of Finance*
Chadwick Henning – *Technical Operations Administrator*
Mary Ann Duncan – *Director of Compliance*

School Leadership

Angel Hennig – *Headmaster*
Katie Jo Urbancic – *Dean of Grammar*
Hastings Wagamon – *Dean of Students*
Anna Johnson – *Office Manager*

Faculty and Staff List

STAFF	
Headmaster	1
Dean of Students	1
Dean of Grammar	1
Office Manager	1
Receptionist	1
Office Aide	1

FACULTY	
Intervention Specialist	1
Art Teacher	2
Music Teacher	2
PE Teacher	1
Kindergarten Teacher	4
First Grade Teacher	2
Second Grade Teacher	2
Third Grade Teacher	2
Fourth Grade Teacher	1
Fifth Grade Teacher	1
MS Science Teacher	1
MS Math Teacher	1
MS History Teacher	1
MS Literature Teacher	1
MS Latin Teacher	1
Total	**29**



Our Operator: ResponsiveEd Ohio

HOCA is operated by ResponsiveEd's Ohio unit. Based in Columbus, Ohio, ResponsiveEd Ohio oversees the daily instructional program and matters related to finance, human resources, operations, compliance, and facilities. One of ResponsiveEd's key contributions is its extensive experience operating schools that use the Hillsdale curriculum. Its Founders Classical Academy network was established in Lewisville, Texas, in 2012 in partnership with Hillsdale College. The Lewisville campus was the first Hillsdale member school established under what was then known as the Barney Charter School Initiative.

HOCA is currently a part of the Founders network, along with 23 other schools, including Northeast Ohio Classical Academy in Cleveland.

The Founders schools, consistent with Hillsdale's vision, consider themselves American classical schools. In defining their mission, curricular focus (aligned with the Hillsdale program), virtues, and desired outcomes, they emphasize the qualities the Founding Fathers thought necessary for a free society: knowledge, courage, civility, perseverance, participation, self-governance, and peaceful conduct. All of the Founders schools in Texas, Arkansas, and Ohio pursue these values.

A Hillsdale Curriculum School

HOCA carries the designation of a Hillsdale College Curriculum School. This affiliation with Hillsdale College and its K–12 classical education program brings immense value to HOCA. Hillsdale's K–12 education is devoted to supporting the launch of high-performing classical charter schools across the country. Hillsdale's goal is to assist schools that provide a content-rich classical education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue.

Hillsdale College developed its K–12 classical education model in 2010 and, over the next fifteen years, refined its approach to instruction and guidance offered to affiliated schools. Since then, it has proven successful in addressing a wide variety of student needs in schools across the country.

The Hillsdale curriculum used by HOCA is characterized by a strong emphasis on language, content richness in all subjects, a strong core curriculum, and a focus on the historical, literary, and scientific traditions of the United States and Western civilization. In addition to resources developed by the College, the program also relies heavily on the Core Knowledge Program; Singapore Math; Access Literacy; a full library of novels, speeches, and poems; original source documents selected for their rich exploration of the human experience; and other excellent books used in mathematics, history, literature, language arts, and the fine arts.

Along with specific curriculum recommendations, Hillsdale College provides its K–12 Program Guide to every teacher at Member and Curriculum Schools. This comprehensive, 600+ page curriculum guide details what should be taught in each subject and grade through a student's entire K–12 journey. It provides the foundation for curriculum choices at Hillsdale-affiliated schools.

With the help of ResponsiveEd Ohio, HOCA is offering a high-quality education to its students through the Hillsdale K–12 Program.

Our Classical Commitments

HOCA is a classical school through and through. This means that we make particular commitments to our families and students. When they come to our school, they can expect that we take those commitments seriously and seek to deliver on them in every aspect of our school.

1. Virtues, as well as principles in self-government and civility, are identified and clearly taught in a seamless manner through course content.
2. Emphasis is placed on minds-on learning and on fostering a spirit of inquiry in students; standardized tests, while important, do not drive curriculum and instruction.
3. The curriculum is knowledge-rich and built around the principle of increasing cultural literacy, or a common body of essential knowledge that promotes academic success, citizenship, and the centrality of the Western Tradition.
4. Literacy is taught through explicit phonics and grammar, and rational thought and expression are acquired through logic and rhetoric.
5. Greek and Latin constitute the foundational foreign language instruction for training in grammar, vocabulary, and critical thinking and as a bridge to the study of seminal texts of the Western Tradition and to other languages.
6. Classic works of history and literature, i.e. Great Books, constitute the texts students read, examine, and discuss with depth and seriousness.
7. Mathematical and scientific knowledge are pursued for their own sakes, not merely for their practical applications; both aim at human excellence.
8. Instruction in the fine and performing arts is essential to the curriculum and includes studies in theory, history, and performance.
9. Students are trained in study skills, planning and organization, close reading of text, and note-taking.
10. Importance is placed on bodily fitness and physical education in concert with fit minds.
11. Co-curricular and extracurricular activities are offered and encouraged to promote a well-ordered and well-rounded experience for students.
12. The education of children is viewed as a collaborative and essential partnership between parents and professional educators.







2025–26 Enrollment Figures

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
39	45	30	28	29	19	26	16

Total: 232



Recognition & Achievements

OVERALL REPORT CARD IMPROVEMENT
Elevated its overall Ohio Department of Education and Workforce rating to **3.5 Stars** ("Meets State Standards") for the 2025–2026 academic year, up from 2.5 Stars in 2024–2025

EXCEEDING STANDARDS IN GAP CLOSING
Earned a **4-star rating in Gap Closing** ("Exceeds State Standards"), reflecting outstanding growth and academic acceleration among special education populations and student subgroups

EARLY LITERACY MILESTONE
Achieved a **4-star rating in Early Literacy** (K–3), reaching an 84% promotion rate to 4th grade, supported by explicit phonics instruction and Title I literacy interventions

DEMONSTRATED ACADEMIC GROWTH
Maintained a 71.4% Performance Index score **(3 Stars in Achievement)** and verified that students met a full year's expected growth trajectory (3 Stars in Progress)

THE "VIRTUE PILLAR" CELEBRATION
Introduced a new tradition in the Great Room where teachers actively recognize and honor students' core virtues, such as courage, courtesy, and perseverance, celebrating them with personalized stickers on our Virtue Pillar

CROSS-GRADE READING MENTORSHIP
Connected middle school scholars with K–4 classrooms during Flex periods to read literature together, modeling elocution, older-student leadership, and literary engagement

LIVING HISTORY & LITERATURE EVENTS
Hosted interactive, school-wide cultural events like the K–1 Literature Parade and the 2nd–3rd Grade Character Museum





Academic Report Card

COMPONENT	STAR RATING / STATUS	DETAILED PERFORMANCE METRICS
Overall Rating	3.5 Stars	Meets State Standards (Up from 2.5 Stars in 2024–2025)
Achievement	3 Stars	Performance Index score: 71.4%
Progress	3 Stars	Evidence that the school met state growth expectations
Gap Closing	4 Stars	Exceeds State Standards in closing educational gaps (Annual Performance Goals: 52.2%)
Early Literacy (K–3)	4 Stars	Exceeds State Standards (Promotion to 4th grade: 84%)
Graduation Rate	Not Rated (NC)	N/A (School served grades K–7 in 2025–26)

Performance Indicators

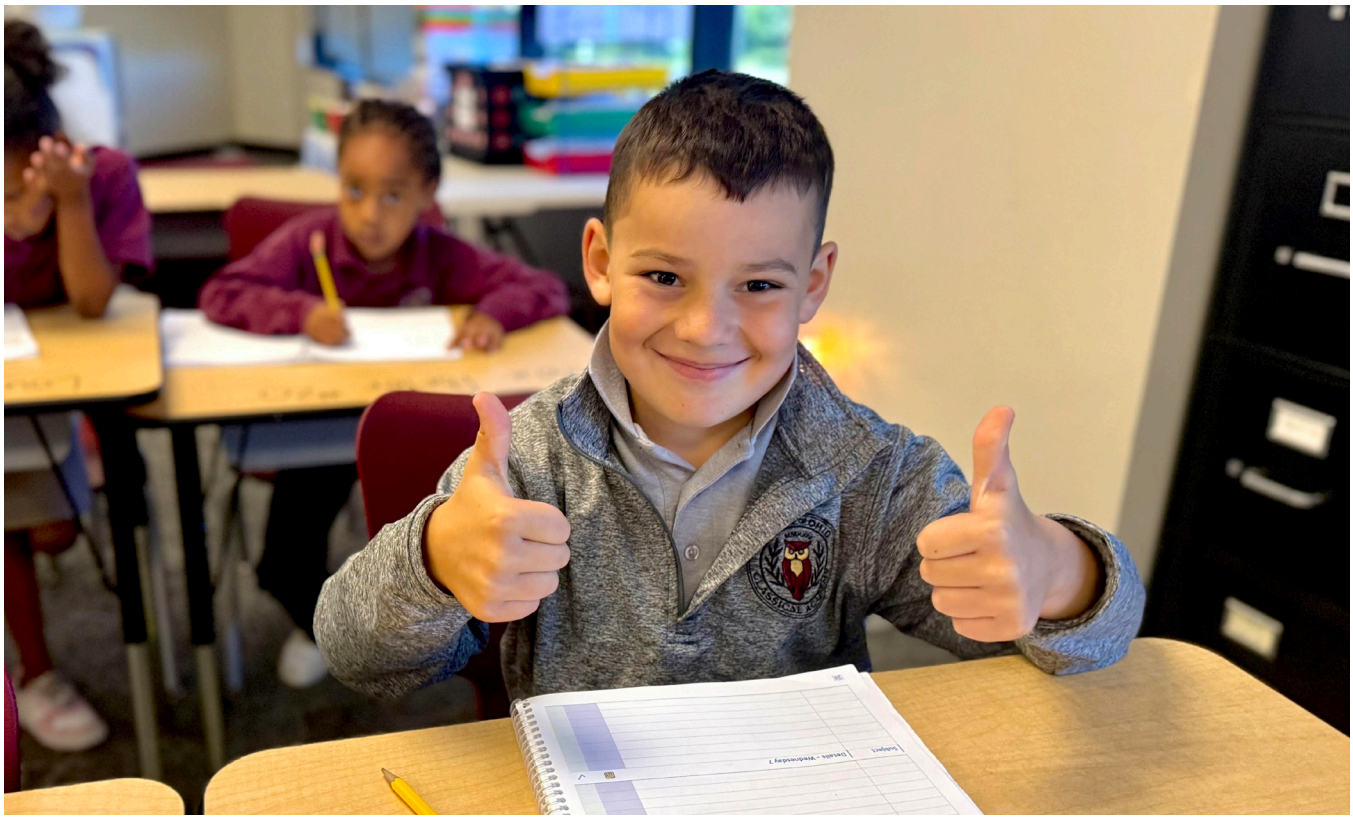
Gap Closing (4 Stars—Exceeds State Standards):
HOCA achieved a 4-star rating in Gap Closing for the 2025–2026 academic year (up from 3 Stars in 2024–2025), demonstrating exceptional success in accelerating growth and meeting performance targets among vulnerable student subgroups and special education populations.

Achievement & Performance Index (3 Stars—Meets State Standards):
HOCA earned a 71.4% Performance Index score, maintaining a solid 3-star Achievement rating across state assessments in reading, mathematics, and science.

Early Literacy Improvement (4 Stars—Exceeds State Standards):
Early Literacy improved from 1 Star in 2024–2025 to 4 Stars in 2025–2026 under Ohio's updated literacy evaluation scale. HOCA achieved an 84% promotion rate to 4th grade under the 3rd Grade Reading Guarantee, supported by Title I literacy intervention programs.

Value-Added Student Progress (3 Stars—Meets State Standards):
Progress measures confirmed that HOCA students met one full year's expected academic growth trajectory across core tested subjects.







Financial Summary & Activity

In fiscal year 2026 (FY 26), ending June 30, 2026, HOCA generated $3,146,112 in core operational revenues. Based on an average funded enrollment of 234.66 students, measured by Average Daily Membership (ADM), total operating revenue averaged $13,407 per pupil. State foundation payments served as the academy's primary operating source, delivering $2,944,275 (an average of $12,547 per pupil). State foundation aid included $9,144 per pupil ($2,145,731 total) in core foundation funding, $2,022 per pupil ($474,561 total) from the Quality Community and STEM School Support Fund, and $983 per pupil ($230,669 total) in facility assistance.

In addition to state foundation support, HOCA recognized $140,472 ($599 per pupil) in federal grant awards (including Title I, Title II-A Title IV-A, and IDEA Part B awards) and $61,365 ($262 per pupil) in local sources, student activity fees, and auxiliary receipts.

Total operational expenditures for the fiscal year came to $3,465,830, representing a per-pupil operational expenditure of $14,770. Key educational investments included $1,588,285 ($6,768 per pupil) in instructional staff salaries, wages, and pension/insurance benefits; $352,797 ($1,503 per pupil) for facility leases, maintenance, and utilities; and $407,870 ($1,738 per pupil) in purchased management and professional services.

Outside of daily operations, the academy recognized $1,416,233 in non-operating revenues and special capital items, consisting of a $989,396 gain on asset adjustments and $225,000 in bond financing proceeds. After factoring in non-operating items and $150,073 in GASB 87 capital accounting amortization and interest costs, HOCA closed the fiscal year with a net bottom-line surplus of $744,605.

In addition, the academy closed the fiscal year with $416,561 in liquid cash deposits and total current assets of $631,541.

As of June 30, 2026, the academy's net position stood at negative $180,701, reflecting an improved capital position as non-operating gains and operational performance strengthened the school's total equity.

REVENUE

State Revenue	$2,944,275.31
Federal Revenue	$140,471.77
Other Revenue	$286,364.84
Student Activities	$6,227.74
Miscellaneous	$18,102.69
Student Fees	$18,280.31
Investment Revenue/Gain on Asset	$1,214,396.26
Food Program Sales	$4,341.25
Casino Tax	$14,412.85
Total Expenses	**$4,360,508.19**

EXPENSES

Purchased Services	$407,870.28
Salaries & Wages	$1,163,366.25
Retirement & Benefits	$424,919.06
Managed Services	$563,230.36
Other	$1,056,517.16
Total Expenses	**$3,615,903.11**

*Unaudited financial information




1. first
2. second
3. third
5. they're
6. primary
master: teacher or expert
virtue: good behavior
government: group of leaders who help run a country and make rules for everyone
Vowel Rules
VOICE Levels
SILENCE IS GOLDEN
SPY Talk
LOW Flow
SPEAKER Voice