



# Parnassus Annual Report

Academic Year 2016-2017

# PARNASSUS



PREPARATORY SCHOOL

*Classical Schooling for the Art of Life*

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*Approved by the Parnassus Board of Directors on 9/26/2017*

# 1 Introduction

This annual report is written to document academic and fiscal accountability, innovative practices, accomplishments, and achievements at Parnassus Preparatory School during the 2016-2017 school year. The annual report meets the reporting requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota statutes, the expectations of Parnassus’ authorizer, and our own expectations as a classical, liberal arts, college preparatory, and Trivium-based school. This report is available to current and prospective families and staff of the Parnassus community and is posted on the Parnassus’ website. Contributors to the Annual Report include Ms. Ford – Executive Director, Ms. Bottenfield – Director of Academics and Programs, Ms. Good – District Assessment Coordinator, Mr. Taintor – Finance Manager, and Mr. Friess – Board Chair and Treasurer.

## 2 Parnassus Levels of the Trivium

Parnassus has developed its own system for labeling grade levels to replace those that are used in most district schools. Many preparatory schools in the U.S., Britain, and other countries use the Sixth Form system, but at Parnassus, we underscore the classical Trivium consisting of the School of Grammar, the School of Logic, and the School of Rhetoric.

Since the cornerstone of a classical school and our mission is the Trivium, our system labels the four levels of each school as follows:

**School of Grammar (SOG):** Begins with the Latin term, *Prima*, for kindergarten - meaning “first” in Latin.

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School of Grammar (SOG)	School of Logic (SOL)	School of Rhetoric (SOR)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prima</li><li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Level Grammar (1G)</li><li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Grammar (2G)</li><li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Grammar (3G)</li><li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Level Grammar (4G)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Level Logic (1L)</li><li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Logic (2L)</li><li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Logic (3L)</li><li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Level Logic (4L)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Level Rhetoric (1R)</li><li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Rhetoric (2R)</li><li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Rhetoric (3R)</li><li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Level Rhetoric (4R)</li></ul>

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## 3 Trivium Overview

### School of Grammar – Prima (P) – 4th Level Grammar (4G)

Prima through Fourth Level Grammar (4G) are the years in which young students master and internalize the skills of language and mathematics as well as absorb a broad expanse of facts in history, geography, science, and the arts. In these years, students are expected to master foundational concepts and skills. In initial literacy instruction, students master the phonograms of the English language and use them to capture their own oral language production in the written system. In mathematics, basic computation and number sense undergird problem solving. In history, the chronological development of world civilizations is linked with a study of geographic regions, as well as introductory concepts of civics and economics. In science, students learn about the natural world as well as the stages of scientific inquiry. Students study Spanish and Latin daily, beginning in Prima. The goal is to accumulate knowledge that will be used later in the comprehension and analysis of more complex concepts.

### **School of Logic – First Level Logic (1L) – Fourth Level Logic (4L)**

In the second stage of a classical education, students continue to advance in skill areas and to accumulate knowledge, but more focus is placed on developing analytical thinking skills and the capacity for abstract thought, discovering relationships between fields of knowledge, and fitting knowledge into a logical framework. Instruction methods build upon the Socratic approach of guided questions to help students learn to reason and develop conclusions. Students in 1L through 4L are expected to demonstrate the ability to move beyond facts to integration and analysis. For instance, in the study of literature, whereas the grammar stage child is expected primarily to show comprehension through summary, the logic stage child is asked to interpret and evaluate how multiple elements of fiction contribute to the meaning of a text. Similarly, in mathematics, the logic-phase student is expected to recognize relationships in numerical patterns, explain relationships and to distinguish between the effectiveness of problem-solving strategies for various problems and contexts. The study of science extends beyond factual presentation and rehearsals of scientific inquiry to introductory investigation and experimentation with data gathering and data analysis.

### **School of Rhetoric – First Level Rhetoric (1R) – Fourth Level Rhetoric (4R)**

In the rhetoric stage, 1R through 4R, students use knowledge and critical thinking skills to write and speak with fluency, eloquence, and persuasiveness about all subjects in the curriculum. The study of history, literature, government, philosophy, ethics, and art and music appreciation have become so intertwined that they are studied together and examined through seminars and Harkness table discussion-method in all subject areas. Advanced science, mathematics, and classical and modern foreign languages are studied as well as rhetoric and debate. Students in the School of Rhetoric are expected to be clear, elegant, and reasoned communicators. They support their ideas with facts acquired in the grammar stage and apply analysis skills formed in the logic stage by explicit instruction in formal logic and examination of virtue. In this stage, students begin to develop original arguments, profess well-informed opinions, and learn the art of respectful debate. Writing and oration are dominant modes of expression intended to persuade listeners and inspire dialogue. Students are liberated to analyze what they have learned in the prior stages of the Trivium and make individual decisions for their elective course(s) of study.



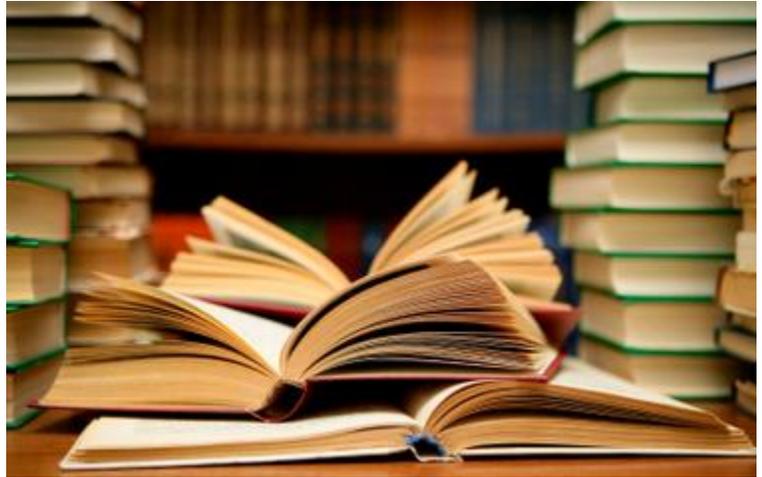
## 4 Mission and Vision

*The mission of Parnassus Preparatory School is to provide students with a K-12 classical education grounded in the classical Trivium that demands their best in intellectual achievement and character development.*

### 4.1 *The Meaning of being a Liberal Arts Classical School*

At Parnassus, teachers, students, and parents share an idealistic aspiration for excellence in academic standards and character development referred by the ancient Greeks as “*arête*.” The Parnassus community also shares the classical Trivium approach to education and Parnassus’ mission and vision.

Parnassus differentiates itself by focusing on a classical liberal arts education. The terms “classical” and “liberal arts” have often been misused to describe almost anything that is opposite from the current trends. At Parnassus, we hold and implement the traditional meaning of these terms where, broadly speaking, *classical* means the inclusion of the “great books,” a classical body of literature that has withstood the test of time, that speaks to our human nature and to what it really means to be an educated human being. The classical methods of teaching – grammar, logic, rhetoric – are part of our definition as well. Finally, *classical* at Parnassus also means the study of the classical languages – Latin and Greek.



Parnassus’ “liberal arts” program is the cornerstone of our classical schooling. Some have equated *liberal arts* with “free-for-all courses” without a method or “usefulness” of learning, focusing only on humanities-based classes, and void of the sciences. This is not so at Parnassus. First and foremost, a liberal arts education is one that liberates and frees the individual to learn and think for oneself. One cannot be free with a myopic view of the world, studying disciplines in isolation such as courses in the humanities alone, sciences alone, or only mathematical skills for example. Liberal arts education at Parnassus seeks to impart the Western tradition, cultural values and knowledge leading the students to wisdom, but also an education which encourages the asking of questions promoting curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. School of Logic and Rhetoric students learn to listen attentively, to ask critically, to analyze deeply, and to express themselves respectfully.

### 4.2 *Strategies to Accomplishing our Mission*

Developing our staff in the classical model and pedagogy is paramount to Parnassus’s success as a Classical school and to our mission. Recognizing the importance of professional development, in fiscal year 2017, Parnassus continued to provide training to faculty and staff the following:

- 1) Parnassus Classical education model;
- 2) Direct Instruction;
- 3) Data Driven Instruction;
- 4) Writing;
- 5) Reading and literacy and;
- 6) Socratic and Harkness discussion methods.

As part of our strategy to accomplish our mission, we continue with our tradition to include summer readings for our staff with discussions during their training prior to the start of the academic year. These readings include the classics from the Parnassus' curriculum as well as academic and research-based books. The school also promotes reading by holding board, staff, and parent book discussions and encouraging good reading as part of the culture of our classical school community. In addition, we continue with our Colloquium series with professors led lectures and discussions held at Parnassus and open to the public.



Lastly, in 2017 we began our campus construction and expansion which will provide us with internal and external spaces, campus environment and school ethos developed specifically to align with the Parnassus' mission of a classical school and our vision to become a top performing classical school. Besides having additional classrooms, physical education space, and science laboratories, Parnassus' scholars will have the opportunity to practice and demonstrate their oratorical prowess in the many areas inside the campus dedicated for this purpose as well as in the school's amphitheater.

## **5 Charter School Background Information**

Parnassus Preparatory School is public charter school approved by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). As a public school, Parnassus serves all students who apply for admission. There are no admission requirements or charges for tuition. Parnassus is funded with state and federal dollars. Funding is based on enrollment and includes money for both operational expenses and lease payment assistance for the facility.

In addition to being regulated by the Minnesota Department of Education, charter schools are overseen by an MDE approved authorizer. Parnassus' authorizer is Friends of Education (see Section 7 for additional information). The authorizer is responsible for the academic results and financial management of the school.

## **6 Parnassus' Education Philosophy**

Parnassus' education philosophy is that all students benefit from the highest standards of academic integrity and from a rigorous, content based, educational program that develops their intellectual capacity and personal character. Through the Trivium methods of instruction, history as the chronological backbone of the curriculum, and through integrated humanities and advanced sciences, the school provides an environment that fosters academic excellence through the habits of discipline and the perseverance to complete challenging tasks.

## **7 Authorizer Information**

Parnassus' authorizer is Friends of Education. Friends of Education oversees other charter schools throughout the state of Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Education awarded Friends of Education its highest *Exemplary* rating of charter school authorizer performance. Elizabeth Topoluk is the liaison for Friends of Education with Parnassus. Friends of Education is located at 200 Lake Street, Wayzata, MN 55391, telephone: 952-475-7053.

## 8 Parnassus Recognitions

The 2016- 2017 school year was another year of strong performance for Parnassus' scholars. Both within and outside of the school's normal curricular program, Parnassus' scholars enjoyed academic success and achieved several milestones.

For the fifth year in a row, Parnassus' school Scripps National Spelling Bee champion advanced to the state spelling bee championship round. A fourth-level Logic (4L) scholar represented Parnassus for the third time and made a strong showing at the competition, which was held at St. Catherine's University in St. Paul.



Parnassus Spelling Bee

Parnassus' scholars in levels 4G – 1R competed in the National Geographic Bee in January. For the second time since its inception, our school winner advanced to the state tournament, which was held at Minnesota State University – Mankato.

In its inaugural year, the Parnassus School of Logic Quiz Bowl team placed second in the statewide competition, which earned them a spot at the national championships. The team traveled to Dallas, Texas last May to compete against 150 other middle school teams at the NAQT Middle School National Championship Tournament.

Parnassus' School of Logic Science Bowl team once again received the Civility Award at the state tournament, highlighting the students' exemplary decorum and conduct during the competition. Parnassus also fielded a School of Rhetoric Science Bowl team, which competed at the high school state tournament in January.



Parnassus Quiz Bowl Team



Parnassus sponsored its first two competitive Mock Trial teams. Scholars and advisors studied, discussed, and analyzed the cases. They developed strategies, potential questions and answers taking into consideration all angles such as the witness, the defense attorney, and the prosecutor.

The varsity team won their second competitive trial and we believe that we have many more victories ahead in the upcoming years.

The ACT Aspire is a practice version of the ACT and gives a predictive ACT score to students

who complete the assessment. The average predicted ACT score for Parnassus SOR students who have been with the school for three or more years was 28, with 40% of those students receiving a predicted score of 32 or higher. In Minnesota, the average ACT score for a high school junior is 22.7. This is yet another demonstration of the value of the classical Trivium education at Parnassus.

Parnassus first 3R level group scored really well on the PSAT. One of our scholars scored in the top 5% of all students nationwide on the 2016 PSAT and National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The student is placed in running for a National Merit Scholarship.



Parnassus administered the National Greek Test to our 2R scholars, who were enrolled in a college-level Ancient Greek course through the University of Minnesota. Eleven scholars received awards on the exam, including two *Blue Ribbon- Highest Honors* awards, six *Red Ribbon- High Honors* awards, and one *Merit-Green Ribbon award*. One scholar received a perfect score on the Beginning Attic Greek Exam – one of only two students, globally, to do so.

In March of 2017, Parnassus administered the National Latin Exam (NLE) for the fifth year in a row to all students in levels 1L through 4G. As ever, Parnassus students achieved impressive results on the NLE. Nearly a quarter of the student body received a national recognition award, with 85 medals, ribbons, and certificates handed out at our award ceremony. This year's awards included six *Gold Summa cum laude* medals, nine silver *Maxima cum laude* medals, twenty *Magna cum laude* certificates, thirteen *Cum laude* certificates, seven *Outstanding Performance* ribbons, and thirty *Certificates of Merit*.



Latin Awards

## 9 School Enrollment and Attrition

The target area for enrollment for Parnassus includes families from Maple Grove, Osseo, Brooklyn Park, Champlin, Plymouth and surrounding areas with families seeking a college preparatory and tuition free classical education for their children. Though this target market includes the closest geographical areas, the school is open to any family from any community interested in a rigorous, liberal arts, college preparatory classical education.

### 9.1 Parnassus Annual Enrollment

Parnassus enrollment five-year history based on average daily membership, on October first of each year, is listed below:

Academic Year	Grades	Total Enrollment
2012-2013	Prima – 3L (K-7)	609
2013-2014	Prima – 4L (K-8)	760
2014-2015	Prima – 1R (K-9)	793
2015-2016	Prima – 2R (K-10)	888
2016-2017	Prima – 3R (K-11)	1004

### 9.2 Fiscal Year 2017 Enrollment Details

The chart below depicts Parnassus’ average daily membership for Fiscal Year 2017 per level. The school’s mission and vision is supported by the strategic plan to add a level per year with a larger base in the School of Grammar and smaller upper grades, Schools of Logic and Rhetoric. This approach ensures the school delivers on its mission to offer all levels from Prima through 4<sup>th</sup> Level of Rhetoric (4R) while maintaining fidelity to the liberal arts Classical Trivium and rigorous college preparatory program.

FY 2017	Prima (K)	1G (1)	2G (2)	3G (3)	4G (4)	1L (5)	2L (6)	3L (7)	4L (8)	1R (9)	2R (10)	3R (11)
Enrollment	119	126	119	126	122	92	80	91	72	26	26	5

### 9.3 Fiscal Year 2016 Student Attrition

The average daily membership was 1004 students with an attrition rate of three percent for the 2016-2017 school year.

Academic Year	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Attrition Rate	5%	8%	6%	5%	3%

## 9.4 ***Equal Opportunity to All Students***

Parnassus seeks and supports students from all backgrounds and has pursued the following two objectives regarding equal opportunity for all students to attend the school:

- 1) Specific, targeted marketing strategies to reach out to educationally and economically disadvantaged families;
- 2) Once at Parnassus, the school continues to develop programs to ensure the economically and disadvantaged students integrate into Parnassus’ classrooms and are successful.

Below is the demographics summary for the 2016-0217 school year, reflecting these efforts and the opportunity of a rigorous, classical, college preparatory schooling to all students:

### **Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Demographics, 2016 - 2017 School Year*	White/Caucasian	Black/African American	Asian	Hispanic / Latino	Two or More Races
% of Total Student Body	50.70%	25.70%	12.80%	5.60%	5.10%

### **Enrollment by Special Population**

Demographics, 2016 - 2017 School Year*	Free or Reduced Lunch	English Learner (EL)	Special Education
% of Total Student Body	25.90%	6.00%	5.70%

*\*Demographic data reflects enrollment on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017*



## 10 Governance and Management/Administration

The board of Parnassus Preparatory School consists of five members: three of whom are parents, one community member, and one teacher from Parnassus. The board meets monthly. All board members have completed board training.

### The 2016-2017 Parnassus Board of Directors:

Name	Current Director	Elected (E) or Appointed (A)	Date Seated	Date Term Expires	Officer Position (if any)	Email Address
Greg Friess	X	E	July 2010	Feb. 2018	Board Chair/Treasurer (Parent Founder)	<a href="mailto:friess@parnassusprep.com">friess@parnassusprep.com</a>
Heather Ross	X	E	July 2010	Feb. 2019	Director (Parent Founder)	<a href="mailto:ross@parnassusprep.com">ross@parnassusprep.com</a>
Barbara Rose	X	E	Dec. 2010	Feb. 2021	Director (Teacher)	<a href="mailto:rose@paranassusprep.com">rose@paranassusprep.com</a>
Kenneth Zigrino	X	E	July 2010	Feb. 2019	Secretary (Community Member; Co-Founder)	<a href="mailto:zigrino@paranassusprep.com">zigrino@paranassusprep.com</a>
Nancy Rigby	X	E	April 2013	Feb. 2018	Director (Parent)	<a href="mailto:rigby@parnassusprep.com">rigby@parnassusprep.com</a>

The full board attended training that included:

- Board self-evaluation. An exercise to identify and examine the areas where the board was strong and the areas where further development was needed.
- Facility bonding. The board received training on the formation of affiliated building corporations and the process of facility bonding.
- Classical Education Discussion. Every year the board reads a book relevant to our tradition of classical education. This year the Board read and discussed *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, a book from the Parnassus curriculum. Board members also attended the school's colloquium series.

### 10.1 Current Administration



#### Ms. Ford, Executive Director

Ms. Ford is the current and founding Executive Director of Parnassus Preparatory School with a history in classical education. In addition to her role at Parnassus, Ms. Ford was one of the founders of the first classical charter school in a neighboring state and one of the first charter schools in her region. Under her leadership, the school was identified as one of the top charter schools in Wisconsin based on student performance, low staff and student attrition levels, and high academic standards. Ms. Ford previously served as a member of a steering committee that reviewed and advised on all applications and renewals for an authorizer in the state of Wisconsin. She holds a B.A. in Art History from Lawrence University and an M.A. in Educational Leadership.



**Ms. Bottenfield, Director of Academics and Programs, Founder**

Ms. Bottenfield holds a B.A. in International Relations with a minor in marketing from the University of St. Thomas, a Master of Business Administration with an International Business concentration from the University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management, and a Master of Education Leadership from the University of Minnesota Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development. Ms. Bottenfield is the original founder of Parnassus and served as the Board Chair for five years from its initial development until 2013 when she resigned from the Board Chair position to accept the Director of Academics position. Ms. Bottenfield

is passionate about classical liberal arts education and continues to conduct extensive research on this program.



**Ms. Good, District Assessment Coordinator and Academic Community Director**

Ms. Good wears many hats in her role. She oversees all testing assessment practices, including state and national exams. She trains staff on appropriate testing procedures as well as analyzing and understanding data to improve instruction. Ms. Good oversees the Animus and Accendo after-school programs and all school events and activities. She serves as the volunteer coordinator, assists with marketing and communications. Ms. Good holds a B.A. in Cognitive and Linguistic Sciences with a minor in Italian from Wellesley College in

Wellesley, Massachusetts and an M.A. in Educational Leadership.



**Principal Hamiel, Principal of the School of Rhetoric**

Principal Hamiel is a former high school math teacher and has always had a love for education. Prior to coming to Parnassus in the fall of 2013, he was a mathematics teacher for the St. Cloud Area Schools. Principal Hamiel sets high expectations for all students and champions classical education. He holds an M.A. in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment and a K-12 Principal and Superintendent licenses from St. Cloud State University.



**Principal Kasowicz, Principal of the School of Logic**

Principal Kasowicz is entering his second year with Parnassus. He was previously employed by Robbinsdale Area Schools as a special education teacher within a self-contained program. He was co-chair of his building's Professional Development committee the past two years. Concurrently, Principal Kasowicz works as an adjunct instructor for Concordia University, St. Paul, teaching courses in the Graduate programs for Educational Leadership and Educational Technology. Prior to working for Robbinsdale Area Schools, he spent five years as a special education teacher for BlueSky Online High School, where he served on

the charter school board as Board Secretary. Principal Kasowicz holds a K-12 Principal license from Bethel University.



### **Principal Omberg, Principal of the School of Grammar and Special Education Director**

Principal Omberg holds high expectations for all learners and is very excited to continue being a part of Parnassus. Principal Omberg came to Parnassus two years ago as the Special Education Coordinator with ten years previous experience from Minnetonka Public Schools. She has an M.A. in Special Education from the University of Minnesota. She also holds a K-12 Principal and Director of Special Education licenses from Saint Mary's University.

## **10.2 Executive Director Responsibility and Development Plan**

The Executive Director is the only direct report of the Board of Directors.

### **1. Promote School Mission and Vision**

#### *a. Instructional Leader*

- i.* Ensure fidelity in delivery of classical program through classical pedagogy
- ii.* Oversee creation and delivery of the classical curriculum
- iii.* Supervise school Principal and administrative staff
- iv.* Oversee the hiring of instructional and non-instructional staff
- v.* Supervise and evaluate instructional staff
- vi.* Oversee daily academic schedule
- vii.* Lead staff development programming to support initiatives of the school's academic philosophy
- viii.* Lead assessment initiatives
- ix.* Create culture of excellence in academic achievement, character, and citizenship

#### *b. School Ambassador and Spokesperson*

- i.* Report to the Board of Directors
- ii.* Develop and coordinate internal and external communications
- iii.* Create school calendar
- iv.* Serve on selected board-level committees
- v.* Jointly with Board chair, maintain primary relationship with school authorizer
- vi.* Work with state-level authorities
- vii.* Work with parent and community groups to advance school goals and mission

### **2. Provide Operational Leadership**

#### *a. Direct Financial Management*

- i.* Manage finances and prepare the annual budget with external accounting firm
- ii.* Prepare financial report to the Board of Directors
- iii.* Maintain oversight of fundraising and financial development efforts

#### *b. Ensure Adequate Resources for Excellence in Operations*

- i.* Lead implementation of strategic plan
- ii.* Determine and pursue human, financial, and physical resources needed to deliver school mission
- iii.* Prepare operational and academic report to the Board of Directors

#### *c. Maintain Primary Oversight of Facilities and Grounds and Relevant Contracts*

- i.* Approve all school contracts and employment agreements
- ii.* As needed, negotiate terms with external vendors

#### *d. Maintain Compliance*

- i.* In collaboration with the Board, work with school's legal counsel and official authorities as needed to ensure state and federal compliance

- ii. In collaboration with the Board, create and maintain school policies and procedures
- e. *Lead Recruitment and Enrollment*
  - i. Direct enrollment campaign
  - ii. Oversee development of enrollment events and processes

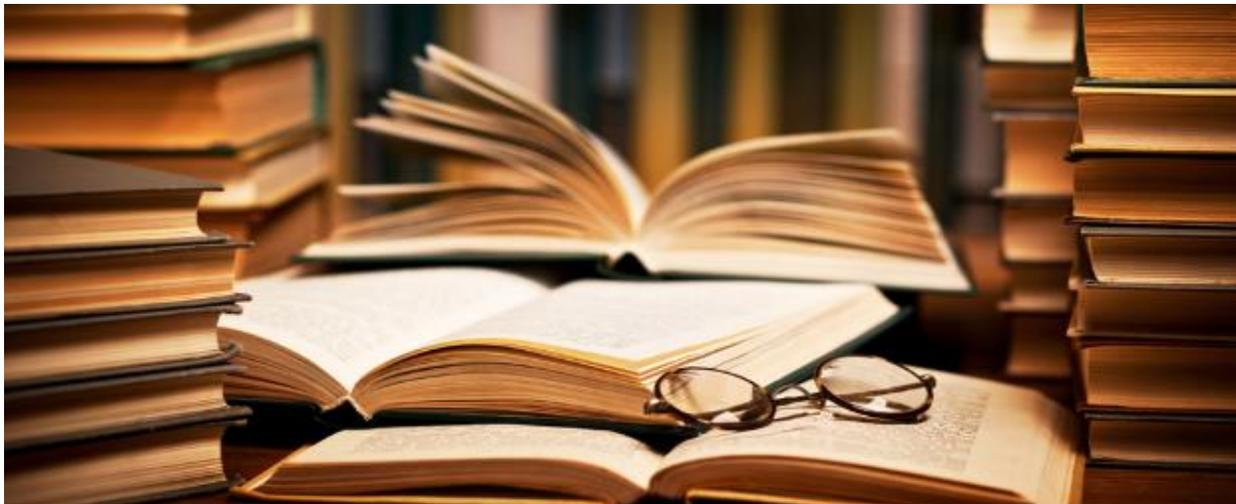
### 10.3 *Executive Director Professional Development*

In 2015-2016, the Executive Director participated in many professional development activities in Classical Education. Following is a complete list where the Executive Director attended or participated in keeping with her professional development plan:

#### Ms. Ford, Executive Director - Professional Development Plan - 2016-2017

A focus of Parnassus Preparatory School is to build an academic culture that is deeply engrained in the traditions of the Classical framework. As the school's leader, the Executive Director will continue her professional development on classical education and education in general. Following is a list of courses, workshops, and other educational activities that the Executive Director will participate in as part of her Professional Development Plan for the 2016-2017 school year.

<b>Professional Development Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
National Charter School Conference	June 2017
School Law Conference	Fall 2016
Circe Institute Classical Education Audio Discussions	2016-2017 school year
Classical Academic Press Classical Education Articles, Blog Posts, and Videos	2016-2017 school year
Memoria Press Articles, Blog Posts, and Classical Education Videos	2016-2017 school year
Training and development in effective fundraising	2016-2017 school year
Training and development i on the formation of affiliated building corporations and the process for facility bonding	2016-2017 school year
Visit classical or other schools with a high school or School of Rhetoric program	2016-2017 school year
Continued reading of books related to classical education, vision, and delivery; attend various cultural events related to classical education, vision, and delivery; and attend various art exhibits, literary talks and lectures, in addition to academic webinars.	2016-2017 school year



# 11 Staffing

Parnassus employed 86 full time employees during 2016-17, including 63 licensed teachers, three directors, three principals, and one dean of students. Parnassus also maintained a number of agreements with outside consultants and contractors who helped deliver administrative and operational tasks.

## 11.1 Parnassus Faculty 2016-2017

(\*\* indicates also a part of the 2017-2018 faculty)

File Folder Number	First Name	Last Name	File Folder Number	First Name	Last Name
496145	Annica	Ahlstrom	420845	Carol	Lundberg**
448078	Lianna	Ambriz**	361972	Shannon	McGuire
488756	Daniel	Anderson	433314	Samantha	Medcalf**
448743	Jonathan	Anderson	469568	Scott	Miller
495243	Kathryn	Anstett-Dekker**			
449152	Jennifer	Arzayus**	375586	Sherilyn	Miller**
413590	Michael	Bennett**	484596	Brian	Murphy**
460041	Rachel	Bluemke**	410928	Sonja	Nelson**
492136	Jessica	Brady**	478806	Margaret	Oie**
427048	Kathryn	Byrne**	462677	Kathleen	O'Laughlin**
439696	Rachel	Chavis	316150	Marie	Penn**
461131	Teresa	Cubas**	466589	Julia	Reiersgord**
470471	James	Dechert**	363769	Barbara	Rose**
			435812	Aaron	Shackle
473203	Kirsten	Edstrom**	455396	Angela	Shequin**
461775	Shawn	Ford**	492085	Chelse	Sjodin**
348753	Jodi	Haben**	462592	Maria	Smith**
405431	Jeffrey	Hagen**	288199	Gail	Spartz
			396243	Jessica	Stutzman**
479732	Gregory	Hamiel**	497809	Jenna	Tebben**
393457	Melissa	Hanson**	402363	Adam	Teeter**
473705	Annmarie	Hasner**	448353	Nelvin	Thomas**
463338	David	Hauge**	488496	Zachary	Thompson**
487416	Alex	Hays**	495887	Anna	Torres Mallma**
445633	Nicholle	Howard**	479407	Kathleen	Towell**
468770	Jill	Igoe**	489159	Kirstan	Trauba**
412556	Lynn	Jerman**	465733	Annette	Vemuri**
473156	Erin	Jugasek**	489113	Elizabeth	Walsh
478233	Michael	Keil**	349539	Carole	Weiland**
495751	Karen	Kelly**	489072	Jen	Whelan**
472340	Sarah	Klassen**	459664	Tanya	White-Koppenberg**
449297	Nolan	Kohorst	471990	Kari	Yarnall**
427140	Marlyn	Lee**			
477806	Melanie	Loso			

## 12 Finances: Executive Summary

*All financial information is based on **PRELIMINARY**, unaudited numbers and, as such, is subject to change.*

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, Parnassus Preparatory School recorded revenues of \$10.02 million, expenditures of \$9.75 million and an increase in the fund balance of \$270 thousand. A total of 994 students were served, which is an increase of 12.6% from last year's total of 883 students. Parnassus Preparatory School's financial position remains strong.

The 2016-2017 school year included a major project to provide a long-term facility solution for the school. The result was that Parnassus signed a 35-year lease with its landlord, CS Properties Parnassus, LLC for a 147,000-square-foot facility located on 12 acres in Maple Grove, Minnesota. The project was financed through the issuance of \$27.4 million of bonds by the city of Ham Lake, Minnesota as the issuance partner. While the project is on going, the school received occupancy in time to start the 2017-2018 school year. When fully completed, the cost of the project will be less than \$200/square foot, a number that compares very favorably to construction costs for other area public school facilities.

The project is expected to be complete in the fall of 2018. School leadership continues to be vigilante to ensure that the project stays on time and on budget. The completion of this long-term facility will allow Parnassus to more fully deliver on its mission to *provide students with a K-12 classical education grounded in the classical Trivium that demands their best in intellectual achievement and character development.*

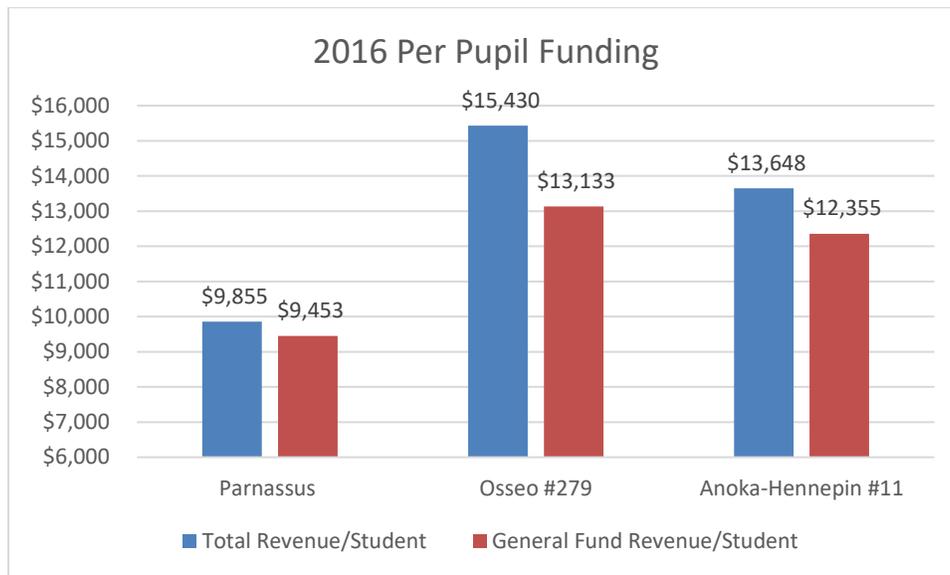
### 12.1 Analysis of Revenues and Expenditures

The following table shows revenues and expenditures over the last two years. Like all public schools, Parnassus uses government fund accounting. For Parnassus, the funds used are the general Fund (revenues and expenses related to instruction and running the school), the Food Service Fund (revenues and costs for lunch, breakfast, and snacks) and the Community Fund (community service activities and programs).

	2017				2016			
	Total	General	Food Service	Community	Total	General	Food Service	Community
Revenue	\$10,020,502	\$9,635,808	\$234,181	\$150,513	\$8,652,701	\$8,294,944	\$171,144	\$186,613
Expenditures	\$9,750,017	\$9,304,018	\$250,758	\$195,242	\$8,337,027	\$7,919,377	\$192,973	\$224,677
Transfers	\$0	(\$16,577)	\$16,577	\$0	\$0	(\$21,829)	\$21,829	\$0
Fund Balance	\$270,484	\$315,213	\$0	(\$44,729)	\$315,674	\$353,738	\$0	(\$38,064)

### 12.2 Revenue Analysis

Total revenue in financial year 2017 was \$10.02mm, up 16% from 2016. Parnassus's per student funding in 2017 rose 2.9% to \$10,028/student reflecting an increase in state funding of 2% as well as relative stronger enrollment growth in the School of Rhetoric. As the Schools of Logic and Rhetoric mature, per student revenue is expected to grow to slightly exceed state funding growth over the next few years (based on current funding formulas). The table below reflects the most recently available data and provides context regarding per-student revenue.



[Note: All data for per-student comparisons were gathered from the Consolidated Financial Statements found on the Minnesota Department of Education website at: [w20.education.state.mn.us/MDEAnalytics/Data.jsp](http://w20.education.state.mn.us/MDEAnalytics/Data.jsp)]

The demographic and economic make-up of the student population of any school also has an impact on per student funding. In 2017, Parnassus served a Free and Reduce population just over 26% of students with approximately 6% Special Education students and 6% English Language Learners (ELL). Parnassus’s enrollment reflects its commitment to serve all students in its demographic area.

Revenues for the year came in slightly above the budget for the year (+1.7%) driven by enrollment, 10 students above the budget, yet somewhat offset by lower fundraising totals than in previous years. Fundraising remains an opportunity for Parnassus and a focus of the Board.

### 12.3 *Expenditure Analysis*

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, total expenditures were \$9.75mm, up 17% from 2016. Like last year, per-student expenditures grew slightly faster than per-student revenue (expenditures of \$9,809/student +3.9%). Expense growth was driven by two primary factors, the school’s increasing investment in its staff and investment in its facilities as part of the construction project. Based on preliminary data, 2017 expenditures on Salary and Benefits were up about 20% over 2016 (+7% on a per student basis). Expenditures in 2017 included \$90 thousand for building improvements that are the responsibility of the tenant.

Excluding project-related costs, expenses were in line with the budgeted amount. Budgeted overages in Contract Services (substitute teaching and janitorial services) were offset by favorable experience in utilities and a few other categories. The school improved the control of expenses in Food Service from previous years. The Food Service deficit in 2017 was \$17 thousand, smaller than previous years and the budgeted loss (\$22k). The school continues to deliver quality food service options for our students at levels not fully covered by Free and Reduced lunch funding. Consequently, it is expected that slight losses in food service will continue. The Community Fund experienced a loss this year as well. This was driven by a shift from the Animus and Accendo after-school program to more extracurricular activities that do not generate fees to the school.

The monitoring of expenses as they relate to the construction project is ongoing—specifically the purchase of school related furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE). Expensing some of these items to 2017 and still meeting the budget fund balance target, provides the school with financial flexibility going into 2018. Overall, the school has demonstrated the ability to remain flexible and manage its finances to drive a healthy fund balance.

### **12.1 Fund Balance Analysis**

Parnassus’s preliminary fund balance grew to almost \$2.55mm in 2017. The school remains at its stated goal of maintaining a fund balance of at least 25% of annual expenditures. This has occurred while the school has undertaken a major construction project and continued to invest in its staff. As the school completes its furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE) expenditures in 2018, it expects a positive, but smaller, fund balance than in previous years. The school maintains its budgeting philosophy of managing its finances to deliver a fund balance that meets its goal. As in past years, the school’s conservative fiscal management has allowed for additional investments in Parnassus Preparatory School’s full program while also delivering a solid bottom line on the school’s financials.

## **13 Academic Performance**

In 2016 – 2017, Parnassus administered the required state accountability assessments as well as a nationally- normed standardized test to its students. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-III) were administered in reading and math for levels 3G - SOR while 1L, 4L, and certain SOR scholars also took the Science MCA-III test. Students in the School of Grammar in 1G – 4G once again took the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests in math and reading, which Parnassus has been administering since 2013.



## MCA Overall Results

The following table includes MCA Math and Reading results for continuously enrolled<sup>1</sup> Parnassus students with comparisons to students in the Osseo Public Schools (ISD 279) and compared to students in the state as a whole.

### SPRING 2017 MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS OVERALL RESULTS FOR CONTINUOUSLY ENROLLED STUDENTS\*

*\* "Continuously enrolled" means that students enrolled no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> of 2015*

<b>MCA-III Math Proficiency by Grade Level (%)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Parnassus (Enrolled 3+ Years)</b>	<b>Parnassus (All Students)</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>ISD 279</b>
<b>All Grades</b>	75.0	67.1	59.9	55.1
<b>3G</b>	77.5	75.8	69.1	65.9
<b>4G</b>	83.9	72.0	67.8	63.7
<b>1L</b>	75.5	61.9	58.2	53.7
<b>2L</b>	64.1	61.3	56.4	51.8
<b>3L</b>	78.3	60.0	56.2	50.5
<b>4L</b>	86.1	68.1	59.4	53.9
<b>3R</b>	*	*	50.2	44.6

<b>MCA-III Reading Proficiency by Grade Level (%)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Parnassus (Enrolled 3+ Years)</b>	<b>Parnassus (All Students)</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>ISD 279</b>
<b>All Grades</b>	75.0	65.5	61.1	57.1
<b>3G</b>	64.8	58.9	57.4	54.2
<b>4G</b>	85.7	69.7	57.7	55.8
<b>1L</b>	75.9	67.5	68.3	64.2
<b>2L</b>	66.7	61.3	64.3	57.2
<b>3L</b>	80.4	72.3	58.4	53.4
<b>4L</b>	64.9	59.4	59.7	54.4
<b>2R</b>	82.2	80.0	61.9	60.3

<b>MCA-III Science Proficiency by Grade Level (%)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Parnassus (Enrolled 3+ Years)</b>	<b>Parnassus (All Students)</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>ISD 279</b>
<b>All Grades</b>	72.1	54.7	54.2	46.2
<b>1L</b>	69.9	61.0	62.5	50.4
<b>4L</b>	69.8	54.7	47.2	29.6
<b>SOR</b>	71.0	56.7	56.3	56.3

## **Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP Test Overall Results**

In the spring of 2017, scholars in 1G – 4L took the NWEA MAP tests. MAP, or the Measures of Academic Progress, is a computerized adaptive test which helps teachers, parents, and administrators improve learning for all students and make informed decisions to promote a child's academic growth. MAP tests are given nationwide and allow Parnassus to measure our scholars' achievement against that of students around the country. When taking the MAP test, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all the previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. Student MAP testing results are reported in RIT scores (Rasch Unit). The RIT score is an equal-interval scale that is an estimation of a student's instructional level and also measures student progress or growth in school.

<b>NWEA MAP Math Proficiency (Given in %)</b>			<b>NWEA MAP Reading Proficiency (Given in %)</b>		
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>All Students</b>	<b>Enrolled 3+ Years</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>All Students</b>	<b>Enrolled 3+ Years</b>
<b>1G</b>	77	-	<b>1G</b>	76	-
<b>2G</b>	68	79	<b>2G</b>	69	74
<b>3G</b>	71	81	<b>3G</b>	63	71
<b>4G</b>	73	82	<b>4G</b>	78	85
<b>1L</b>	81	88	<b>1L</b>	75	82
<b>2L</b>	74	79	<b>2L</b>	71	77
<b>3L</b>	68	79	<b>3L</b>	72	81
<b>4L</b>	75	89	<b>4L</b>	67	86

## **14 Operational Performance**

A classical education is a balanced education that attends to advancing the intellect while instructing the moral character of every student. At Parnassus, the classical education program delivers the best content of the Western canon through pedagogy that acknowledges current understanding of child development and learning. As the students progress through the school's program students become prepared to think for themselves. They have at their command a large body of factual and foundational knowledge, a logical frame of mind that allows them to organize and analyze information before them, and the ability to put forward reasoned and persuasive arguments in what they say and write. Undergirding their learning is a keen attention to ethics and the habitual practice of applying wisdom and virtue as a way of life.

Parnassus curriculum highlights include:

- The chronological study of history that incorporates the use of original texts and sources
- Geography as its own discipline
- A rigorous, comprehensive, honors and advanced course levels of study in the sciences
- Saxon Math and college level math
- Direct Instruction reading (SOG)
- Classic literature – all grade levels
- Formal penmanship and writing instruction
- Formal Logic instruction beginning in 1L

- Daily Spanish instruction beginning in Prima
- Daily Latin instruction beginning in Prima
- Greek instruction
- Taekwondo and physical education for fitness and character education
- Philosophy and ethics
- Music, art history, and art education

Parnassus is very fortunate to have a school leader with a strong background in classical education and leading a classical school. The Executive Director of Parnassus is passionate about the liberal arts classical education and is committed to advancing the school's critical mission on behalf of all students. Parnassus sets a standard for excellence and asks its students to meet and surpass that standard often working beyond their potential.

As a classical school, Parnassus also seeks to nurture a sense of intellectual wonder and a need to search, find, and explore Beauty, Goodness, and Truth in its students. Parnassus' academic philosophy comes alive as talented faculty members guide students through the classical Trivium program on a journey of engagement with Language Arts, Math, Logic, Sciences, Latin, Spanish, Greek, History, Geography, Music, Art, Philosophy, and more. The school invites its emerging scholars to take on the adventure of a lifetime—to climb that metaphorical Mount Parnassus towards wisdom and virtue. Scaling this mountain will demand a high level of preparation, knowledge, care, and commitment, and the faculty and staff are devoted to leading its students to the summit. The small steps and giant leaps they take on this journey will benefit them now and will also prepare them for the challenges and triumphs in their future.

#### 14.1 *Parnassus Continues to Grow its School of Rhetoric*

Parnassus continues to focus on building the classical Trivium, with the School of Rhetoric as the last stage before the scholars move on to college. The School of Rhetoric curriculum provides a content rich and rigorous classical liberal arts and sciences framework preparing the scholars for college and beyond. In the academic year of 2016-2017, Parnassus added the 3R level the ante year to their last in the School of Rhetoric.



Scholars in the School of Rhetoric have the opportunity to pursue Parnassus rigorous courses or more challenging work with Honors designation courses (H), Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and University of Minnesota courses Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO). These advanced classes offer students the opportunity to receive college and high-school credits. As the scholars progress through the School of Rhetoric, they will have the opportunity to take courses in advanced sciences, philosophy, ethics, political philosophy, biotechnology and much more. In addition, all Fourth Level Rhetoric scholars will be required to research, write, present, and publicly defend a thesis. At Parnassus, the Thesis Program is a culmination of the Classical Trivium education combining all skills learned throughout the scholars' classical career and sending them off to the world extremely well prepared to handle the next phase of their lives in college, career, or whatever path they decide to take.

### **14.2 Overall Highlights**

- Over the course of the school year, areas of focus included: building our school's classical culture, fostering academic achievement, and maintaining strong financial health.
- The school continued to provide a healthy lunch program with balanced meals in an environmentally way by using biodegradable products.
- Bussing was offered to all students within District 279 borders and was relatively near to their students' homes.
- Increased efforts to recruit students from all backgrounds included, but were not limited to, a direct mail campaign targeting low income families, a billboard with millions of views weekly, and advertisements in local city magazines.
- Staff qualification and licensure were compliant with state requirements.
- State reporting was completed accurately and in a timely manner.
- Animus and Accendo, Parnassus' academic before and after program, continues to expand fostering study habit skills, responsibility, and seriousness about academic work.
- School of Rhetoric scholars had a formal etiquette workshop, which included social skills, culminating on a Spring Cotillion formal dinner and dance.
- Scholars in 4L demonstrated their speaking skills in the fourth annual Oratorical Contest

### **14.3 Building our School's Classical Culture**

The search for truth, goodness and beauty through a classical, liberal arts program is what defines a Parnassus scholar. Within the structure of the classical Trivium, Parnassus scholars are educated by varying methods of instructional delivery based on the level of the school. In order to properly prepare teachers in the school's academic model, Parnassus continues to make teacher and staff training a priority. A critical part of the school's culture lies in teachers' understanding of all three schools in the Trivium and the teaching methods of each school.

During the summer of 2016, Parnassus teachers participated in two weeks of intensive training to prepare them to teach the school's curriculum and virtues in the tradition of the Western Canon. Training areas included:

- The foundation of classical education
- Classical education and program at Parnassus
- Direct Instruction
- Socratic questioning
- Book discussions on classical education and a novel from the curriculum

- Student writing in all levels
- Special education and Response to Intervention
- Preparing for the 4<sup>th</sup> Level Rhetoric thesis
- Bullying prevention
- Health and safety
- The Harkness model for discussion-led instruction
- Parnassus classical culture

Co-curricular activities as well as other extensions to student learning such as the before and after-school Animus and Accendo programs and the Summer Institute, also played crucial roles in building the culture and traditions of Parnassus Preparatory School. Please see the Parnassus Points of Pride listed below for additional information.

## 15 Parnassus Points of Pride – Building the School’s Culture

### 15.1 *Classical Academics and School Events*

- All of our Prima students learned to read!
- Our School of Logic and School of Rhetoric students read Shakespeare plays this school year including: *Hamlet*; *The Merchant of Venice*; *Julius Caesar*; *The Tempest*; *Twelfth Night*, *MacBeth*, *King Lear*, *The Tragedy of Richard III* and *Henry IV Part 1 and Part 2*
- Parnassus 4L scholars demonstrated their speaking, delivery, and memorization skills in the fourth annual Oratorical Contest.
- School of Rhetoric students had their first annual Oratorical Contest. Their ability to deliver speeches and poems so passionately and from memory continues to amaze us!
- Students in our Schools of Logic and School of Rhetoric competed in the Minnesota Science Bowl this year. One of our SOL teams won, for the second year in a row, the Civility Award!
- Students performed a Spring Drama –Charlotte’s Web – continuing with Parnassus tradition of speaking, memorization, and performing skills in drama with 30 students performing in the play.
- SOL-SOR students performed a Shakespeare play, *Much Ado about Nothing* for the first time!
- The school added Latin for scholars in Prima through 2G.
- SOG-SOL enjoyed academic learning in exciting field trips to such places as the Minnesota Zoo, Fort Snelling, the Science Museum, and had a chance to see Anne Frank at Park Square Theater, and *King Lear* at the Guthrie Theater after reading and discussing the books.
- Prima through School of Rhetoric students are becoming increasingly proficient in their aural comprehension of Spanish and their oral communication skills.



- Not only did our students in Prima through School of Rhetoric students make great strides in their learning of Latin vocabulary and grammar, but they also strengthened their levels of concentration, analysis, and puzzle-solving skills through their studies in Latin.
- Our School of Logic students took their fourth National Latin Competition and received many awards and merit certificates! Over 90 School of Logic and Rhetoric scholars received recognition on the National Latin and Greek Exams!
- We held our Third Annual School of Logic Science Fair and were greatly impressed by our students' knowledge of and passion for science.
- We conducted our fifth National Geographic Bee and Scripps Spelling Bee and made it to regionals again this year in both areas!
- We hosted many Fun Nights, each with a different theme, for our School of Logic and School of Rhetoric students.
- Over 75 students participated in our Grandmasters of Chess program and 65 students participated in LEGO Engineering.
- Across the curriculum, our teachers built lessons embedded in the classical framework. In 3L science, for example, before studying modern chemistry, the students reviewed the history of the early theories of matter set forth by the Greeks, followed by the theories of Democritus, and alchemy in the middle ages.
- Our new teachers received extensive training in the classical framework and all teachers received training in specific areas of our curriculum and overall program.
- Parnassus has attracted more families interested in a rigorous, college preparatory, liberal arts, classical education than spaces available and held a lottery for the 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.
- Parnassus offered the "Parnassus Summer Institute" for the fourth year!
- Our Mock Trial program grew to two full teams and competed for the first time this year!
- Scholars' writing and oratorical skills developed and showed large improvements over the course of the year. We appreciate the teachers' diligent work in this area of our classical



program.

- The Prima scholars had a successful Recitation Night and displayed their public speaking and performance skills.
- School of Logic and Rhetoric students showcased their talents during band, orchestra, and chorus concerts.
- Many in the lower levels of the SOG participated in the Poetry Alive performance this year.
- SOL and SOR were visited by the MN Opera Guild and heard some amazing opera performances!
- The first National Honor Society cohort was elected and worked to create a mentor program, assisted in planning different student events, and established rules and procedures for student leadership.
- Parnassus had a billboard again this year exposing the school to millions of views over the course of the month of January
- Boys in SOL and SOR rehearsed together once a week to learn songs specifically composed for the male voice. They performed at each concert.



- The Parnassus Olympians fencing teams, Varsity and JV, took sixth and eighth place in statewide competition.
- The SOL Quiz Bowl team qualified for and competed in the NAQT national tournament in Dallas, Texas after taking second place in the state.
- Parnassus scholars donated just under six tons of food and supplies to CEAP in Brooklyn Park during our annual food drive.
- Parnassus hosted three colloquium speeches on a number of topics given by esteemed professors from St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota, and St. Thomas University.
- Students in the Schools of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric (along with families and friends) demonstrated their commitment to serving others by making and packing over 1300 sandwiches in this year's Community Service Night
- The SOL/SOR Mathcounts team participated in the nationwide Mathcounts Foundation competition.
- SOG/SOL/SOR students participated in Operation Gratitude and donated over 105 pounds of candy to US personnel around the globe.
- 4L and a few 1L-3L students engaged in a memorable Science Fair that demonstrated the passion and knowledge they have for science.
- The SOL/SOR Fencing team started from the ground up and participated in a statewide meet. They even got to meet a medal winner coach for the US Fencing team.
- 4L and 1R students displayed their oratorical prowess in memorizing and presenting their command of public speaking through the Oratorical Contests.
- SOL and SOR students participated in the first annual round of music performances led by Parnassus staff. Students had the opportunity to perform for other scholars as well as family and friends.
- National Honor Society members engaged in tutoring and mentoring younger scholars to assist in homework and how to navigate the school.
- The SOR Math League competed in MSHSL meets, competing and holding their own against other teams in the region.
- The School of Rhetoric held its first oratorical contest with some of the greatest pieces of oratory from history.
- The FIRST Lego League group were busy creating and programming different robots and competed in the Animal Allies tournament.
- 2L scholars joined SOR scholars on a field trip to see the temporary Martin Luther exhibit at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. This was at the same time both groups of scholars were studying this time period in classes.

- The Chess group met weekly to engage in their skills and improve their chess craft. This culminated in the annual Chess Night that brought in waves of supporters to the school.
- The SOL Science Bowl team competed at numerous tournaments and was awarded the Civility Award (for good sportsmanship and decorum).
- 

## 15.2 *Building our School of Rhetoric*

- School of Rhetoric students read many classics including for example *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *The Aeneid*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *The Prince*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *King Lear*, *Richard IV*, *Don Quixote* and more.
- School of Rhetoric scholars continue to practice and refine their oratorical skills in class and in the SOR Oratorical competition
- Parnassus SOR scholars took the National Greek Exam for the second time with great success.
- Parnassus scholar was one of two globally to have a perfect score in the National Greek Exam.
- Parnassus SOR Scholars enjoyed the third annual spring Cotillion.
- School of Rhetoric scholars read *King Lear* and attended the Guthrie Theater production of this Shakespeare play
- SOR students led a science project with SOG scholars.
- SOR students had the opportunity to receive college credits in Greek, AP Human Geography, AP World History, and AP Computer Science Principles.
- Students read primary sources, discussed them in Harkness style, and continue to develop their own opinions in many disciplines.
- Scholars had the opportunity to challenge themselves with Honors level courses in many subjects including sciences, literature, and history courses.
- All SOR level students had the opportunity to participate in college advising seminars as well as individual guidance with our college counselors.
- Some colleges visited Parnassus and met with the students.
- Scholars assisted students in the School of Grammar and School of Logic with their homework.
- Students enhanced their writing ability based on the classical writing method as well as literary responses and expository writing in preparation for their thesis writing.
- 3R scholars visited the Wilson Library at the University of Minnesota and learned about research methods and resources available to them for their 4R thesis.
- Students learned and continue to enhance their ability to write scientific lab reports meeting college level expectations



- In math, advanced and grade level students are on track to be able to take Calculus.
- For the first year ever Parnassus has also awarded its first academic and athletic letters to scholars who have demonstrated tenacity and leadership at a number of co-curricular activities as well as academic disciplines.

The National Honors Society team accomplished many commendable projects including cleaning up a community park.



### 15.3 *Financials*

- Parnassus had a clean audit with no findings.
- The school received Minnesota Department of Education's Finance Award. The Finance Award recognizes schools that met statutory deadlines for submission of audited fiscal financial data and reporting criteria.
- The Parnassus Board and Administration continued to be good, prudent stewards of the school's finances. Parnassus's charter requires the school to have a fund balance of 25 percent by the year 2020 – a goal the school met in Financial Year 2017.

## 15.4 *Volunteering and Community Events and Activities*

- Parent volunteers volunteered over 4,100 hours of their time in support of Parnassus, including assisting with our move in May, helping us prepare for the new facility, and assisting with the day-to-day operations of the school
- Parnassus held its first Colloquia series where faculty from area colleges and universities visited the school to present on their areas of research.
- The school community collected just under six tons (nearly 12,000 pounds!) of food and household goods as part of the annual community service project to benefit CEAP in Brooklyn Park. A family community night was held to sort and box the items. Volunteers loaded their cars and vans to help us deliver the donations.
- Teachers greatly appreciated the help parents provided by helping prepare materials, making copies, organizing materials for special projects, etc.
- Many parents graciously volunteered to chaperone school fieldtrips.
- In October, the school held its second annual Autumn Festival with hundreds of families coming out to celebrate the year together.
- Many dedicated volunteers spent hours preparing for and engaging with the School of Grammar students for Art Adventure. It marked the school's sixth year of participating in the program.
- Many of our students and families formed new friendships and strengthened existing ones at the school's many community events.
- Parnassus has many unsung heroes who quietly donate their time without wanting any notice or recognition. Their dedicated work for our school is indeed noticed, appreciated, and valued.



## 15.5 *Fostering Academic Achievement*

The primary goal, mission, and charter of Parnassus is to educate young scholars in a K-12 classical education that is grounded in the classical Trivium. The school continues to build in measures to assess student progress as part of their regular instruction. Each quarter, Prima through SOR teachers assessed their students' progress in reading and math against the Minnesota Standards. In the spring, Parnassus administered the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading and math to scholars in 3G – 4L and 3R, and in science for students in the 1L, 4L, and 2R levels. While the MCAs are not comprehensive tests that indicate how students are doing in the classical framework, they provide information for measuring the proficiency of Parnassus' students compared to their peers in other public schools throughout the state. The results of the spring 2016 MCAs showed that in general, a higher percentage of Parnassus students were proficient in both reading and math than students in our resident school district and across the state.

Parnassus continues to work towards the goal of all students achieving mastery not only in reading and math but in all subjects in the school's curriculum. It is the school's mission to design a rich, compelling academic day for young thinkers, and in order for them to excel our students must have their progress measured against Parnassus' high standards for academic achievement and moral development and in content areas untouched by standardized tests.

Returning students continued to make strong progress in 2016 – 2017 as did our new students who spent the year acclimating to a new educational model. Some of the initiatives from this school year included the following:

- orientation meetings for parents and students in key ‘transition’ grades such as 4G and 4L covering the classical model pedagogies shifts the students would experience focusing on areas that might be the most challenging for new students including logic, foreign and classical languages, advanced courses, and college readiness;
- recruiting more teachers to work in the Animus and Accendo after-school programs to assist with after school tutoring;
- offering all students in 3G – 4L access to Study Island to practice math and reading skills, and designating class periods each week for scholars to use the computer lab or mobile iPad labs;
- continuing to offer skill grouping for students in reading in grades Prima-3G and in math for grades Prima-3R to assist with meeting students’ academic needs;
- partnering with the Minneapolis Institute of Arts to bring the Art Adventure program to Parnassus to enhance the school’s art history and art production program;
- continuing to work with World Taekwondo Academy to groom students into strong confident, respectful, and disciplined citizens and future leaders;
- offering band, voice, and strings ensemble lessons to School of Logic and Rhetoric students.





For example, students in 1G are introduced to the story of the ancient world from 5,000 B.C. to 400 A.D. In literature, 1G scholars read biographies and stories covering the same time period and read, as examples, *The Adventures of Odysseus & The Tale of Troy: Homer's Great Epics, Rewritten for Children*. In science, 1G study animals, human beings, and plants (life science) corresponding to the history period. In 1L, students study the ancients again with a wider period of study, 10,000 B.C. – 400 A.D, and this time in history they study the elements of civilization and learn about the mythology, ideas, architecture, culture, agriculture, political systems, and important advancements of each civilization. In literature, 1L read “*Homer, Greek Mythology and Tragedy, Poetry and Short Stories,*” corresponding to the history time period and going deeper than first graders stories for children. In science, 1L students study the same subjects as 1G scholars do, animals, plants, and the human body, but going deeper and studying the classification of organisms, vertebrate and invertebrate anatomy, evolution and change through time, human biology, plants, cells, and ecosystems.

### **15.10 *Requires the Study of Latin, Greek, and Spanish***

Parnassus’ language program is innovative as the school was the first, public or private, in the Northwest Metro area to require the study of both Latin and Greek languages. Latin forms the root of 90% of polysyllabic English words and over 60% of all English words; and 8% of all English words are Greek-based. A student’s reading comprehension, as well as writing and speaking skills, is substantially improved by studying Latin and Greek. The vocabulary is enriched, grammar is sharpened, and a sense of organization, structure, and logic is instilled in the student. In addition, Latin contributes to about 80% of the vocabulary of the Romance languages: French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish. Moreover, studies have shown that students of Latin have higher SAT scores than students of any other language. (*National Committee for Latin and Greek*). In additional to the study of Latin and Greek, we also believe it is important for well-rounded scholars to study a spoken language. As such, we begin teaching Spanish at the Prima level and continue it through the School of Rhetoric. Not only is Spanish considered to be one of the most functional spoken languages in our society, but it is also a direct descendent of Latin which makes it a perfect complement for our Parnassus scholars’ language studies.

### **15.11 *Innovative Teaching Method***

The Trivium stages of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric require different and innovative teaching methods depending on the stage and maturity level of the students. For example, in the Grammar stage, levels Prima through 4G, instructors focus on providing students with content using direct instruction, memorization techniques such as singing and chanting, group memorization, dictation, and recitation. In the Logic stage, levels 1L-4L, students start asking “Why?” to ensure what they have learned in the Grammar stage is in fact true. Teaching techniques include asking leading questions to stimulate students’ critical thinking and arrive at valid conclusions. In the Rhetoric stage, 1R-4R grades, teaching techniques include guided reading and discussions, debates, Socratic discussion method and Harkness Table format.

### **15.12 *Harkness Table & Socratic Discussions***

Parnassus is the first charter school and one of the few schools public or private to practice the “Harkness Method,” also known as the Harkness Table discussions in the classroom. The Harkness method incorporates teaching in seminar style for the advancement of learning in the School of Rhetoric. An authentic Harkness Table is a large, oval table used in a style of teaching where students sit at the table with a teacher. However, the Harkness table is much more than a place to sit. Teachers

participate and guide students in the discussions encouraging students to take ownership of their learning. The method is in use at many American elite private and boarding schools as well as colleges and universities and it encourages classes to be held in a discursive manner. This collaborative discussion method traces back to Socrates, approximately 2,400 years ago. The Harkness teaching method style is related to the Socratic Method and Socratic Circles, an already familiar method to our scholars entering the School of Rhetoric.

## 16 Future Plans

As a young school, Parnassus Preparatory School continues to build and develop its own unique academic culture. One of its ultimate goals is to develop top Parnassus graduates. Parnassus graduates will present and defend a thesis project at the Fourth Level of Rhetoric (4R) in the 2017-2018 school year with its first graduating class. Each year at every level, the school grooms its scholars to academically push themselves to do their best. In so doing, Parnassus scholars develop a strong work ethic and drive that will serve them well throughout their academic careers and lives. A classical scholar must put forth effort and be disciplined; however, it is equally important to enjoy the journey and to experience all of the joy and fun that learning offers. Our students will be challenged with a great deal of new and interesting content this year in their various classes. We want them to know the satisfying feeling of a job well done at the end of the school year; however, knowledge also breeds appreciation, so we hope also that our students will experience the pleasure of developing new appreciations during the course of their classical studies.

The 2017-2018 school year marks Parnassus's seventh year of operation with over 1,000 students in levels Prima through the Fourth Level of Rhetoric (K-12). The school will graduate its inaugural class in June of 2018. This marks Parnassus Preparatory School's first commencement and the beginning of what we hope will be a long tradition.

The school looks forward to full completion of the campus construction project in the fall of 2018. The project consisted of the renovation of the facility, along with a 32,290 sq. ft. addition to house the Lyceum performance hall, locker rooms, and full gymnasium that the school calls the Gymnasium. The construction of the full 147,000 sq. ft. facility provides the school with 60 classrooms, 5 music rooms, 3 art rooms, and 2 science labs. The facility was designed around an exterior Quad that is divided into areas for recess with equipment as well as areas for a track and ball courts. One of the highlights is a green space area with a scholars' walk down the center of it that leads to the School of Rhetoric Athenaeum. The purpose of this design is to provide both indoor and outdoor space for our School of Rhetoric scholars to study and contemplate. In keeping with the school's classical mission, the Quad also houses a Romanesque amphitheatre for recitations, plays, performances, and ceremonies. When fully complete, Parnassus Preparatory School will be a beautiful campus, but most importantly, the enhanced campus assists the school in delivering its classical liberal arts program.

The cornerstone of a classical education is *Truth, Goodness, and Beauty*. In the 2017-2018 school year, our students will each continue their individual journeys toward learning *Truth*, discovering the importance of *Goodness*, and finding *Beauty*.



## 17 Dissemination & Marketing Information

Minn. Stat. 124E.17 requires charter schools to “disseminate information about how to use the offerings of a charter school. Targeted groups include low-income families and communities, students of color, and students who are at risk of academic failure.”

Parnassus conducts annual and ongoing marketing strategies to attract and keep students from diverse backgrounds and social economic status. Our demographics included in this annual report is a testament of the success of our efforts and of our classical program. Below are some strategies used at Parnassus to achieve this goal:

- a) Manner and information disseminated during the school year:
  - Parnassus uses its website to promote the school’s offerings to all
  - Parnassus conducts informational meetings to groups and private meetings to families throughout the year to promote the offerings of the school to all
  - In 2016-2017, Parnassus had its second billboard promoting the school to millions of viewers weekly
  - Parnassus includes ongoing advertisements in local city magazines and directories in the school’s targeted areas. City Magazines and City Directories are free to the public and distributed in various locations throughout the community
  - Parnassus places ads in local newspapers in its target markets
  - Parnassus conducts an annual direct mailing campaign
  - Parnassus empowers parents to promote the school with new prospective families and to engage with existing families
- b) Manner and information disseminated during the school year specifically to low-income, students of color, at-risk students
  - Parnassus sends an electronic and a paper copy of its newsletters to all families bi-monthly including information about the school’s offerings, enrollment, parent-teacher conferences, and any other updates
  - Parnassus utilizes translators for meetings with parents where English language may be a barrier for communicating
  - Parnassus uses the school phone alert system (including email and text messages) or the school academic system to continuously communicate with families regarding key academic areas such as parent-teacher conference, student missing assignments, expected homework, and tests and projects due dates

- Parnassus sends written letters to targeted families as a non-electronic means of communication.
  - Teachers call parents of targeted student groups when grades are below Parnassus' expectations
  - Teachers reach out to students during lunch, recess, resource period and after school providing at-risk students with support and tutoring
  - The school generates missing assignments reports and implements specific strategies to reach at-risk students and their families
- c) Activities Parnassus engages in to ensure participation of all and not segregation
- Socioeconomic
    - i. Uniform – Parnassus offers uniform vouchers to low income families to pay for the school uniform logos
    - ii. Academic Events – low income students are offered free access to co-curricular activities such as intramural clubs, academic clubs, drama club and others
    - iii. Field Trips – the school offers free access to low income students to participate in any school sponsored events
    - iv. School Events – Parnassus assists low income families by offering free access to school's events such as the school community event
    - v. School Socials –low income students are offered free access to the school's students socials and fun nights/activities
    - vi. Summer Institute – Parnassus assists low income families by offering free academic classes for the school's provided Summer Institute classes
  - Demographic, Ethnic, Racial:
    - i. All school sponsored events and activities are promoted to all students and all have access
    - ii. The school promotes the participation of a diverse group of students and leaders in key areas of the school including Student Senate and advisory groups
    - iii. Parnassus adjusts where appropriate to ensure inclusion for all –e.g. uniforms adjustments including religious, ethnic, and racial considerations
    - iv. World languages are celebrated at Parnassus. Students in all grades have daily Spanish and Latin instructions which begins in Prima (kindergarten) and Greek instruction in the School of Rhetoric.
- d) The results of all these activities are included in the Parnassus Annual Report specifically under the school's enrollment.



