



Renuntio

No nobler training exists but that which cherishes the good, the beautiful, and the true, thus producing disciples of knowledge and lovers of wisdom.

December, 2018

Volume 8 Issue 4

HOMework AT XAVIER CHARTER SCHOOL

I want to take a few minutes to address the issue of homework at Xavier Charter School. From time to time I have students and parents come to me to address the issue of students having too much homework. This is a multi-faceted topic that requires some thought and explanation.

I will begin by saying that I think students can have too much homework. Every one of us does or should have a life outside of the daily commitments of our jobs or, and in this case, school. Family meals, extra-curricular activities, vacations, and leisure are all parts of our lives that deserve more than just a nod of consideration. Americans are often characterized as living to work rather than working to live. We have very little interest in padding resumes, creating busywork, and wasting precious time. The sort of stress induced existence created by a life where work or school consume most of your waking hours is not the aim of our school nor should it be. All that being said, we will always be willing to evaluate the amount and quality of work we send home with children and change course should we veer from the goals and purposes we have created as an institution. That is our promise to our community.

We must also mention, first and foremost, that Xavier is a Classical Liberal Arts School and with that comes a devotion to intellectual study and Socratic Discussion. Our Rhetoric School students are reading and studying the likes of Shakespeare, Euclid, Melville, and Vol-

taire et cetera. This simply takes time and patience. There is no shortcut. We simply do not have the time, especially on the secondary level, to spend a good portion of our classes reading the works we discuss. Class time is devoted to Socratic Discussion and practicing necessary skillsets in the various disciplines. That is our model and for that we will not apologize. This can, at times, be overwhelming to students. The reading is difficult. The language can be obscure. The math practice is just that. Practice. And with practice comes failure and hopefully a willingness to try again which again takes time. Sometimes the work can seem boring and to be frank reading and intellectual pursuit are not nearly as exciting as a movie or a video game, especially to the novice. But, that doesn't make the work not worth doing. Aldous Huxley, the renowned author of the dystopian fiction *Brave New World* once said, "The most valuable of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it has to be done, whether you like it or not." Intellectual pursuit is very similar to preparing for battle and preparing for battle can be, but usually is not, fun. We all know however that if a soldier goes to battle without being conditioned, without firing his or her weapon, or without learning to use the equipment necessary to survive, the consequences can be fatal. Homework, if it is being done well, is the preparation for the intellectual battles of our present and our future and I would argue that the stakes are just as high. (cont. pg. 2)

THE XAVIER PROMISE

Xavier Classical Charter Schools are dedicated to providing a classical, academically rigorous, content-rich, liberal arts education, preparing students to excel in every duty and guiding them toward wisdom and virtue.

DECEMBER EVENTS

- 12/4— Xavier Holiday Concert 5:30 p.m. (Gr. 7/8)
- 12/4— Xavier Holiday Concert 7:00 p.m. (Gr. 9-12)
- 12/5— Junior Class Meeting—SAT Instructions (Lunch hour)
- 12/7— Xavier Dress Up Day Ugly Christmas Sweater
- 12/8— Mingle Jingle Craft Show 10:00-4:00 p.m.
- 12/13— Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
- 12/14— Sadie Hawkins Dance (7-12) 7:00-10:00 p.m.
- 12/17— Mustard Seed Pickup
- 12/17— Winter Showcase (Gr. 5/6) 5:30 p.m.
- 12/18— Roman Festival (Gr. 3) 5:30 p.m.
- 12/19— Winter Showcase (Gr. K-2)
- 12/20— Medieval Tournaments (Gr. 4) 5:30 p.m.
- 12/24-1/4— CHRISTMAS/WINTER BREAK NO SCHOOL (K-12)**

HAVE A BLESSED HOLIDAY SEASON WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS!

Homework cont.

A nation that has lost the ability to read and think critically, that has lost the capacity to be wise enough to be self-critical, that has lost the ability to imagine what could be, is a nation teetering on a dangerous precipice. If your children heavily invest themselves in Xavier Charter School and walk away without the ability to read and think well, without the ability to differentiate truth from falsehood, and without the ability to put science and math to work in the real world then we have failed to do our jobs. We have made a commitment to do otherwise and we seek students who will do the same. We seek to create students who are successful and develop the ability to be responsible, self-regulating, and to make the hard choice to be fulfilled as developed human beings before being entertained. We are in the business of creating students who are adults. Students who no longer need us. We are in the business of working ourselves out of a job with each of your children. That being said, this takes a certain deliberate willingness on the part of the student and their family to achieve the success we collectively desire.

If your children are going to be successful in this environment this does require a certain commitment on their part. They must choose, at times, between school and an extra-curricular activity or a job. They must choose, at times, between being entertained by a screen and doing their schoolwork. They must choose, at times, between doing the hard work that is intellectual achievement and creative productivity and the latter option of being an entertained consumer. And again, there is no shortcut. But, if, they are willing to take the hard road, to push themselves, to pursue knowledge and wisdom, and finally virtue, your children will be more free. They will be free to design their lives and lead others to success along the way. They will be free to challenge systems that cage that success. They will be free to be participants in their own destiny, to mold circumstances around the ideals of the common good when it is possible and to adapt themselves to situations when they are unmovable. They will be free, finally, to lead lives of purpose. If that isn't worth pursuing, I don't know what is.

Brian Loosli
History Teacher

PILLAR OF THE MONTH

INTEGRITY— We are individuals of strong ethical values, who make consistently good choices in keeping with our knowledge of right and wrong. We seek the wisdom of others in cases of moral uncertainty.

Dec. 3 – *“He is not wise who is wise in words only, but he who is wise in deeds.”*

~St. Gregory the Great (b.540-604, Catholic Pope, writer)

Dec. 10 – *“Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.”*

~Mark Twain (b.1835-1910, American author, humorist)

Dec. 17 – *“It takes less time to do a thing right than to explain why you did it wrong.”*

~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (b.1807-1882, American poet, educator)

Dec. 24 – CHRISTMAS/WINTER BREAK

MINGLE AND JINGLE REMINDER!

If you are new to Xavier you may not be aware that we hold a big holiday vendor event called Mingle Jingle each December to raise money for the character scholarships that are awarded to our senior class. Why not invest in Xavier for the holidays!

The event is on December 8th from 10-4pm.

