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MAJORIS

# QUID NOVI

The fifth grade girls break out the parachute in PE!

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

## NEW RESEARCH ON CLASSROOM TECH

by John Heaton, Headmaster

New Covenant administrative staff continuously reviews the place of technology in our pedagogy and curriculum. In recent years we have surveyed our graduates in college who have given very specific feedback on the computer skills they felt they needed to make the transition to the collegiate setting. This resulted in the development of specific objectives that are now embedded across the curriculum in the School of Rhetoric, with more on the way.

Nevertheless, current research continues to support our posture that overuse of computers in the classroom – technology for its own sake

– does not result in better learning, at least as measured by standardized tests. In short, the presence of technology is not an unqualified good.

Writing in June, 2019, for the online journal *The Pacific Standard*<sup>1</sup>, Tom Jacobs has called attention to a major new study from the Reboot Foundation. The study analyzed data from two sources: the 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress, which provided math and reading scores for American fourth and eighth graders; and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) which provided data from 30 nations suggests that, while computers

*continued on p. 4*

## WHAT'S NEW?

Last month Headmaster Heaton sat down with Adam Miller (parent to Penelope, 1st grade) and the crew from Hello Studios to discuss the uniqueness of classical, Christian education. The conversation lasted about an hour and Adam was left with the daunting task of editing a great deal of information down into a minute and a half video. The result is amazing. Hello Studios produced a concise video which showcases many of our students, classrooms, and activities while explaining classical education. The video has been posted to our website homepage as well as to our Facebook page. Watch it when you have time and share it with others. It's New Covenant Schools in a nutshell.

## NEW VIDEO TO SHARE

THINK.

LEARN.

LOVE.

LIVE.

# H O N O R A R I A

## EXPLORING HEALTH SCIENCES

*by Stacey Hester, Guidance Counselor*

One of the many privileges of my job is watching our students grow and discover their God-given abilities and strengths. In our eighth-grade meeting, Brandon Hostetler shared his affinity for challenging algebraic equations. I remember it distinctly. His love of learning was contagious. Now a junior, he still maintains his love of discovery. When asked how he's currently using his abilities, he reflects, "I always try to do my best. I pay attention to teachers and make sure I understand what they are saying...I find myself helping a lot of people with questions especially in math." An accomplished student, musician (four instruments!) and athlete, he recognizes that "God has given [him] many gifts and abilities."

Likewise, junior Konner Johnson continues to apply himself in his classes, long imagining that his future will entail, "...a lot of school. My dream has been to become a doctor or surgeon." Reflecting on the purpose and nature of education, he believes that school is "a lot more than just facts. We learn manners, how to be kind and respectful...these things are preparation for living. And living to glorify God."

Armed with personal experience, classroom application, and gritty commitment, junior Chris Matney dreams of working in the hospital setting where he, too, can personally and positively impact patients as they encounter their most difficult hours of fighting disease.

Naturally, these three young men who have been honing their talents, gifts, and hopes through the years, jumped at the chance to spend a week at Centra Health's Career Camp this past summer. Shadowing alongside professionals, they gained not only practical knowledge in the field of medicine but also insight into how real-life events intersect one's faith and ethics – a common topic in each SoR class.

As faculty, we are proud of these young men and praise God for His handiwork that is so evident in each of them. Our prayer is that they continue to see God's hand as He continues to do His good work.



## THE NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

### DID YOU PAY INCOME TAXES IN THE STATE OF VIRGINIA THIS YEAR?

Sure. You paid taxes. Even if you received a tax refund, you paid income taxes - a refund means you actually overpaid and received the balance back. The average Virginian pays 5.75% of salary in income taxes.

What if you could redirect your tax dollars at no cost and help a qualified student attend New Covenant Schools?

You can. The Commonwealth of Virginia offers tax credits *in addition* to charitable deductions for gifts to the New Covenant Schools Scholarship Foundation. The good news is that you most likely qualify. You don't have to be wealthy to benefit. You only need to be a taxpayer.

If you would like to understand more about how your tax money can provide a classical education to a deserving student, contact **Dayna Renalds** in the Development Office at [drenalds@newcovenantschools.org](mailto:drenalds@newcovenantschools.org) or call her at 434.847.8313. This is a unique tax opportunity the state provides to its taxpayers and students. Your situation may vary, but nearly everyone benefits from this provision in the tax code.



# E T C E T E R A

## EVERYONE

### INDIVIDUAL AND CLASSROOM

**PICTURE PROOFS** are ready and parents should have received an email from TSS Photography. You may need to check your junk folders or resubscribe. If you have any questions please email [bmayberry@newcovenantschools.org](mailto:bmayberry@newcovenantschools.org) or call TSS directly at 434-973-2960. Retakes will be done for those who were absent on October 17th in the morning.

**NEW COVENANT UNDERSTANDS** that good financial stewardship is important to your family and we want to help you in that effort. Join us for breakfast on **Friday, September 27 at 7:30 am** to hear from Headmaster Heaton and Director of Finance Linda Hackenbracht on how to save money by routing it through the Virginia 529 Savings Plan or gifting to the Scholarship Tax Credit Improvement Program. Be watching your e-mail for an invitation through sign up genius. We look forward to sharing with you.

**YEARBOOK INSERTS** are going home today with your student! To add these to your 2018-19 yearbook, simply open to the last page of the Index, lay flat with the sticker up. Peel off the sticker and bind into the book as close to the spine as possible onto the white page.

**LUNCH** ordering for October has been extended through **today only**.

**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS** will be held on October 4th for PreK - grade 8. Plan to arrive around **2:10 pm, Friday, October 4**, and bring your leashed or caged animal to the bell tower - no need to come inside.

Middle School students traveled to Watermarks Camp for their Retreat last week. Here is a peak at the fun they had...



### MENS VARSITY SOCCER

NCS	5	ASCS	2
NCS	1	MillerSchool	0
NCS	1	NorfolkCS	2

### MENS JV SOCCER

NCS	1	LHS	7
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### WOMENS TENNIS

NCS	5	Chatham	4
NCS	5	VES	1

### WOMENS VARSITY VOLLEYBALL

NCS	3	Fuqua	0
NCS	3	NorthCross	0

### WOMENS JV VOLLEYBALL

NCS	2	Fuqua	0
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### JR GRYPHON VOLLEYBALL

NCS	2	LHS	0
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## IT'S TIME TO LOOK!

### OPEN HOUSE

October 8, 2019

9:15 a.m.

PreK - grade 12



can sometimes help children grasp certain concepts, their overuse is highly worrisome.

The research controlled for various factors that could affect student achievement, including household income, teacher training on the use of computers in education, and, for the international students, the size of the nation's economy. The data identified several disturbing trends. Across most countries, a low to moderate use of school technology was generally associated with better performance - relative to students reporting no computer use at all.

## MODERATE COMPUTER USE CORRELATES POSITIVELY

Helen Lee Bouygues, President of the foundation says that "when students report having access to classroom computers and using these devices on an infrequent basis, they show better performance," but when students report using these devices every day, and for several hours during the school day, performance lowers dramatically."

American fourth grade students who reported using laptops or desktop computers in more than half or all of their classes scored 10 points *higher* than students who reported never using those devices in class. Likewise, students in France who reported using the internet at school for a few minutes to a half-hour every day scored 13 points higher on the PISA reading assessment than students who reported spending no time on the internet at school.

## EXTENSIVE OR EXCLUSIVE COMPUTER USE CORRELATES NEGATIVELY

Those students who were online in school for more than 30 minutes per day consistently scored lower than their peers on the same test. Students who reported a high use of school technology trailed *behind* peers who reported moderate use.

Now for the bombshell: The results regarding *tablet use* in fourth grade were particularly worrisome. American fourth grade students who reported using *tablets* in all or almost all classes scored 14 points lower on the reading exam than students who reported never using classroom tablets. *This difference in scores is equivalent to a full grade level, or a year's worth of teaching* (emphasis mine).

The findings of this latest research is consistent with two earlier major studies, *Angrist and Lavy*, 2002 and *Fuchs and Woessmann*, 2004, which relied upon similar data as the Reboot Foundation. I discuss both of these extensively in my 2015 master's thesis, *Education in Context of Student-accessed, Digital and Applied Technology*, which you can find on our website under the tab *Glad You Asked/Technology*.

These results do not prove causation, of course, but they are certainly cautionary. The overuse of computers correlates with diminishing and ultimately counterproductive, results.

New Covenant is committed to appropriate instruction in computer technology and to the appropriate deployment of technology in the classroom. The current data, however, continue to suggest that chasing tech without caution is not a sound educational practice.

<sup>1</sup><https://psmag.com/education/computers-in-the-classroom-may-do-more-harm-than-good>



**Tamara Long, Ph.D.**  
**Guest Lecturer**  
**New Covenant Schools**  
**October 17, 2019**  
**7:00 PM**

*Helping Students Realize their Potential:*  
*Understanding Core Strengths That Influence Student Learning and Development*

## QUID NOVI

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### OUR MISSION

New Covenant Schools is an educational community serving families of Central Virginia, providing an exceptional education in a classical curriculum within the framework of historic Christianity, furnishing the student with the tools of education and the inspiration to be a life-long learner.