



Middle Schoolers bring poetry to life at the Moomaw Center on Friday.



THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

QUID NOVI

OCTOBER 27, 2025
VOL. 28 NO. 10 MAJORIS

FIVE MYTHS ABOUT MODERN EDUCATION

by John Heaton, Headmaster

Over the years I've kept a short list of assertions that often occupy the minds of students and parents alike. The power of these assertions tends to wax and wane from one decade to the next, but in general, each has staying power in our social imagination.

The inclusion of technology is essential. By 2014 the majority of Americans had a smartphone. That was not the beginning, but rather the climax of the push to chase technology in the classroom. This was the same year that Google Classroom hit the market, a development that sought not only to make educators' lives more efficient, but also to control how curriculum is shaped and delivered. I routinely fielded questions from prospective parents who thought our "tech-lite" policy was ill-conceived. Ten years later, I no longer get the question. Parents intuitively know that chasing technology for its own sake is unwise; most do not want their children in front of screens for any significant amount of time; and current neuroscience research is backing this position strongly. New Covenant has been phone-free for more than a decade and judiciously commits to technology when there is a clear mandate to do so.

Classical, Christian education is only for the elite, and ignores the non-liberal or common arts. This assertion was more prominent twenty years ago. It stems from the fact that classical education was the default curriculum tradition for nearly all of America's elite preparatory schools and Catholic schools in the 18th – 20th centuries. Returning to this tradition, after wandering for a century in the wilderness of progressive educational models of John Dewey, seemed

a bit stuffy and perhaps mildly elitist. It doesn't have to be this way. Mortimer Adler of the University of Chicago quipped that "the education that is good for the wealthy is good for everyone." He was a strong proponent of the idea that public education should return to this tradition. In the Christian expression of classical education, greater attention is given to embracing the whole person. At New Covenant, we strive to aid those who might need help gaining such an education through a robust tuition assistance program. Additionally, recent programming adjustments at the high school level (J-term offerings) allow for the exploration of the common arts.

Students will have more friends and more opportunities in a larger school. This assertion is more complicated because it entails more variables. It may be true that students who fail to make friends in a smaller context have "no place to go to find them." After nearly 30 years at New Covenant, however, I would affirm that this is generally not traceable to school size, but to a variety of factors in play within interpersonal relationships. Viewed another way, a school the size of New Covenant actually expands opportunities. Average athletes who would be recruited over in a bigger school actually get playing time. School-wide activities are possible because of manageable numbers. What academy can take its entire high school by charter bus to Washington, DC for an overnight excursion of the city every year? New Covenant can do such things and a dozen others that are not options in larger contexts. While the larger school may in fact have many choices, students realistically

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H O N O R A R I A

MS LATTE POETRY RESULTS

THE JEFFERSON CUP WINNER

Elise Williams

5TH GRADE

Winner: Noelle Deyo

Finalists: Mary Higey,
Cameron Wertz, Emmie White

6TH GRADE

Winner: Vera Shesko

Finalists: Josephine Kolegue,
Emmy Roberts, Bertie Seckman

7TH GRADE

Winner: Zoe Hart

Finalists: Kale Anderson,
Ella Dunaway, Charley Weber

8TH GRADE

Winner: Elise Williams

Finalists: Alex Quaranta,
Naomi Roberts, Arden Shesko



MS Latte Poetry Winners and Finalists: (Front L-R) Noelle Deyo, Emmie White, Cameron Wertz. (Row 2) Emmy Roberts, Bertie Seckman, Vera Shesko, Josephine Kolegue, Elise Williams. (Row 3) Mary Higey, Ella Dunaway, Charley Weber, Zoe Hart. (Back) Kale Anderson, Alex Quaranta, Naomi Roberts, Arden Shesko.



SPORTS RESULTS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

Varsity Men's Soccer

Virginia Episcopal.....1
New Covenant Schools 1 (4-3 PKs)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

Varsity Men's Soccer

New Covenant Schools0
Blue Ridge School.....3

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

Varsity Women's Volleyball

New Covenant Schools3
St. Anne's-Belfield1

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24

Varsity Cross Country

Women..... 1st Place
Men2nd Place
Michael Seckman..... 1st Overall

NCS VOICES SHINE AT VIRGINIA TECH HONOR CHOIR FESTIVAL



(L-R) Austin Harrison, Xander Arbaugh-Turner, Whitney Bailey, Emma Compton, Charlotte McCarty, Ruby Helm.

Six of our talented choir students—**Xander Arbaugh-Turner**, **Austin Harrison**, **Ruby Helm**, **Charlotte McCarty**, **Emma Compton**, and **Whitney Bailey**—recently participated in the Virginia Tech Honor Choir Festival, held October 25–26. Over the course of the weekend, they joined outstanding singers from across the state to rehearse and perform challenging choral repertoire under the direction of Virginia Tech's choir and voice faculty.

Highlights included a voice masterclass, a pizza social with VT choir students, and the world premiere of a new piece based on an Appalachian folk song performed in the beautiful Center for the Arts. The experience was an inspiring opportunity for our students to grow as musicians and connect with a vibrant collegiate music community.

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cannot take advantage of all of them all.

Advanced Placement (AP) is the gold standard for education. The College Board is a private organization that has long behaved like a cartel in the field of education. It controls the PSAT/SAT exams, drives college admissions processes, publishes AP curriculum for high schools, and engages in political advocacy. Moreover, AP courses tend to inform and drive curriculum courses and pedagogy. For example, the current pace of AP Latin requires 18 lines of translation per night, likely more than an hour of homework in one discipline. This alone

drives out significant reflection upon the text because the pacing is breathless. AP Biology is prohibitively dense, and countless more examples abound. We therefore severely limit AP offerings.

Furthermore, when looking at the data from ISM and other sources, college admissions offices are so inundated with competitive student transcripts that AP is only one small snapshot on a student record. Colleges are routinely looking for students who stand out: enter the classical, Christian student and a college guidance program that *knows New Covenant Schools*. In the college admissions world,

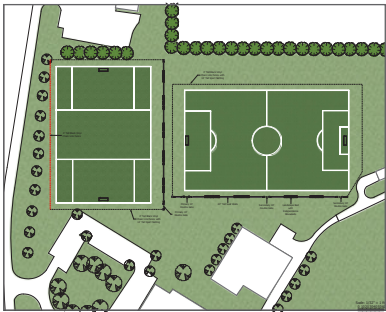
applicants who take the highest level courses that their school offers are the golden key, not AP or even dual enrollment (more below). Additionally, college admissions representatives are continually impressed with our program and our students through regular campus visits to our school.

Dual Enrollment is the wave of the future. There is no question that colleges are facing the great student “drop-off” in the next decade and are responding according to their bottom line. Fewer students are choosing to go, and the total number of available students is

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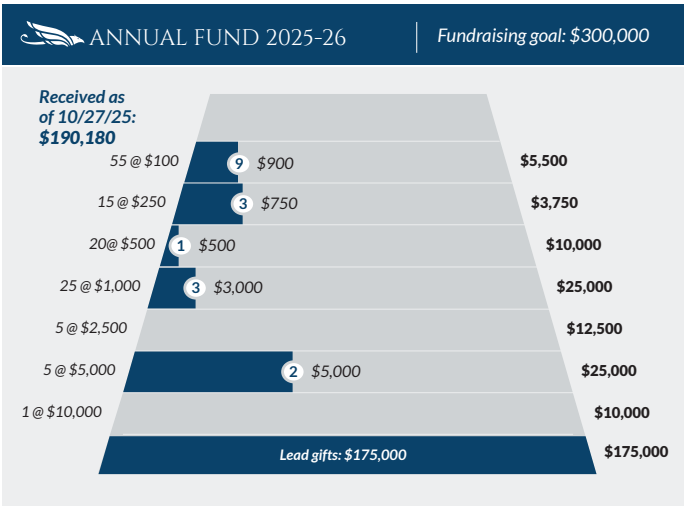
ANNUAL FUND UPDATE

The Annual Fund at New Covenant is our yearly effort to provide for items that tuition does not cover. The generosity of many individuals allows for enhancements to our campus that would not otherwise be available without significant help. We thank you and many others for your kindness.



Our project this year focuses on placing some finishing touches on our game fields outside the Workman Field House. We'll be installing a significant amount of fencing, reorienting the practice field and adjusting its irrigation, and installing shrubbery with low brick seating walls. Taken together, not only will it look nice, but it will keep the soccer and lacrosse balls on the right field during play! The project is expected to begin in phases this fall with soccer field renovations and will be completed over the summer.

The goal is to raise \$300,000 towards this project. Currently, we have \$190,180 in hand from several lead donors to start the renovations. Please consider how you might participate in this year's initiative. Gifts can be made online by clicking the “DONATE” button on our home page (www.newcovenantschools.org). Alternatively, you can make a gift through the development office by check. If you prefer you may contribute with a direct transfer of stocks/equities or an IRA distribution. For assistance with any of these transactions, please contact **Dayna Renalds** in the Development Office, and she can assist you.



FUNDRAISING REPORT			
	GOAL	RECEIVED	
Annual Fund	\$300,000	\$190,180	
General Scholarship	\$10,000	\$2,580	
Scholarship Foundation	\$300,000	Pledged	\$204,000
		Received	\$163,394

HONORS FOR 1ST QUARTER 2025-26

SCHOOLS OF RHETORIC AND DIALECTIC

THE HEADMASTER'S LIST

Summa cum laude

Ashe Smith, 12	Rusty Hooks, 12	Andre Frenchik, 12	Luke Cordes, 12
Enoch Tan, 12	Walt Gill, 12	Ian Gill, 11	Avery Harrison, 11
Emma Haupricht, 11	Charlotte Libbey, 11	Charlotte McCarty, 11	Joel Ng, 11
Elena Andrade, 10	Xander Arbaugh-Turner, 10	Ava Boettger, 10	Peter Brophy, 10
Charis Durand, 10	Claire Hansen, 10	Lucy Kirshberger, 10	Sol Knapton, 10
Lizzie Miller, 10	Kendall Morrell, 10	Naomi Rigg, 10	Micah Harrison, 9
Mac McRaven, 9	Idella Olmsted, 9	Eleanore Seckman, 9	

THE DEAN'S LIST

Magna cum laude

Grace Brady, 12	Eva Andrade, 12	Alicia Kenny, 12	Ella Dudley, 12
Ryleigh Taylor, 12	Ruby Helm, 11	Ellia Ramsey, 11	Joseph Robert, 11
Elora Williams, 11	Caden Smith, 11	Journey Lancaster, 11	Judah Weber, 11
Embry Carlton, 11	Hannah Edwards, 11	Michael Seckman, 11	Britton Baston, 10
Christian Henson, 10	Mindy Morse, 10	Addie Ruhl, 10	Alaina Hilton, 10
Gabriel Leitner, 10	Reese Mahle, 10	Elle Shesko, 10	Wyatt Cole, 10
Leila Kenny, 10	Elle Vollmer, 10	Josiah Thornhill, 10	Emma Christian, 10
Morgan Eggleston, 9	Judah Durand, 9	Gwen Kesler, 9	Mitchell Rogers, 9

Cum laude

Olivia Hostetler, 12	Ayla Gezen, 12	Micah Xayavong, 12	Gia Barlow, 12
Nick Gieszczykiewicz, 12	Emma Kate Lovell, 12	John-Paul Gauger, 11	Emma Compton, 11
Elle Rose, 11	Alex Fuhr, 11	Kelly Hoskins, 11	Kylie Garnett, 11
Wyatt Copenhagen, 10	Kate Cordes, 10	Lydia Williams, 10	Alex Pemberton, 10
Colton Buckner, 10	Alina Gieszczykiewicz, 10	Wyatt Gill, 9	Meg Maslow, 9
Bella Nickel, 9	Annalise Weber, 9	Jack Gauger, 9	

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Summa cum laude

Chloe Brophy, 8	Emilia Andrade, 8	Tinley Tucker, 8	Eleanor Bebeko Lane, 8
Landis Hoskins, 8	Ella Dunaway, 7	Penny Miller, 7	Eden Olenik, 7
Charley Weber, 7	Kale Anderson, 7	Tessa McRaven, 7	Simeon Durand, 7
Brielle Heap, 7	William Marotta, 7	Sterling Moody, 7	

Magna cum laude

Arden Shesko, 8	Tye Boettger, 8	Alexander Quaranta, 8	Jason Smith, 7
Macy Vollmer, 7	Molly Lovell, 7	Olivia Steed, 7	Wills Gauger, 7
Avery Hinson, 7	Eve Hilton, 7		

Cum laude

Nora Misiano, 8	Elise Williams, 8	Gabe Angell, 7	Micah Morse, 7
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EXCETERA

EVERYONE

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

There will be **no school on Monday, November 3**. We will hold parent/teacher conferences that day from 12:30-6:00pm. A link will be emailed on **Monday, October 27** to sign up for a conference with your student's teachers.

PAID FOOD SERVICES POSITIONS

We have several paid positions available in our lunchroom. These involve flexible hours and would be well-suited for anyone looking for a part-time job. Grandparents are welcome to apply! For more information, please contact **Debbie Williamson** at dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org.

WINTER ATHLETIC REGISTRATION

Registration is now open for 5th-12th grade for the winter sports season. Students must be registered in order to participate. Click on the following link to register for winter sports: [Athletic Sign Up Form > New Covenant Schools](#). **The deadline to register is Friday, October 31**. All students participating need to have a physical form on file. Students only need one per academic year, so if they played fall sports or have one on file for the 2025-26 school year there is no need to submit another one. The form can be found [HERE](#). Please reach out to **John Maynard** with any questions at jmaynard@newcovenantschools.org and see the attachment with the QUID NOVI email on **October 20** to see start dates for practices and more information.

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

The tuition assistance program (TAP) for 2026-27 school year will accept

applications from **Saturday, November 1, 2025** until **January 15, 2026**. There is high demand for assistance, and it is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, so do not delay! Look for a separate email on **Monday, October 27** from **Tiffany Fulcher** with more detailed instructions.

SCHOOL PHOTOS RETAKES

HJ Photo returns to campus on **Tuesday, October 28** for picture retakes. If your student was absent on picture day, they will automatically be rescheduled.

YEARBOOKS

Our experience proves that the majority of parents appreciate when we automatically order one yearbook per family. However, you may opt out of ordering a yearbook. **Please email April Andrade TODAY at aandrade@newcovenantschools.org if you DO NOT want to receive a yearbook this year.**

If we do not hear from you today, your FACTS account will be charged \$50 for your family yearbook. To order EXTRA yearbooks for your family, use the Sign-Up Genius link [here](#). Additional yearbooks cost \$35 each, if ordered through **October 31**.

MEN'S RETREAT

This year's Men's Retreat will be held on November 14-15.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Fall athletic awards for the School of Rhetoric will be presented **Wednesday, November 12 from 12:40-1:30pm** in the Workman Field House. Parents are welcome to attend.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

8TH GRADE PARENT BREAKFAST

Parents with a student rising to 9th grade for the 2026-27 school year are invited to join **Dr. Erin Uminn** and **Mrs. Lauren Helm** for breakfast on **Friday, November 14** from 8:00-9:00am. Come and hear about what awaits your student in 9th grade and beyond. Please email your RSVP to **Eliza Olson** at eolson@newcovenantschools.org.

MIDDLE & GRAMMAR

GS & MS FALL DRESS DAY:

On **Friday, October 31**, Grammar School and Middle School students are invited to wear jeans, fall-colored/themed shirts (orange, yellow, red, brown) and Friday shoes.

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

SOR PARENT COFFEE

Join us **Thursday, November 6 at 8:00am** for a discussion about the junior and senior years at New Covenant. We'll explore the course options available to your students in 11th grade and how to choose classes that fit their interests and post-high school goals. **Sophomore families** are especially encouraged to attend.

YEARBOOK: SUMMER VACATION PHOTOS



If you would like to share a photo of your student(s) or family on summer vacation in 2025, please send a JPG to Yearbook Advisor **Mark Hernandez** for consideration by the yearbook staff at mhernandez@newcovenantschools.org.

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slowing due to population decline. Many university models are recruiting younger ages by offering college credit while a student is in high school, establishing themselves as another institution that dictates curriculum and testing at the secondary level. Moreover, colleges monitor and evaluate high school teachers, curriculum, and pedagogy. However, liberal arts education is to form the individual as a whole person in age-appropriate ways. Reaching down to high school and accelerating students through college-level material circumvents true learning. Students desperately need age-appropriate instruction, predictability, and support structures to learn optimally. New Covenant features personal teacher attention and availability, working with students through each stage and year. This process cannot be fast tracked.

A new [analysis released in October 2024](#) by the Community College Research Center (CCRC), tracked what happened to every high school student who started

taking dual enrollment classes in 2015. Almost 30 percent of the dual enrollees earned a bachelor's degree in four years, but 58 percent had not earned any college degree or any post-secondary credential within this four-year period. Arguably, dual enrollment credits are not making a huge difference in time to completion, on average. The credits do not always transfer favorably, or, more importantly, count toward a student's requirements in a major, which is what really matters and holds students back from graduating on time.

NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

Unique among the offerings in the greater Lynchburg area, New Covenant remains the premier classical, Christian program of the region, firmly established and vetted over three decades. According to ISM (2023), schools like New Covenant are a prime feature in the market who "design a truly independent, mission-and core values-based curriculum."

QUID NOVI

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McCurley, Leann Perault, Leland Seckman

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John Heaton—Headmaster
Davidson Morse—School Warden

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 lifelong learner.

NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS