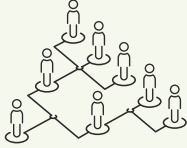


EIGHT PRINCIPLES THAT MAKE

The Sundial Difference!



Rethinking Modern School Structures and Systems

Sundial Classical Farmstead's founder, Sarah Kwilinski, used her 20+ years as a special education teacher and consultant to identify structural and systemic barriers to learning found in modern educational practices.

Sundial's Structural or Pedagogical Difference

A Modern Education Practice

01

Charlotte
Mason
Philosophy

The one-room schoolhouse model enables mastery-based (not age-based) progression. The study of beautiful things-- music, art, nature, literature--teaches students to attend. The teacher's role is to shepherd each student through individualized challenges.

Sonya Shafer at Simply Charlotte Mason

One Size Fits All - Large, single-age cohorts progress at the same rate through the same content. Ubiquitous instructional methods used from ages 5 to 18. Credits are based on seat-time, not mastery.

02

Small Group
Instruction

Academic instruction is only delivered via small-group, direct instruction. Ability-based groupings of 3 to 5 students stimulates active engagement and enables immediate error correction.

The 2 Sigma Problem: The Search for Methods of Group Instruction as Effective as One-to-One Tutoring, Benjamin S. Bloom. Educational Researcher, Vol 13, No 6. 1984.

Large groups require classroom management and pedagogical practices that force teachers into the active speaking and presenting role, and students into the passive listening, writing, and reproducing role.

03

Honor
Developmental
Capacity

A child's brain cannot be forced into early maturity. Rigorous studies of Head Start and other PreK intervention programs show both no lasting academic gains AND a strong correlation between attending an intervention-style PreK program and poorer outcomes in the upper grades: higher rates of suspension, truancy, and referrals for special education, etc.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Tennessee's Voluntary Pre-K Program 2009-present. my.vanderbilt.edu/tnpreevaluation

Early childhood intervention: the "training wheels" approach creates the "bulldozed" child in the long run. Expectations are too rigorous during the early elementary years, and then too low during high school.

04

Durable
Hospitality

Sundial practices a Culture of Hospitality: first build a durable table (a firm foundation of beliefs) and then invite everyone to your table. This enables a robust Culture of Inquiry: seeking to understand.

Alasdair MacIntyre's works on virtue-based ethics

Reacting to extremism and intolerance by teaching deconstructionism and relativism has led to higher rates of anxiety and depression among schoolchildren. Students are given too many choices without a strong moral compass. They are exhausted.

Sundial's Structural or Pedagogical Difference

A Modern Education Practice

05

Student
Formation

A balanced schedule of arts, academics, and practical skills requires a child to more fully perfect his ability to resist vice in all settings. We teach: Intellectual Formation to overcome ignorance. Moral Formation to acquire rightly ordered loves. Aesthetic Formation to develop talent and taste. Spiritual Formation to overcome acedia. Physical Formation to develop discipline. Practical Formation to overcome helplessness. Social Formation to develop civic virtue.
Brian Williams, Introducing Principia and Classical Education, Principia: A Journal of Classical Education, Vol 1, Issue 1. 2022.

A narrow focus on only two avenues for success--academics or sports--does not prepare students for a rich, fully faceted life.

06

No Tech
Classrooms

Our teachers model *scholé* - purposeful, leisurely learning of worthwhile content. Personal devices and internet-infused teaching inhibit the development of the highly focused, deeply contemplative attitude we cultivate.
Technology and the Character of the Contemporary Life: A Philosophical Inquiry by Albert Borgmann. 1984.

Utilitarian ethics permeate modern school culture from the building architecture to the pervasive reliance on technological devices.

07

Authentic
Assessment

Sundial does not assign letter grades or homework. The onus for demonstrating mastery is on the student. We believe the work of preparing for an oral recitation, project, or performance is, in itself, of deep value to our students.

"Work is a good thing for man"
-Laborem Exercens by Pope St. John Paul II

Homework and letter grades are performative rituals that create work for the teacher and only serve the parent. The student is the least active participant in this exchange.

08

Non-
Competative
Mindset

Our focus on deep mastery and individualized instructional methods means that despite having a 130 day academic calendar (50 days shorter than traditional school calendars) our students - including those with learning disabilities - perform at or above grade level on standardized testing.
Joshua Gibbs, Stop Assigning Reading Homework, The Cedar Room, Circe Institute, 2016.

Competition between schools on students' standardized test scores creates a frenetic pace to cover all potential test questions. This then leads to shallow coverage of the curricula.

The Big Picture?

**MODERN PRACTICES INDUCE PASSIVITY.
SUNDIAL'S METHODS INSPIRE OWNERSHIP.**