



MILLENNIUM CHARTER ACADEMY

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Character Scholarship Community



Welcome to our seventh edition of "The Academic Journal," a bimonthly bulletin where you can read about MCA's educational philosophy, instructional methodology, and the various viewpoints and positions of our faculty, staff, students, and families.

TECHNOLOGY AT MCA

Advancing technology is an ever-present factor of life in the 21st century, and, therefore, a student's understanding and facility with it is vital. Millennium Charter Academy's use of cutting-edge instructional technology affords an array of tools that prove helpful in advancing student learning. Our technology helps fuel problem solving, organizational skills, student motivation, and student writing. It provides easier access to subject matter and opens doors to a classroom that extends far beyond the usual four walls. Most importantly, MCA views technology as a means to an end, and never an end in and of itself. Teachers teach students to use technology like pencil and paper, in the sense that it is another valuable tool to make learning more effective and efficient.

Our faculty and students currently use a variety of technological tools, including SMARTBoards in every classroom, online discussion boards and wikis, wireless Internet connection school-wide, iPods for keeping assignment dates, an online grade book for 3rd – 8th grades, class websites, a lab complete with Dell Opti-Plex 170L PCs, as well as email accounts for continuous academic communication between the faculty, students, and parents alike. MCA also has a 1:1 Laptop Program for middle school students, through which students accelerate their education.

"When used right, technology becomes an accelerator of momentum, not a creator of it."

-Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*

The NC State University Friday Institute has evaluated multiple 1:1 computer programs in North Carolina, and the evaluation indicates: 1) better attendance, 2) lower dropout rate, 3) increased student engagement, and 4) increase in 21st Century skills. It is too early to determine in North Carolina, but other states report that students' standardized test scores have increased with 1:1 computers. A recent article in "The Journal of Technology Learning and Assessment" examined the impact of 1:1 implementations on



teaching and learning. The report concludes that students not only became more engaged with school, but they also became better researchers, had access to “expanded” classroom, and benefitted from “systematic and ubiquitous use of technology.”

For the students, the classroom teacher weaves into the fabric of everyday school life the academic and technical aspects of technology through integrated lessons, interactive class assignments, projects, and communication with people in other parts of the world. Our students learn keyboarding, word-processing, as well as web design and research skills. They also learn how to create and use databases, spreadsheets, and Power Point. Grades K-3 enjoy a regularly scheduled time in our computer lab in addition to their time with the computers located in each classroom. Guided by our self-imposed curricular requirements, projects and assignments drive the instruction for fourth and fifth graders, whether they are designing travel brochures for North Carolina or using Excel to create flash cards about the fifty states. In the Middle School, our students use technology for web-based lessons, online research, creative and expository writing, remedial and enrichment instruction, science, drama, music—essentially every subject matter. Our advanced art classes learn to manipulate and enhance their creations through various applications.



Our Information Technology Department provides direct instruction and ongoing technical support for students and faculty. The IT Department helps insure a safe environment for our school, maintaining our own servers, firewall, phone system, and over 250 computers. This team, furthermore, is continually scouting the technology frontier for new, usable hardware and software that would improve our students’ education.

As Jim Collins wrote in *Good to Great*, “When used right, technology becomes an accelerator of momentum, not a creator of it.” Technology is neither the goal nor the focal point, but rather one important tool that helps to propel MCA toward its stated mission. As technology changes, so will the world and so will this Academy. And, here, those advancements will be used to further develop students that are life-long learners, as well as faculty, staff, parents, and community members that continue to thrive on education.

