

AREA'S HOMESCHOOLED EDUCATIONAL ROOTS GROW WITH ACE

By Heidi Earlywine

As a school formed to enhance the educational experience for home-based learners, the Academy for Character Education (ACE) Charter School planted its roots into Cottage Grove in 2007 with one day of collaborative School Community Day classes per week, and four days of schooling at home per week.

As it enters its 13th year, ACE Charter looks forward to new and exciting developments — a study-abroad trip to Greece, improved math classes, and ever-evolving methods of engagement and instruction, even adding an additional day per week, across all levels.

Due to popular demand, students now learn in community two days per week, with three study-at-home days per week.

ACE's classical approach to education mixes history studies with literature and science, cycling through its cross-disciplinary curriculum every four years. This year marks the beginning of ACE's fourth rotation through this curriculum cycle, which is exciting for ACE staff. In this cycle, students walk through world history over a four-year cycle: Year 1 is "Ancient World," through the Fall of Rome; Year 2 is "Renaissance and Reformation," until the discovery of America; Year 3 is "Age of Discovery," as cultures connect all over the globe; and Year 4 wraps up with United States History.

Each year is paired with a school-wide science genre (Year 1 = Biology; Year 2 = Chemistry; Year 3 = Physics; Year 4 = Earth Science and Astronomy). This year, as the curriculum cycle begins, the focus will be Ancient World Humanities & Biology, for all K-12 students.

Math education grew from tutoring-based lessons to math classes this year, moving most students to group classes of 17 or fewer students twice per week. "Math classes inspire my children and keep them on track," said ACE-parent Jeanet Campbell. Math classes offered in this way are bringing more excitement, more activity-based learning, and more continuity to ACE's offerings.

Holding the torch high for students to have a "liberal education" means that students will be in a place where "students who study" is the average mode of operation. More than



A group of students, staff and parents who went to New York last May and visited The United Nations headquarters, as well as other key locations.

gram supports students in classes of their choice: swimming, taekwondo, violin, piano, voice, horse-back riding... just to name a few.

The possibilities with that program are nearly endless.

The academic program described above is the full-time program, where students are officially full-time public school students, but there is also a part-time option where homeschool students can access up to three classes per week, funded with state monies allotted for their education while retaining their legal home-schooled status with Lane Educational Services District (Lane ESD.)

Originally, Curl desired to support students who school at home with funding from government sources for their education. This goal led her to work with charter schools, as she learned that students can best access funds for schooling at home when they are connected to a full time, state-approved K-12 academic program.

As challenges led to successes, she eventually developed two programs with the support of those around her: the full-time program and the part time program, rounding out the supports available to students who wish to school-at-home.

sixteen AP course offerings have filled ACE students' schedules over the years, which is remarkable given that the school is merely 110 students total.

This year, offerings in AP Literature and Composition, AP Latin, AP Computer Science and AP Human Geography top off high school students' schedules.

The school benefits greatly from Karen Zeller's expertise and leadership in Latin, leading ACE students and staff in navigating the College Board Advanced Placement offerings and guiding AP Latin students through a Grecian study-abroad trip next spring.

Traveling abroad is a part of the fabric of ACE in order to support its rigorous education goals.

Twenty-eight students and adults toured Washington, DC, and New York City in May, with about 50 percent of students' funding coming

from the charter school's budget, which allots funds for each students' electives. Students enrolled in AP Latin courses this year will study in Greece next spring — a fully funded trip ACE instituted this year to incentivize students to stick with their Latin studies all the way through high school.

Students at ACE place into classes with a small battery of reading, writing and math tests to ensure they go home with the appropriate level of work. Ranell Curl, founder of ACE and strong proponent of legalizing homeschooling in Oregon back in the 1980s, valued planting students wherever they would grow best.

As part of that value system, the fabric of ACE includes supporting individualized educational goals and electives for each student.

Elective offerings are diverse, as a reimbursement-based elective pro-

SWITCH TO THE CONVENIENCE OF AUTO PAY! SAVE TIME & SAVE MONEY



Use your Credit or Debit Card account to renew your subscription to the Cottage Grove Sentinel (includes online edition) by using AUTO PAY. Complete the credit card information on the enclosed billing notice and make your payment the easy way with Auto Pay.

Bring in or send this ad back with your payment and save \$5 OFF

Yes, Sign me up for Auto Pay*!

☒

☐ 10 Weeks = \$6.50, (Reg \$11.60) ☐ Digital Only \$30 (Reg \$35)
BEST OFFER ☐ 1 Year = \$38.50 (Reg \$43.50)
No Set Up Fee

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Credit or Debit Card Exp. Date: _____

Security Number _____

Card Number: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature of Card holder: _____

Cottage Grove
Sentinel

116 N. 6th Street, PO Box 35
Cottage Grove, OR 97424
541-942-3325 • cgsentinel.com

*Auto Pay Subscriptions renew automatically unless cancelled. Future renewals will be at the current subscription rate.

Let us help support your dreams!

Ann White
Certified Financial Planner™
Investment Advisor Representative
1807 E. Main Street, Cottage Grove, OR 97424
541-942-5535

ADVISOR NETWORKS LLC
Member FINRA/SIPC

Securities and advisory services offered through Cetera Advisor Networks LLC, member FINRA/SIPC