



**THOMAS  
MACLAREN  
SCHOOL**

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# SCHOOL PROFILE CLASS OF 2023

## MACLAREN COMMUNITY

Thomas MacLaren School is a classical, liberal arts charter public school for grades K-12 that offers a rigorous, sequenced core curriculum through which students learn the habits of mind needed to be life-long learners. MacLaren opened in the fall of 2009 and graduated its tenth class of seniors last spring. The students enjoy small class sizes, single-gender classes (except for Orchestra, Language and Drama), and a low student-teacher ratio. Fifty-three per cent of MacLaren Upper School faculty has earned an advanced degree; 7% of these faculty hold a doctorate in their field. MacLaren is authorized and accredited by the Charter School Institute, a state-run charter school authorizer for the State of Colorado.

**MacLaren's State SAT Composite for the Class of 2023 is 1182** (51 students) which ranks MacLaren as the **7<sup>th</sup> highest achieving high school in the State** (as compared to the State composite score of 986) and the **second highest achieving high school in Colorado Springs**.

## OUR STUDENTS

The MacLaren student body is comprised of 926 students; 240 of whom are in grades 9-12. Of our high school population, approximately **28% qualify for free or reduced-priced Lunch** and **32% represent a minority**. Of the students who applied to college, 100% were accepted. Our alumni have gone on to study at places such as the **University of Chicago, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Notre Dame, Grinnell College, Berklee College of Music, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and the United States Naval Academy**.

In an effort to cultivate students who are more attuned to learning for its own sake than for the sake of a grade, Thomas MacLaren School deemphasizes grades. **Students do not have access to their grades**. The one choice in the curriculum offered is the choice of language in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. We encourage students to take the language that they are most interested in learning, and not to choose Greek – a weighted course – simply for a higher GPA. We have two “highest” GPAs, depending on which language track a student is in.

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

**All students follow a single curriculum; there is no tracking.**

- All students follow the Academy Project curriculum which has successfully been implemented in Trinity Schools and the Great Hearts Schools.
- **Thomas MacLaren School offers no AP/Honors courses, but our discussion-based, performance-oriented courses generally exceed the rigor of Advanced Placement courses.**
- Many courses are weighted +1.0 in a student's cumulative GPA, reflecting the difficulty of the curriculum. See description of each curricular area below.
- MacLaren does not rank its students.

## COURSE OF STUDY

- MacLaren has one common curriculum. All students take the course of study outlined below.
  - The curriculum is divided into three pillars: Math & Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts
- All students take 5 courses a day; one course is a 2-hour Socratic seminar.

## MATH & SCIENCE

9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Biology	Chemistry	Computer Science/Physics I	Physics II
Geometry/Precalculus	Precalculus	Calculus I	Calculus II/Advanced Topics

### Course of Study/Credits:

- Precalculus (9<sup>th</sup> grade) = Algebra 2; Precalculus (10<sup>th</sup> grade) = Trigonometry & Precalculus topics
- Computer Science: A one-semester computer programming course in which students learn to use MATLAB to create GUIs that solve particular classes of problems in science or mathematics. This course establishes the foundation needed for the Physics II coursework.

## HUMANITIES

9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Humane Letters - American Studies	Humane Letters - European Studies	Humane Letters - Ancient Studies	Humane Letters - Medieval and Modern Studies
Latin IV	Language	Language (1 semester)	Language (1 semester)

### Course of Study/Credits:

- Humane Letters seminars are comprised of **daily two-hour blocks** and students earn 2.5 credits per semester, 5 credits per year. The **9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade** Humane Letters seminars are distributed as **2 credits of history, 2 credits of English, and 1 credit of composition**. The **11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade** Humane Letters courses are distributed as **2 credits of history, 2 credits of English, and 1 credit of philosophy (11<sup>th</sup>) and 1 credit Economics (12<sup>th</sup>)**.
- In the Humane Letters Seminar, literature, history and philosophy are taught through reading, discussing and writing about issues which emerge from the study of original texts and source documents. Historical lectures supplement the discussions.
- Students are expected to be engaged in many of the greatest literary and philosophical works in the Western canon. It is normal to have one hour of reading per night.
- Students write at least 30 analytical essays and three substantial research papers.
- Students complete their Latin studies in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade; in 10<sup>th</sup> grade they may continue in the Classics track, taking Greek or choose a modern language. Language is a two-semester course in 10<sup>th</sup> grade and a single-semester course in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

## ARTS

9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
		Drama I (1 semester)	Drama II (1 semester)
		Art (1 semester)	Art (1 semester)
Orchestra IV	Orchestra V	Orchestra VI	Orchestra VII

### Course of Study/Credits:

- The arts are not electives at MacLaren; they are embedded into our core curriculum.
- Orchestra: Students begin their study of a stringed instrument in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. By high school, students are playing Mozart, Sibelius, and Bach. Our program is one of the most demanding and unique orchestra programs in the country, and we weight our high school orchestra courses to reflect the level of rigor.
- Semester-long classes include Drama I & II, Studio Art, and Art History
- By the end of senior year, students will have performed in two full-length drama productions and analyzed art works, covering from Pre-historic to Contemporary, and learned to produce art in a spectrum of styles & media.