# FAQs

## What is this about schools at The Renaissance Preparatory Academy?

The Renaissance PreparatoryAcademy is divided into schools for each three year grade range. Initially, we will begin with one classroom per school but our plans are to grow to having at least 3 classrooms per school. Each school has a lead teacher who coordinates the classes and lessons of the school.

## What is the student/teacher ratio?

We average 15 students per teacher but our Kindergarten also has at least one classroom aide when the classroom size reaches 12.

## Is the school accredited?

No, in this start-up phase, we do not qualify for accreditation processes.

However, we have designed the school to meet the accreditation standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS) a regional division of AdvancEd, the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) a partner of AdvancEd, and the Malcom Baldridge school continuous improvement guidelines.

## How can we be assured of the school’s quality?

Here is a list of 13 attributes of best performing schools [[1]](#footnote-1)with respect to student learning…

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| # | Best Practice For Student Learning | Presence in the Renaissance Prep Programs |
| 1 | Year-Round Schooling | Four 10-week terms: Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring  Four 3-week breaks between terms |
| 2 | Extended school days | All students attend school from 8 am to 4 pm |
| 3 | Extended School Year | Four 10-week terms less one week off for Thanksgiving = 195 school days instead of 180 |
| 4 | Focus on Student Development Level and Not Age-grade Orientation | Mornings are for individualized foundational learning and afternoon theme units have attained developmental placement into theme units. Promotion to the next grade can occur in any term but in general promotion between schools occurs at start of school year. |
| 5 | Multi-aged classrooms | Each classroom will have three ages/years involved with overlapping ages for additional support or early promotion. Kindergarten = ages 4, 5, 6; Primary = Grades 1, 2 &3; Elementary = Grades 3, 4 &5; Grammar = Grades 5, 6 & 7; Jr. High = Grades 7, 8 &9. |
| 6 | Progress between grades based on pattern of work | Promotion to the next grade occurs at the end of any school term |
| 7 | Assessments based on performance | Promotions to next “schools” occurs when student has at least 2/3 of skills, knowledge and application ability demonstrated of last grade in current school. Early promotion assessment is based on a consistent pattern of skill attainment and application at a completed grade level for one term. |
| 8 | Fewer required testing results resulting in teaching to the test | All nationally normed testing is for the placement of the child in the program and not for the evaluation of the program or teachers. Patterns of results of normed testing may inform curriculum changes/reinforcements/abandonments. |
| 9 | Move away from Subject silos | Morning is individualized foundational work and afternoons are applied theme units. Extension work is in afterschool clubs, teams, etc. |
| 10 | Use technology to tailor education to students | Students begin using technology in Kindergarten but wide spread customized technology-based learning doesn’t occur until 4th grade. |
| 11 | Interdisciplinary Theme Units | Afternoon work is comprised of at least 50% theme unit work that allows for individual additional research and learning. |
| 12 | True project-based collaborative learning | Theme units are around solving a problem or question and are sorted by ability levels allowing for true collaboration |
| 13 | Design and offer rigorous courses | Culture of high expectations and only faculty-staff agreed upon demonstration of knowledge and application or a pattern in nationally normed testing (wide-spread test results showing higher grade level attainment in all areas) is used to determine promotion to the next grade |
| 14 | Allow student choice and ability to follow passion | Theme units allow for student choice of unit or research topics/project deliverable to allow for students to develop interests |
| 15 | Program-Centric Learning Experience | Thematic vacation camps during breaks |
| 16 | Leaders (teachers) model creative risk taking | Students are encouraged to try creative ways to solve problems or create deliverables. Faculty develop new units integrating student interest and required content. |
| 17 | Leaders (teachers) support |  |
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## What is the quality of the Headmaster and the teachers?

Our faculty are all certified and have all been through our own training certification in strength-based continuous-progress schooling.

1. Lichtman, G. 2015. What if? A crowd sourced window on the future of schools [↑](#footnote-ref-1)