



METAIRIE PARK
COUNTRY DAY

State of the School Report

2023





Dear Country Day Community,

A couple of weeks ago, as Rob Hereford and I were wrapping up a meeting, we both paused to look out the window in the Benjamin Living Room. We were so captivated by the sights and sounds of campus that we opened the door to walk onto Founders' Terrace. As we looked across the lawn, we could see in the distance our youngest Cajuns as they laughed and shrieked while swinging and playing during recess. In the foreground, our upper school students enjoyed a break between classes. Some were playing spike ball, while others were enjoying little lunch. Off to the side, Principal Augustine Whyte stood in his standard white button-down, sleeves rolled up, as he laughed and talked with students. Other students were chatting in groups, and some were sitting with friends as they all enjoyed the mild, sunny day.

As I took in the scene, I remarked to Rob, "Good things are happening here at Metairie Park Country Day School." Yes, I used our full name because it literally looked like a carefully staged and choreographed scene for a commercial that deserved a formal tagline. Cue the music! But in reality, it was just an average Wednesday for our students on our beloved campus.

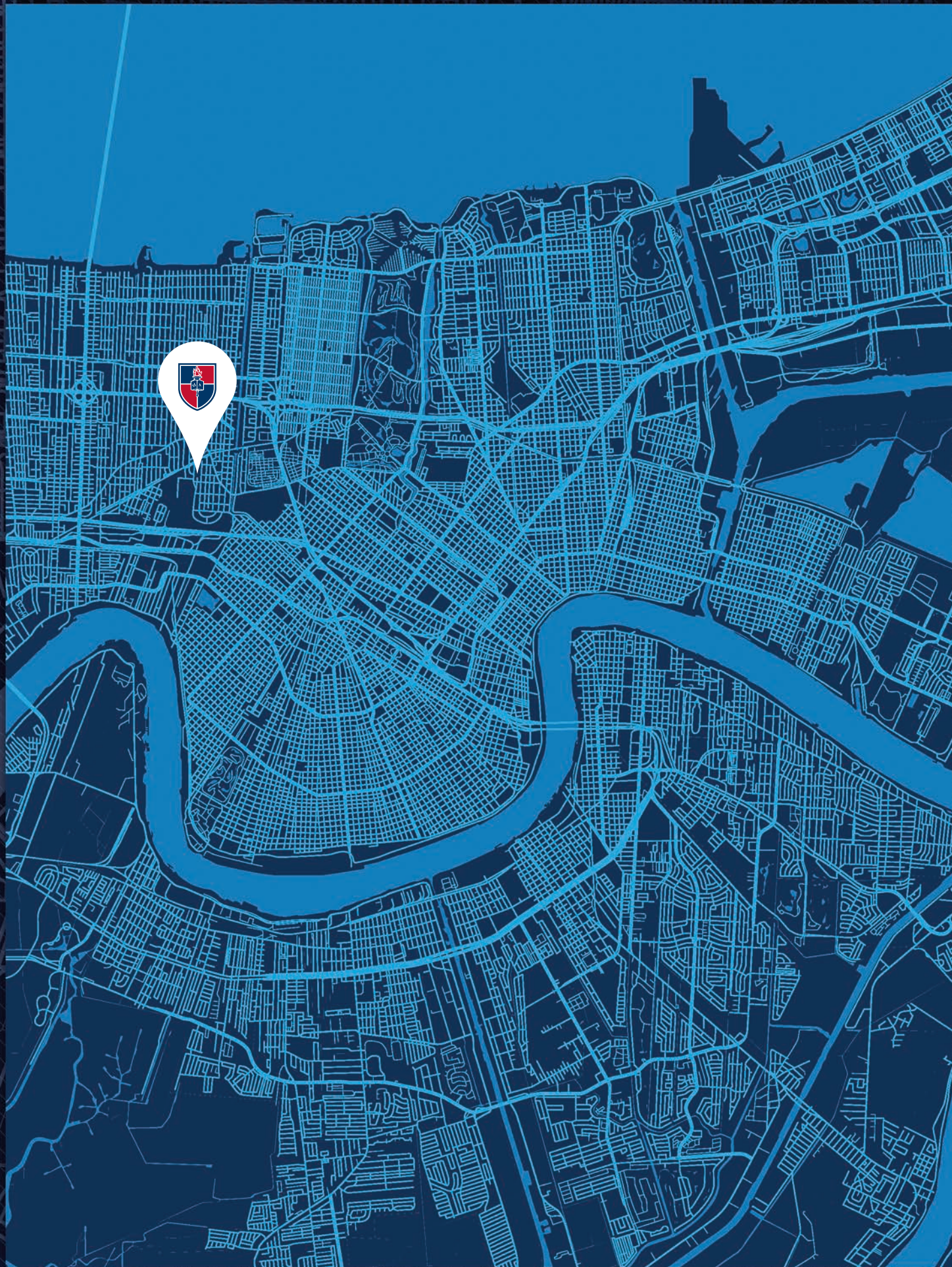
But make no mistake about it: Good things are happening here at School as we continue to see excellence in the arts, athletics, and academics. For the thirteenth time in 14 years, the volleyball team captured the 2022 State Championship title. The Cajun Robotics team returned to the competition field at the First Tech Challenge, with 14 students from grades 5 to 12 representing Country Day, and 29 students competed in the District Literary Rally, with 26 students advancing to State.

I am equally enthused to see the success of our community expand beyond the School's day-to-day activities. This year's GrandFriends' Day brought record attendance, with over 750 visitors receiving a warm CD welcome. The Parents' Association Book Fair returned to the Coleman Family Dining Room, delivering joy to students and classrooms across the campus. And giving to the Country Day Fund, the School's most important annual fundraising priority, is outpacing recent memory.

As Chair of the Country Day Board of Trustees, I am mindful that all of the good things happening here are because of the commitment and generosity of our Country Day families and our dedicated, hard-working faculty and staff. So many of you invest yourselves in our community in various ways, and I am so grateful for this place and all of you. The moms and dads who volunteer, coach, bring food, chaperone field trips, and restock the library shelves all provide invaluable support to our students. You make our School much more than a place to learn: It is a place that feels like home. Stop by and say hello if you haven't been on campus in a while. Or, like Rob and I often do, pause and watch the magic that is Country Day!

Always grateful,

Jennifer Heebe



Academics *First Things* BY G. HOWARD HUNTER, ACADEMIC DEAN

According to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the share of bachelor's degrees awarded to traditional humanities majors in English, history, philosophy, religious studies, and foreign languages dropped to 4.4 percent in 2020. Reasons for the paucity of humanities majors vary — the cost of college leads students down a more utilitarian path that conventional wisdom deems more employable like business and finance. The explosion in technology and health care has fueled new fields in computer science, engineering, and medicine, and it's fair to say that part of the crisis of the humanities is self-inflicted as some university departments have become increasingly politicized and strident, sending students scurrying to other majors.

Yet our position is that the humanities, however troubled, are not only essential to a liberal arts education (i.e., humanities, social sciences, math/sciences, and the arts) but also exigent to a good life. And we are evolving our own senior humanities requirement next year through the merging of two established programs.

In 1996, we started the senior global humanities requirement, designed to expose students to the big ideas that have shaped civilization. The aim was to develop a high school equivalent of the Great Books curriculum that has distinguished Columbia, The University of Chicago, and St. John's. Ten years ago, we added a capstone requirement in which students are required to write a ten-page research paper and present their topic at an academic-type conference that we hold in May.

In 2012, Country Day received a \$250,000 grant from the E.E. Ford Foundation, along with a matching grant from the RosaMary Foundation. The purpose was to fund the New Orleans Scholars Program in which the city — its politics, culture, economy, and environment — served as the curriculum. Ten of our students, along with ten students from Benjamin Franklin High School, worked with a political consultant, explored neighborhoods, conducted research at The Historic New Orleans Collection (THNOC), toured the port, and provided recommendations to the City Council on ameliorating problems in precincts throughout the city. The fourth-year students produced radio spots on WWNO about St. Augustine Church and the New Orleans Vietnamese community. As a result of COVID-19, the program has been dormant for four years.

Next year, the senior humanities program will become a new incarnation of New Orleans Scholars in which the whole class will take part. The theme will be New Orleans and the World. Resident scholar Mike Miley developed a curriculum based on the streets of the city — religion (Piety Street), economy (Commerce Street), history (Clio Street), music (Euterpe Street), literature (Dante Street), myth (Elysian Fields), race and civil rights (Liberty Street), colonial origins (Frenchmen or Spain Streets), and water management (Canal Street). The course will include field work at cultural institutions like NOMA or THNOC, as well as a trip to the Sewerage and Water Board to assess the challenges the city has always faced in securing proper drainage. Students will engage the city in film and assess why New Orleans has been cast as the other in the panoply of American cities, or how a tourist economy invites kitschy facsimiles of a halcyon past that never existed.

Since the recession of 2008, the humanities have lost favor in higher academe. Yet in popular culture the humanities have thrived in print and eBooks, podcasts, film and television, book clubs, historical societies and humanities councils, and in classics that won't go away. Recent history bears that out. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there has been no shortage of articles looking to Homer's *Iliad* as the lens for making sense of the gut-wrenching horror and tragedy of war. Even though the conflict between the Achaeans and Trojans raged 3,000 years ago, sublime poetry and narrative transcend time. Likewise, during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, bookstores could not stock enough copies of Albert Camus's *The Plague* because the experience of people living in the Algerian town of Oran circa 1940 was our own. As Tom Crick, Graham Swift's beleaguered history teacher in his novel *Waterland* tells his students, "... it [history] teaches us no shortcuts to Salvation, no recipe for a New World, only the dogged and patient art of making do." In times of duress, people have always turned to the humanities for validation in order to forge ahead with that business of making do. Whether our students will be exposed to the humanities for the last time before proceeding to a career-based education or studying the humanities as preparation for a liberal arts college education, our object is to help them find meaning through the big questions that define us.

The Arts

BY KATIE ANTIS, ARTS DEPARTMENT CHAIR

At Country Day, we take pride in the idea that our students have the freedom to thrive in dedicated, creative spaces under the direction of renowned, practicing artists and musicians. 2022 was nothing short of a successful year for the Arts Department, with many accomplishments, events, and achievements in various areas.

Congratulations to all the students, teachers, and staff involved in continuing to grow the Arts Department at Country Day.

ART AND MUSIC FILL THE CAMPUS

Country Day's student artists filled the Georges Art Gallery and Weinmann Auditorium for several successful showcases, including the 6th Grade Visual and Performing Arts Showcase, the Faculty and Staff Art Show and Recital, as well as four Student Art Shows, which were jam-packed with exciting pieces of art including paintings, drawings, ceramics, photography, woodworking, and metals.

STUDENT ARTISTS WIN LONG-STANDING, NATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, the nation's longest-running and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens, has identified some of America's most celebrated artists and writers while they were teenagers. Three Country Day students were recognized this year: Salem Fitch (Silver Key Award), Marygrace de la Cruz (Silver Key Award), and Gabrielle White (Honorable Mention).

STUDENT ARTISTS PLACE FIRST IN THE NEW ORLEANS HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH ART CONTEST

Caitlin Cosse, Coco Emonet, Josephine LaGraize, and Camille Swander placed first in the New Orleans Hispanic Heritage Month Student Art Contest for their chalk painting representing Cuba.



SPACE IS THE PLACE! ARTS FESTIVAL

Spring blossomed with a school-wide celebration of the arts with an out-of-this-world Arts Festival, "Space is the Place!," which brought a full and vibrant display of our student talents across campus. Students demonstrated their abilities and the techniques used in the different mediums of art.



TALENTED MUSICIANS

Music was in the air at the Louisiana Music Educators Association Conference in November as musicians from across the state gave outstanding performances. Mason Kwon, Phillip Antis, and Charlie Antis were selected for the Louisiana All-State Orchestra, and all three received the All-State Academic Recognition for maintaining a 3.5 GPA or higher. Congratulations to the talented musicians on their selections:

- » **Students Selected for District Honor Band**
 - Elementary Honor Band: Evan Casey (percussion) and Gustavo Bernhard (percussion)
 - Junior High Honor Band: Paul Curry (percussion) and Iskra Jurkovic (clarinet)
 - Senior High Honor Band: Xander Roniger (trumpet)

- » **Students Selected for District Jazz Band**
Xander Roniger (trumpet), Paul Curry (percussion), Iskra Jurkovic (clarinet), Evan Casey (percussion), and Gustavo Bernhard (percussion)

- » **Student Selected for District Orchestra**
Mason Kwon (violin)

- » **Students Selected for the ACDA Louisiana All State Choirs**
Sophia Curry (Children's Choir), Amelie Barrilleaux (Children's Choir), Eva Lau (Children's Choir), Charlie Antis (Men's Choir), and Olivia O'Bell (Women's Choir).

- » **Students Selected to Perform with the Loyola University Bourgeois Band**
Sarah Heebe (trumpet) and Manish Jain (clarinet)



COMEDY TAKES CENTER STAGE IN WEINMANN AUDITORIUM

The Weinmann Auditorium stage was home to two Upper School Productions this year. Gilbert and Sullivan's rollicking musical comedy, *The Pirates of Penzance*, was filled with memorable melodies and peculiar paradoxes. This production was a salute to Country Day tradition, as Gilbert and Sullivan's shows were a hallmark of the theater program at Country Day for many years. In the fall, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* put the community's spelling abilities to the test as members of the audience competed alongside cast members to advance to the National Spelling Bee.

AFTER-SCHOOL PLAYERS PROGRAM RETURNED!

November 29 marked the auspicious return of the After-School Players with the world premiere of an all-new original play, *The (Almost) True Story of Cinderella and Her Stepsisters*. Directed by teacher Genna Ellis and written by our Drama Specialist Sean Patterson, the show featured 18 talented performers from the Lower School. After-School Players, part of the Lower School Enrichment program, provides a theatrical performance opportunity to our youngest actors on campus.



MERRY MEETING PRESENTED "WONDERS OF THE EARTH"

Kindergarteners took the stage in the spring for the Merry Meeting Production of "Wonders of the Earth" as they sang songs and feverishly waved to those watching.

MUSIC FOR HUMANITY CLUB ORGANIZES COMMUNITY PERFORMANCES

Music for Humanity Club members shared their musical talents with the residents of Poydras Home in a fully self-organized community outreach effort. They played music from Mozart to Elvis and even some movie music.

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL ARTS INTEGRATION

The department highlighted Arts Integration with 11th-grade U.S. History. Each student chose a book to read about Abraham Lincoln, wrote critical book reviews, and then used their new knowledge of the 16th president to design portraits of Lincoln in a variety of mediums.



HOLIDAY CONCERTS SPARKED JOY ACROSS CAMPUS

December's many performances shared the joy of children's voices raised in song. The 7th- to 12th-grade choral groups treated us to impressive performances, filling the auditorium with beautiful music sung by many talented singers. The evening finished with a festive holiday sing-a-long. The 7th- to 12th-grade students again displayed their musical talents in the joy-filled Instrumental Concert. The audience even performed their best "ooga chaka" while the band played "Hooked on a Feeling"! The 6th Grade Musical Extravaganza combined band, orchestra, and choral performances from the Class of 2029.

The busy holiday concert season concluded with the return of the Lower School Winter Holiday Concert, which was back in the Atrium for the first time since 2019! This hallmark performance brings our community together to be a part of the collective joy that is Lower School. What an excellent way to wrap up our holiday season and a year in the Arts on campus.



LOWER SCHOOL STUDENTS CREATE 100 BOWLS FOR THE SALVATION ARMY "SHIELD OF HOPE" FUNDRAISER

A tradition since 2015, 3rd- and 4th-grade students again created and delivered 100 bowls for the Salvation Army's fundraiser, "Shield of Hope." Students are encouraged to paint something that is meaningful to them on the bowls, producing a wide variety of themes. Donors found bowls decorated with animals, flowers, Saints emblems, and more!

Athletics

CHEERLEADING (FALL 2022)

Head Coach: Maddie Oberfoell

UCA All American Team Qualifier: Claire Cannella



SWIMMING (FALL 2022)

Head Coach: Shawn O'Neil

Assistant Coach: Kelly McGeehan

GIRLS

LHSAA Div. IV State Ranking: 14th

BOYS

LHSAA Div. IV State Ranking: 7th

For individual swimming results visit mpcds.com/swimming



VOLLEYBALL (FALL 2022)

Head Coach: Julie Ibieta

Assistant Coaches: Myra Bordelon, Dana Launey, Lauren Leaumont

Overall Record: 31-8

LHSAA DIV. V STATE CHAMPIONS

DISTRICT CHAMPIONS

All-District First Team: Gigi Dazet, Emma Launey, Olivia Prout, Ellie Schneider (MVP)

All-District Second Team: Lia Beverly, Evelyn Rivas

All-District Honorable Mention: Jane Gambel, Maggie Schneider

District Coach of the Year: Julie Ibieta

Division V All-State Team: Emma Launey, Olivia Prout, Ellie Schneider

Most Outstanding Player Div. V State Championship Game: Ellie Schneider

Division V Player of the Year: Ellie Schneider

All-Metro Team: Olivia Prout, Ellie Schneider

All- Metro Small School Player of the Year: Ellie Schneider

LHSAA All-Star Team: Ellie Schneider

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Olivia Prout, Ellie Schneider

AVCA 1st Team All American: Ellie Schneider

Volleyball Magazine 1st Team All American: Ellie Schneider



CROSS COUNTRY (FALL 2022)

Head Coach: Maurice DuCarpe

Assistant Coaches: Haley Fayette, Susan Lee, Dom Maley, Lane Porter

BOYS

LHSAA Division IV State Results: 3rd

LHSAA Div. IV Regional Results: 2nd

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Hunter Miller

GIRLS

LHSAA Division IV State Results: 2nd

LHSAA Div. IV Regionals Results: 4th

LHSAA Division IV Top Ten: Coco Goldenberg, Raine Goldenberg

All Regional Team: Coco Goldenberg, Raine Goldenberg

All-Metro Team: Coco Goldenberg, Raine Goldenberg

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Salem Fitch, Emmeline Moore, Margo Thionville



FOOTBALL (FALL 2022)

Head Coach: Chris Chetta

Assistant Coaches: Troy Baglio, Mark Drago, Austin Duncan, David Mosley

Overall Record: 6-6

District Ranking: 3rd

LHSAA Class 2A Results: Lost in Quarterfinals to U-High

All-District First Team: Colin Cummings, Clayton Gehman, Connor Gibbs, Yash Gupta, Jake Ibieta, Taj Oberhelman, Jack Schwing

All-District Second Team: Hagan Mimeles, Casey Rizzi, Ethan Smith, Mason Snyder

All-District Honorable Mention: Sam Schlesinger, Alden Senette

All-Metro Team: Connor Gibbs, Jake Ibieta, Jack Schwing

All-State Team: Jake Ibieta, Jack Schwing

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Colin Cummings, Yash Gupta, Ethan Smith

BOYS' SOCCER (WINTER 2022)

Head Coach: Raquel Bueno

Assistant Coach: George Cano

Overall Record: 10-5-02

DISTRICT CHAMPIONS

District Record: 2-1-1

LHSAA Division IV State Results: Lost in Regionals to Episcopal (2-3)

All-District 1st Team: Lance Hebert, Connor Gibbs, Christian Myers, Maximo Valobra

All-District 2nd Team: Tammer Eissa, Simon LaGraize, Alden Senette

All-State Team: Lance Hebert, Maximo Valobra

All-Star Team: Maximo Valobra

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Maximo Valobra

GIRLS' SOCCER (WINTER 2022)

Head Coach: Chris Coniker

Assistant Coach: Lindsey Landry

Overall Record: 5-13-0

District: 1-3-0

LHSAA Division IV State Results: Lost in Quarterfinals to Episcopal of Acadiana (0-2)

All-District 1st Team: Ellie Davidson, Cecile Hattier, Lila Moody, Sophie Temple

All-District 2nd Team: Layne Corcoran, Emma Launey, Bea Schwarz, Adeline Weidner

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Layne Corcoran, Ellie Davidson

BOYS' BASKETBALL (WINTER 2022)

Head Coach: Mike McGuire

Assistant Coaches: Kevis Anderson, Justin Napoli

Overall Record: 22-13

LHSAA Class 1A State Results: Lost in Semifinals to Calvary Baptist

DISTRICT CHAMPIONS

All-District First Team: Maddox Moss, Evan Nunez, Connor Trahan, Jordan Trahan (MVP)

All-District Honorable Mention: Jake Ibieta

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Barrett Goldenberg

All-State Honorable Mention: Jordan Trahan

GIRLS' BASKETBALL (WINTER 2022)

Head Coach: Clinton Wenzel

Assistant Coach: Joseph Mitchell

Overall Record: 9-8

District Record: 6-2

LHSAA Class 1A State Results: Lost in Regionals to Southern Lab

All-District First Team: Ellie Schneider

All-District Second Team: Addison Launey

All-District Honorable Mention: Evelyn Rivas

GOLF (SPRING 2022)

Head Coach: Doug Gordon

BOYS

District Ranking: 7th

GIRLS

Lowest Score on Country Day Team: Layne Corcoran

BASEBALL (SPRING 2022)

Head Coach: Tommy Mathews

Assistant Coaches: Henry Abbott, Jim Mann, Michael Mann

Overall Record: 18-7

DISTRICT CHAMPIONS

LHSAA Class 1A Results: Lost in the Regionals to Catholic Point Coupee

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Barrett Goldenberg

All-District First Team: Sinnott Bland (Utility), Colin Cummings (Offensive MVP), Clayton Gehman (Infield), Jake Ibieta (Pitcher), Owen Marchal (Pitcher), Maddox Moss (Catcher), Jack Schwing (Outfield)

SOFTBALL (SPRING 2022)

Head Coach: Rob Ennis

Assistant Coaches: Gina Escude, Maddy Livaudais

Overall Record: 14-6

District Record/Finish: 6-3

LHSAA Class 1A Results: Lost in Regionals to Opelousas Catholic

All-District First Team: Addie Lund, Ellie Schneider

All-District Second Team: Jane Gambel, Ellie Schmidt, Maggie Schneider

TRACK & FIELD (SPRING 2022)

Head Coach: Maurice DuCarpe

Assistant Coaches: Jason Abate, Michael Arata, Chris Chetta, Howard Hunter, Susan Lee, Dom Maley

GIRLS

6th in State

LHSAA CLASS 1A REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

DISTRICT CHAMPIONS

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Valerie Cannella, Layne Corcoran, Eli Goodwin, Mason Poole, Ethan Taylor, Jack Zink

BOYS

2nd in State

LHSAA CLASS 1A REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

DISTRICT CHAMPIONS

For individual track and field results visit mpcds.com/trackandfield

TENNIS (SPRING 2022)

Head Coach: Chep Morrison

Coordinator: Robyn Schwarz

GIRLS

LHSAA Div. IV State:

Doubles: Emma Launey, Marguerite Schwarz

LHSAA Div. IV Regionals: Doubles:

Semifinalists: Emma Launey, Marguerite Schwarz

LHSAA All-Academic Team: Marguerite Schwarz

BOYS

LHSAA Division IV Regionals:

Singles:

1st Round: Jack Morton

1st Round: Charlie Kazour

Doubles:

2nd Round: John Hereford, William Sinnott

2nd Round: Eli Jones, Porter Sinnott

2nd Round: Henry Breen, Oliver Parsi

Financial Statement 2021-22

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

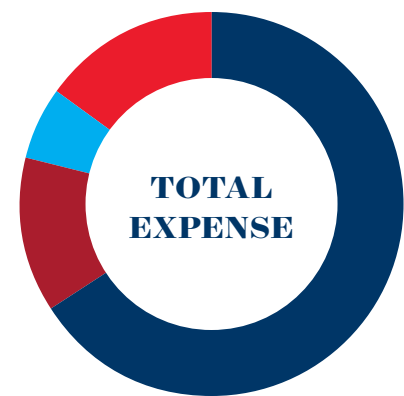
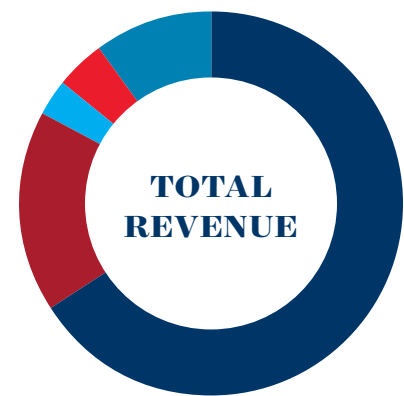
Metairie Park Country Day School has an annual operating budget of \$18.7 million. The annual operating budget is funded through four major sources: Tuition; Auxiliary Services (Dining, Early Childhood, Summer Programs); charitable giving, such as the Country Day Fund; and annual endowment draw.

	(Amts in '000)	
Tuition, net of Financial Assistance (\$3,616)	\$13,119	70%
Auxiliary Services: Dining, Early Childhood, and Summer Programs	\$3,465	19%
Annual Endowment Draw	\$568	3%
Contributions, including Annual Fund and Restricted Contributions	\$928	5%
Other*	\$603	3%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$18,684	100%

* Includes governmental funding through American Rescue Plan Act program for early childhood centers.

The largest expense in this operating budget is salaries for our faculty and support staff, which are the foundation of the strong and nurturing learning environment we build at Country Day. The remaining funds go toward funding our Instructional and Student Support Programs, including our impressive arts and athletics programs, providing financial aid, and maintaining our beautiful campus. Facilities costs in 2021-22 included unexpected expenses due to minor storm damage in the fall and increased insurance expense.

	(Amts in '000)	
Salaries, Taxes, and Benefits	\$12,973	69%
Instructional and Student Support Programming	\$2,194	12%
General and Administrative, including Debt Service	\$1,404	7%
Plant Operations, including Major Repair and Maintenance & Reserves	\$2,321	12%
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$18,891	100%



Development

THE 2022-2023 COUNTRY DAY FUND*

The Country Day Fund is the School's most important annual fundraising priority. It provides unrestricted funds that directly support the annual operating budget. Every year, the Country Day Fund benefits every student by bridging the gap between tuition revenue and the actual cost of providing a Country Day education.

Thanks to our generous donors and volunteers, this year's Country Day Fund campaign is off to a great start!

91%

Participation from
**FACULTY
AND STAFF**

100%

Participation from
**THE ALUMNI
BOARD**

100%

Participation from
**THE BOARD
OF TRUSTEES**

We've raised over
90%
of the dollars needed to reach our
\$775,000 GOAL
for The Country Day Fund

Over
75
VOLUNTEERS
for the
Country Day Fund

**COUNTRY DAY FUND
CO-CHAIRS**
Jessica and
Jordan Schulman

**COUNTRY DAY FUND
MAJOR GIFTS CHAIR**
Gaines Seaman

**COUNTRY DAY FUND
PARENT GIVING
CO-CHAIRS**
Jessica and
Josh Richardson



Strength of Intellect
Strength of Character

Portrait of a Graduate

Metairie Park Country Day School enriches the lives of talented young people in a dynamic learning environment, building strength of intellect and strength of character within a community that is simultaneously challenging and supportive. Our students learn to be flexible, to be adaptable, and to face the challenges of life with honor, optimism, confidence, creativity, and a sense of humor. *In pursuit of this mission, the school has prioritized **four essential outcomes** for all of its graduates:*



CURIOSITY

- Pursues knowledge for its own sake
- Applies essential academic content to create solutions
- Asks meaningful questions
- Seeks out and learns from multiple perspectives
- Identifies and pursues creative interests
- Exhibits a sense of wonder about the world

CHARACTER

- Acts with integrity
- Advocates for self and others
- Makes choices that support physical and emotional wellness
- Builds meaningful relationships
- Develops self-awareness

CRITICAL THINKING

- Reveals and challenges assumptions
- Analyzes complex problems
- Connects ideas across disciplines
- Evaluates sources and information
- Develops informed opinions
- Explores beauty, truth, and meaning

CITIZENSHIP

- Engages in experiences at school, within the local community and the world at large
- Values diversity of cultures, beliefs, and our shared humanity
- Navigates complex issues inherent in equity and justice
- Communicates with clarity and respect
- Understands the importance of both leadership and teamwork

At the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year, we announced our "Portrait of a Country Day Graduate." Building this portrait involved a team of students, teachers, and administrators who defined the skills and habits of mind we aspire to see in all our students. This framework will help us develop specific goals at each level of a student's experience as we guide them through their educational journey at Country Day.



Looking Forward

BY ROB HEREFORD, HEAD OF SCHOOL

We are in an exciting and challenging time for teachers.

As educators, technological advances regularly push us to reconsider our approach to students and how they learn, particularly as we assess the utility and impact of tools such as Chat GPT. This chatbot, powered by artificial intelligence, has unsettled many industries, particularly education, as we begin to understand its capabilities and grapple with how this tool will alter our classrooms and our approach to inculcating values such as academic integrity.

While we are in the earliest stages of understanding how artificial intelligence will change student instruction, other innovations have had more time to inform educators’ best practices. In the late 1990s, a combined effort brought together researchers in neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and educational theory under the heading of Mind, Brain, Education (MBE) Science to conduct MRI scans on adolescent brains. The objective was to study how they respond when learning, providing educators access to new information on effective instruction, review, and assessment approaches.

One of the leading organizations in MBE is the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL), based at St. Andrew’s Episcopal School in Bethesda, Maryland. In March of 2022, we entered a partnership with the CTTL, bringing their team to Country Day multiple times over the past year to share this latest research with our faculty. This partnership has resulted in an investment of over 4,500 professional learning hours over the past year. Every student brings their brain to school daily, it’s our responsibility as educators to know how that organ works best. We believe in the importance of applying MBE research and best practices in every grade, every classroom, and for every student. While we have always been proud of the caliber of faculty at Country Day, we are celebrating that our partnership with the CTTL has, in many ways, affirmed our approach to teaching, while giving powerful strategies to fine-tune our practices and ensure optimal student success.

In Lower School, the time students spend during recess provides a crucial creative and physical outlet that helps students learn problem-solving, develop social skills with

their peers, and foster creativity — to name a few. Through MBE practices, students and teachers have brought increased intentionality to this time through “Play Plans,” a strategic exercise in which teachers present a series of thought-provoking questions to students about their plans for the period before it even begins. Creating a plan for success for teachers and students before heading out to big adventures such as recess has empowered students to manage their expectations and behavior more effectively.

MBE research concluded that more frequent feedback on a student’s understanding is essential in enabling memory consolidation. In Middle School, faculty members prioritize implementing multi-channel feedback, allowing students to develop increased self-awareness of how they best learn. Teachers have seen an impressive increase in study effectiveness across the division by leveraging direct and indirect feedback methods, both before and after assessments.

Too often, students focus only on the end product — in their minds that is the grade — and give less attention to the opportunities for learning and growth. In Upper School, English teachers have experimented with returning student assignments with written feedback but no grade, shifting focus from the high-stakes grade to the student’s work. By emphasizing the importance of absorbing and responding to feedback, teachers reinforce that our students’ primary goal should be their ongoing development as writers.

As always, what most positively impacts learning for our students is the Country Day community and the relationships among all its members, particularly students and teachers. Peer relationships and connections with teachers provide Country Day students “an environment that is simultaneously challenging and supportive,” which we believe encourages everyone here to stretch themselves and take healthy risks. We encourage our students to try new things every day, whether on stage, at the lunch table, or in a classroom. Our teachers’ dedication to constant self-improvement enhances our kids’ ability to grow and become the best version of themselves.



STRENGTH OF INTELLECT
STRENGTH OF CHARACTER

300 Park Road, Metairie, LA 70005

 @mpcountrydayschool

 @MetairieParkCountryDay



2022-2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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**Not pictured in 2022-2023 Board photograph.*