

PDS Spirit

The Magazine of Presbyterian Day School



**PDS Boys are
Hitting the Road**
Cultural Expeditions

SUMMER 2022



**What is Best for
Boys?** Professional
Development is a Priority



PDS
Spirit
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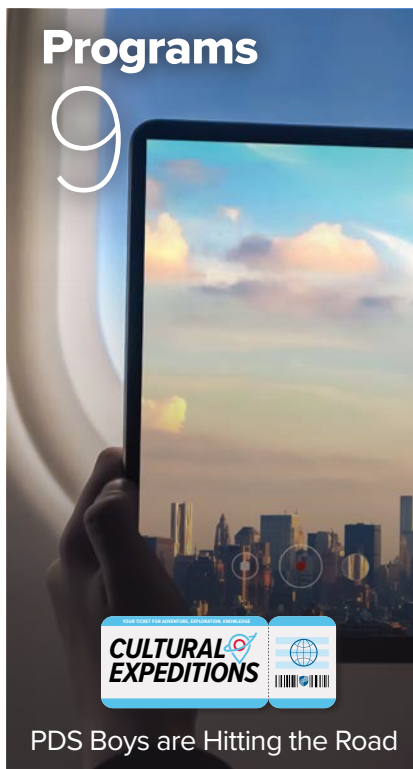
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 Email kbridgforth@pdsmemphis.org



On the Cover:

The class of 2022 gather outside the sanctuary just before receiving their diplomas.



From the Head of School



Dear Family and Friends of PDS,

With the academic year behind us, and families engaged in typical summertime routines, let me express my sincere gratitude for your support and dedication to PDS and, above all, for entrusting us with the education and care of your son.

It has been a remarkable year at PDS. I want to thank our faculty and staff, the Board of Trustees, and those who volunteered to make this year special! As you turn the pages of this edition of the *PDS Spirit*, you will see many examples of a truly exceptional school community. It takes many people with diverse skills, competencies, and passions to create a vibrant school community that instills a foundation for a boy's life. This is certainly true of PDS!

A few weeks ago, the 73rd graduating class of PDS boys crossed the stage to receive their diplomas and finish the first leg of their educational journey. They are now official "alumni" of PDS. A few weeks before commencement, high school seniors, all graduates of PDS from around Memphis, returned to campus to be celebrated by our faculty and staff. Once again, they roamed the hallways and interacted with faculty that taught them as far back as early childhood. These graduates spoke excitedly about their next chapter as they step into college life. The one theme that marked this experience for me was that of leaving and returning. Most importantly, it was a true blessing to see these boys return to PDS with excitement after all of these years.



Among the many things that I admire and deeply appreciate about PDS is the education of the whole boy, the intentional development of the heart, soul, and mind of each boy. Each boy, whether a sixth-grader or a graduating senior, carries an imprint of PDS left by the friendships made, faculty that have guided him, and a feeling of the most profound sense of care about his well-being – because he is loved, known, and nurtured.

Our faculty's passion and commitment to seeing each boy succeed is a keystone of PDS culture. The depth of care for each student and the high standard we hold ourselves to, making sure each boy reaches his fullest potential, drive us as educators.

Lastly, we want as many boys as possible in the Memphis community to receive a PDS education. So many of the families that I meet and welcome to our campus visit because of your recommendation. We had very active admissions this year, and we appreciate all of our families and friends that sent referrals our way. Thank you, as always, for being ambassadors of PDS.

I wish everyone a relaxing and fun-filled summer.

Sincerely,

Brad Sewell
Head of School



Art Selections for '21-22

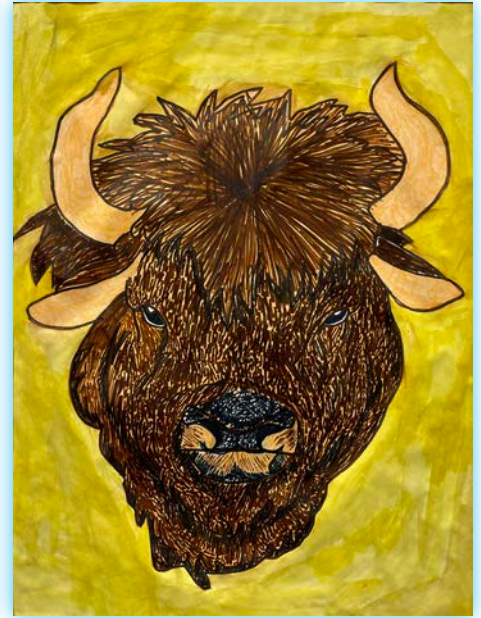
Each year, one work of art in 1st-6th grades is selected to go on permanent display.



1st Grade: Martin Shea



2nd Grade: Julian Kang



3rd Grade: Blake Terry



4th Grade: Chase Coleman



5th Grade: Colton Schrank



6th Grade: Benjamin Berry '22



Retired Faculty Honored in Chapel

On Friday, April 22, we honored our retired faculty members in Chapel. The people in this photograph represent a combined 300+ years of service to PDS! What legacies they have left behind in the lives of countless boys! We are grateful for their service to our school!

Pictured: Charlotte Neal, Ting Ting Davis, Margaret Taylor, Carolyn Murray, Pat Corbitt, Mary Ellen Danner, Cathy Kyle, Dee Gibson, Barbara Harris, Jean Nabers, Gladys Slappey, Dwight Creasman, Sharon McCall, Beth Campbell

Celebrating This Year's Retirees

Betty West-Brown **Housekeeping**

Betty West-Brown has served in our Housekeeping department for the last 26 years. While she may not have worked directly with the boys, all who have worked on our campus can testify to Betty's caring and generous spirit, her dedication and diligence, and her importance to ensuring a healthy and clean school building, especially important during the course of the pandemic. We wish her the best in her retirement.



Jill Kauffman **Chief Financial Officer**

PDS has been blessed to have Jill Kauffman as CFO over the last 17 years. Her steady leadership and financial acumen have helped steward the school to its current status. We are incredibly grateful for Jill's leadership and wish her the best as she retires.

Debbie Todd **Head of Early Childhood**

For the last 18 years, Debbie has led our Early Childhood division with excellence and integrity. She's been an exemplar of the PDS mission! Her tireless devotion and efforts have shaped learning experiences and the classroom setting within the halls of PDS into a boy-friendly environment. During her tenure and leadership at PDS, she expanded our Early Childhood division to include Pre-Kindergarten and Young Knights. She was also instrumental in the planning of our Early Childhood building. We are thankful for the years of service from Debbie and wish her well in retirement.



“Live in the Moment”

by Russell Lindeman '22

The annual Motsey Hudson Speech Contest is a familiar rite of passage for all alumni of Presbyterian Day School. The winner of the contest delivers his speech during the Graduation ceremony. This year's winner was Russell Lindeman '22.

How often do you find yourself reliving moments from your past or imagining what your future will be like? Do you zone out when someone's talking to you or daydream during class? It's time to stop living in your head and start living in the moment. Sometimes we spend so much time thinking about the past or future that we don't realize just how quickly the present moment flies by. Because we are bombarded with distractions constantly, being fully present is an uphill battle. Being in the now has many aspects like being fully aware of your surroundings and focusing on the task at hand. Your life becomes much simpler if you live in the moment because you don't worry about what will happen in the future or regret your past actions. Today, I will talk about the importance of living in the moment, the benefits of doing this, and ways that we can live in the now.

First, why is it important to live in the moment? Studies have shown that people who are absorbed with the past are nowhere near as happy as people trying to stay in the present moment. And we all want to be happy, right? By trying to notice the little things and simple pleasures, we can be happier and more productive. Also, the present makes us exist in a certain place. Even though we underestimate the present sometimes, everything we do in the present moment will affect our future. Living in the now allows you to create your legacy. Moreover, living in the present moment allows us to truly appreciate the things we have. If we are relying mainly on memories and the past to keep us happy, we won't be able to focus on the present very well. This will keep us from being fully conscious of what goes on around us. For example, my grandmother, whom I was very close to, died suddenly last year. And I'll be honest: it was a very hard time for my family and me. I got so caught up remembering all the good times I had with her in the past, that my life was being seen through a grey

lens of sadness. But since I have accepted her loss the only things I think of now are the happy memories of her. Overall, happiness is easier to achieve if you are living in the moment.

Secondly, don't you want to know how life will be different if you live in the moment? Living in the present allows you to be more in the world and less and less absorbed in your thoughts. Keeping yourself in the present is perhaps the most useful (and underrated skill.) And there are many benefits of having it. If something is bothering you and you don't know what it is, living in the moment helps you quickly pinpoint it. It makes it very easy to isolate what's bugging you. Another example is that living in the moment changes how you view success. We are taught that the harder you work, the more successful you'll be; the more successful you are, the happier you are. Instead, when we are fully present, we start to see happiness coming not from money and material things like the newest iPhone, but from family and the things we love. Also, being in the now brings down your stress level immensely. The life of a PDS boy can be somewhat crazy, and some days for us are filled with stressful events. I bet if you stop and think, something that stresses you out will pop into your head. I know what it is for my family. For my mom, it's traffic. For my dad, it's work. For my sixteen-year-old brother, it's girls. By living in the moment, you are able to quickly relax your body and let go of any negative impulse. Overall, living in the moment is great for you and others around you.

Third, now that you know why you should live in the moment, I'm going to tell you how. To start, you should interact with people and truly notice them. It's routine to ask people how they are, but what if you actually inquired because you want to know about the wellbeing of the people you interact with every day? By having more engaging conversations with people, you become more focused on the here and now. Furthermore, start small. Try to really experience the moment and notice little things that are happening around you, like your daily routine or the sunrise in the morning. This may feel odd at first, but you'll find these things are much more interesting than you thought. Also, try to stay off your electronic devices. I know you've been told many times before,

but although electronics and technology have transformed our world for the better, people are spending more and more time on their phones and other devices and spending less time interacting with real people. The average screen time per day has gone from 90 minutes in 2012, to, wait for it, 3 hours and 43 minutes in 2022. Ultimately, by applying these suggestions to our lives, we can be more in the present.

In conclusion, I have discussed the benefits of living in the moment, the importance of doing this, and ways that we can be in the present. I sincerely hope that each one of you will take these suggestions to heart because I truly believe that even though it can be a challenge, it is worth it to live in the moment. Being able to live your life one moment at a time can help reduce stress, improve your

relationships with the ones you love, and become more productive. Do the things that make you happy because that's what living in the moment is all about. In our current twenty-first century lives, it's not easy. Given the fast pace and hectic schedules most of us keep, mindfulness is more important than ever. While it is okay to think about the past and future in small doses, we should not spend time worrying about them. I challenge you to stay in the present moment for the majority of your time. And, as Ferris Bueller once said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."



6th Grade Awards

Congratulations to the following 6th graders from the Class of 2022 who received awards in recognition of their outstanding achievements during their PDS careers.

Headmaster's List:

Palmer Albertine, Benji Berry, Mac Canale, Nate Fahey, Ethan Ferdinand, William Frazee, Mack Gober, Sajjan Goorha, Russell Lindeman, Robb McDonald, Will Perkins, Bruce Stockburger, Kemmons Wilson

Vicky C. Spicer Trophy:
Mack Gober '22

Minna Thompson Bible Scholarship:
Bruce Stockburger '22

Henry Edward Russell Scholarship:
Ethan Ferdinand '22

Mary Hearn Coleman Award:
Will Perkins '22

Wendy Edwards Award:
William Frazee '22

Elisabeth Horton Laios Trophy for General Excellence:
Benji Berry '22

Jane East Award:
Sajjan Goorha '22

A.W. Dick Trophy:
Haynes Kiser '22

Charlotte Neal Spirit Award:
Peo Hughes '22

Headmaster's Trophy:
Palmer Albertine '22

Motsey Hudson Speech Award:
Russell Graves Lindeman '22

Robert E. Gentry Creative Writing Award:
Peo Hughes '22

Wetter-Boyle Memorial Award:
Robb McDonald '22

Robert J. Hussey Scholarship:
Benji Berry '22

MUS Book Award:
Mac Canale '22





PDS Boys are Hitting the Road

Our new *Cultural Expeditions* program offers annual, immersive learning experiences for boys beginning this fall.





“The world is a book and those who do not travel read only a page.”
- St. Augustine



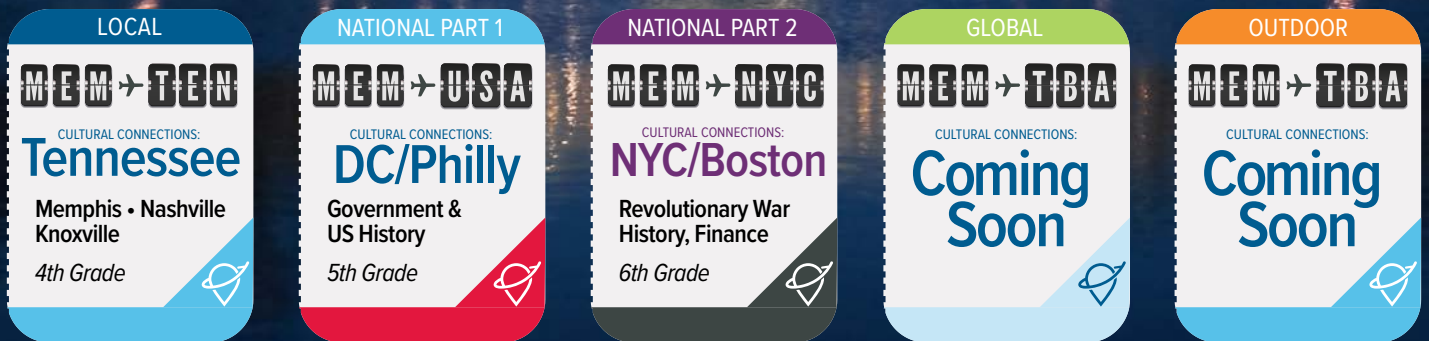
As we strive to live out PDS’ mission, we build a foundation for our boys to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor, both with God and man. Our goal is to shape each boy as we prepare them to be global citizens who flourish in the world today. Part of this preparation includes exposing our boys to the world around them, starting locally and expanding outward along the way.

We live in a world where we are more connected than ever, and preparing boys for their future should include active engagement from immersive, first-hand experiences. Beginning this Fall, our boys will have the opportunity to travel our state, nation, and the world through our new Cultural Expeditions program

The benefits of educational travel for students are numerous. A recent survey of over 2,500 adults and 1,200 youth by the *Travel Effect* project revealed that adults who traveled regularly as children had above average grades and higher educational attainment. Traveling fosters independence. It teaches boys early lessons about independence through opportunities to pack and organize and accept responsibility for their own things.

Travel can also boost higher-level thinking skills. When we are in a place that is familiar, our brain goes into cruise control, simply because there are less inputs to consider. Think about your commute to work. You don’t use nearly as much analytical power driving familiar routes as you would when exploring unfamiliar terrain. This promotes the psychological phenomenon known as the “distant condition.” According to an Indiana University study, being in an unfamiliar space significantly increases your capacity for creative problem solving. Travel brings classroom lessons to life, making connections in the brain that enrich the learning process.

Cultural Expeditions will launch in phases. In the Fall, we will launch phase one with a *Cultural Connections Trip* to Washington D.C. and Philadelphia. We believe that giving students the opportunity to explore and grow in their understanding of their own culture, its history, and their nation’s capital is essential to developing their understanding of civic duty, their identity as U.S. citizens, and their ability to think globally. This trip is intended to immerse our students in the functions of our federal government, our nation’s history, and to experience one of the most important cities of the world.



Eventually, our program will feature five trips. Phase one launches in the fall with a Cultural Connections Trip to Washington D.C. and Philadelphia which will include 5th and 6th grade in year one.

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts.

Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one’s lifetime.”

- Mark Twain

Once all of the elements of the program are in place, we will offer annual trips that progressively move from local to national to international destinations. Additional phases of the program will add additional Cultural Connection Trips to explore the government and history of the state of Tennessee, a trip to New York City and Boston, an international trip, as well as an outdoor expedition.

Throughout this process, we will connect classroom knowledge with seminal experiences, broadening each boy’s perspective and stirring up his imagination and curiosity of the world and its many cultures.

“Few experiences embed knowledge as deeply into memory as travel exposure. Cultural Expeditions is a pacesetter in formative experiences for boys,” says Brad Sewell, Head of School.

Through these immersive experiences beyond the classroom, our desire is to foster independence, connect knowledge, expand perspectives, ignite curiosity, and affect a boy’s disposition for learning. Through this program, boys will gain knowledge of the world and build a foundation to be the best neighbors they can be.

“What is best for boys?”

PDS stands as the vanguard in the education of boys. One of the most important contributors to our ongoing success is a commitment to professional growth amongst faculty and staff.

One of the requirements to be a PDS teacher is a commitment to being a lifelong learner by immersing oneself in cutting edge research, learning from educators around the world, and sharing their world-class expertise with others.

Our commitment to lifelong learning during the 2021-2022 school year saw PDS faculty engaged in many different professional development opportunities:

- *The Arbinger Institute Outward Mindset Training Conference*
- *Learning and the Brain Webinar*
- *Tennessee Association of Independent Schools: New and Emerging Leaders Institute*
- *Neurodiversity Workshop Webinar*
- *Enrollment: Strategies in a Post Covid World Conference*
- *International Boys' School Coalition: Developing a School-Based Research Program Webinar*
- *Tennessee Association of Independent Schools 2021 Biennial Conference*
- *Hello Literacy Writing Workshop*
- *Using Executive Function to Improve Learning in and Beyond the Classroom Webinar*
- *Visit from New Hope Christian Academy educators*
- *Book Club: Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box*
- *Book Club: Legacy: What the All Blacks Can Teach Us about the Business of Life*
- *Book Club: Playing to Win: How Strategy Really Works*
- *IMSE Orton-Gillingham Comprehensive Training*
- *Facing History and Ourselves Workshop*

In the fall, a number of faculty members represented the school at the Tennessee Association of Independent Schools' Biennial Conference. Principal of the Elementary Division Mark Fruitt, Head of Elementary Laura Glenn and Counselor Tom Edwards lead educators from across the state in a deep dive into our emotional intelligence program. Other PDS faculty members, Melissa Smith, Holly Lindsey, Mallory Byrd, Darilyn Christenbury, and Cami Sewell, led roundtable discussions, opening the door to a wide variety of educational ideas and best practices.



PICTURED: Counselor Tom Edwards leads a session on emotional intelligence at the TAIS Biennial

A group of PDS faculty members also visited St. Mark's School in Dallas in March. St. Mark's serves over 900 boys from 1st through 12th grade. PDS and St. Mark's faculty participated in an exchange of ideas about faith-based education, best practices for educating boys, and character development programs, inspiring creative reflection on the part of PDS. The experience was a confirmation of what we are doing well, as well as a challenge not to become complicit in our approach to boys' education and character development.

Looking Forward

Beginning with the upcoming school year, one way the school will continue to grow in implementing best practices in the education of boys is via the

establishment of a new position. Emily Lequerica has been named our first Director of Research and Innovation for Boys' Education. Emily aspires to lead PDS in advancing evidence-informed practice in boys' education and serve as a resource to educators and PDS families. Emily is well positioned to take on this new role due to her educational background and experiences at PDS. In her thirteen years with the school, Emily has served as a Junior Kindergarten teacher, Director of Early Childhood Programs, Assistant Director of Admission, and as an associate in the Advancement office. In addition to her Masters Degree in Education from Christian Brothers University, she recently completed the *New & Emerging Leaders Institute* through Vanderbilt University.

The pace of innovation is set to increase in the 2022-2023 school year. Look for PDS to continue visiting and learning from the expertise and experience of other leading boys' schools with planned trips to St. Christopher's School in Richmond, VA, the International Boys' School Coalition in New Zealand and Scots College Preparatory School in Sydney, Australia. Our faculty will also be forming "professional learning teams" and diving into research and development as well as evaluating best practices in curriculum, teaching and learning. We will also be launching a companion program for our *Cultural Expeditions*

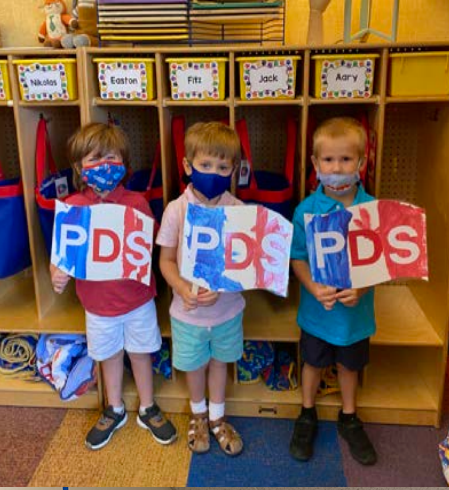
program offering immersive learning experiences for faculty members both in the United States and beyond. Bible & Global Education teacher, Darilyn Christenbury will be attending the workshop *A Comprehensive Approach to Leadership of Global Education* over the summer.

Finally, PDS faculty will be diving deep into the book *Raising Boys By Design* by Gregory L. Jantz and Michael Gurian and learning directly from *New York Times* bestselling author, international speaker, consultant and psychologist, Dr. Michael G. Thompson during his visit to the school.

Our continuing goal is to intentionally promote the social, emotional, spiritual and academic development of every PDS boy. This goal, informed by our mission, drives us to these efforts, where we will ask, explore, and implement, "What is best for boys?"

PICTURED: PDS Faculty visit St. Marks School of Texas









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GRANDPARENTS' DAY 2022 FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28