

PDS SPIRIT

SUMMER 2010



FRED SMITH '56 NAMED DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS BE LIKE GOOGLE FORGING AHEAD

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PDS SPIRIT

SUMMER 2010

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12 MARTIN INSTITUTE

5 TEACHER FEATURE

Behind the scenes with
PDS music maestro,
Bill McMath

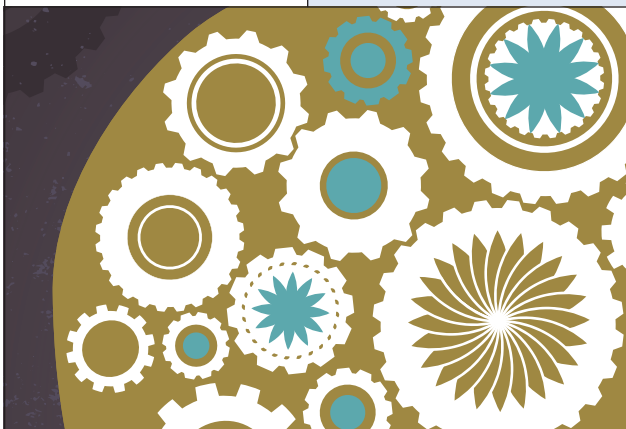


10 CRAIN CENTER

Global curriculum opens
opportunity for students,
teachers, and community

26 CLASS AWARDS

Sixth graders recognized
at Awards Day



18 BE LIKE GOOGLE

How schools can benefit from exploring
and implementing the strategies of a hugely
successful search engine company



14 FORGING AHEAD

Results from recent surveys show strength,
enthusiasm, and areas to improve



6 ALUMNI LUNCHEON

Fred Smith '56 returns to reminisce,
offer praise for progress, and relay his
thoughts on a 21st century education

21 SOURCES OF PRIDE

Class of 2004 receives
\$5.95 million in scholarships

MINI-FEATURES

Have some news for a future issue of *PDS Spirit*?
Send it to info@pdsmemphis.org

BOYSPEAK

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY OF YOUR TIME AT PDS?

During this issue we asked graduating sixth graders to answer the question: What is your favorite PDS Memory? The answers were sometimes humorous, often touching, but always as varied as the personalities of the students who responded. Thank you to our graduating boys who shared their closing thoughts about special moments at PDS.

My favorite memory of PDS was sixth grade Crusader football. Every day at practice, I would always ask the coach to let me play tackle for one play. This is my favorite memory of PDS.
– Bolton Gayden

I will always remember when I had fleas in my laptop, and I had to give it back so they could double bag it and flea bomb it.
– Jim House

My favorite memory of PDS was Yipes Stripes in second grade. My president was Martin Van Buren, and I had great time learning about him.
– Chandler Clayton

My favorite PDS memory was when I was in first grade and some sixth graders let me play kickball with them at recess.
– Gil Humphreys

My favorite memory of PDS was having green eggs and ham in kindergarten because I didn't know how they made them green.
– Buck Billings

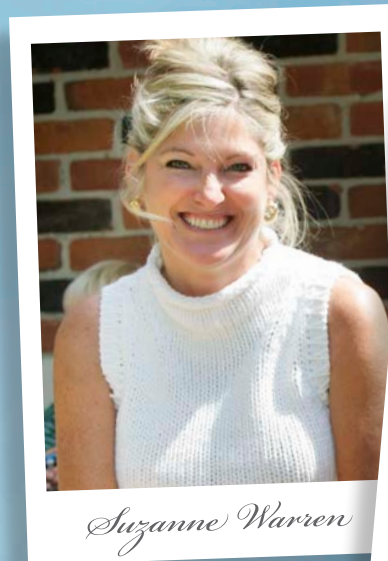
Look for more favorite memories from PDS boys on subsequent pages.

REMEMBERING SUZANNE WARREN AND MARY ALICE DOBBINS

Mary Alice Dobbins, a beloved Presbyterian Day School teacher, died on March 17, 2010, in Nashville, Tennessee. Dobbins taught at PDS from 1955 until her retirement in 1979. She lovingly taught hundreds of students during her teaching career. She was 94 years old.

Suzanne Warren, early childhood teacher, died on March 9, 2010. Warren was cherished by the boys for her spark and bubbly personality. She was instrumental in establishing the junior kindergarten program at PDS, where she taught from 1992-2008.

PDS warmly and graciously remembers these two extraordinary women who selflessly shared their love, faith, and talents with the entire community.



Suzanne Warren



Mary Alice Dobbins

TEACHER FEATURE

BILL MCMATH, MUSIC TEACHER

Behind the Scenes with PDS Music Maestro

Mr. McMath, much loved musical director, has been teaching students a variety of instruments for more than eighteen years. Less known by many in the PDS community is his impressive career as a notable musician in his own right.

Tell us what you like best about your job?

I enjoy being actively involved with music every day and having the opportunity to share that with the boys. My students' curiosity and enthusiasm make it fun.

Is there a favorite story you have about teaching students here?

During my first year of teaching at PDS, which was January of 2002, I was having a discussion about instruments of the string family with my third grade class. A boy suddenly started waving his hand, and I assumed he had an enlightening contribution to make to our discussion. When I acknowledged him, he reported: "Mr. Mac, Mr. Mac, My Dad has some shoes just like yours!"

Your funniest moment at PDS?

The student-faculty basketball game when Dennis Smith decided to "resurrect" Elvis. Dressed in my Elvis costume, the coaches carried me into the gym on a stretcher. I was supposed to run to the microphone and sing "Hound Dog," but because I was covered up on the stretcher, I got disoriented. The next thing I knew I was running around trying to get my bearings. The crowd was yelling and screaming and fortunately seemed to think it was part of the act. I finally got my bearings and was able to belt out "Hound Dog."

Talk about your background and a few of your musical experiences outside PDS.

I've had a passion for music for as long as I can remember. During high school, I studied guitar and piano and was always in at least one band of some type. I also joined the American Federation of Musicians when I was 19-years-old and am still a member today. I received both my Bachelor of Arts and Masters degrees from North Texas State University, which is now The University of North Texas. After graduation I worked as a studio musician in Memphis, recording music for radio and TV commercials. Later, I moved to Nashville where I played on recording sessions as well as playing guitar and touring with Lynn Anderson, Tanya Tucker, and Jerry Reed. During that same period, I played guitar on the sound track of the Clint Eastwood movie, *Thunderbolt and Lightfoot*.

Currently, I enjoy playing guitar with the Memphis Symphony Pops Orchestra. I have also played for numerous shows at the Orpheum Theatre, and this past June, I played at Theatre Memphis for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

What do you hope to accomplish at PDS over the next five years?

I would like to see us continue to increase our recording faculties and capabilities with a goal of having a state-of-the-art recording studio. We also plan to offer instruction in more instruments such as cello and percussion, expand



our PDS Orchestra, and add more choices for sixth grade electives.

What are your hobbies? Your passions?

Music is both of those things for me, and I cannot remember a time when it was not. I also like baseball and enjoy studying its history, fundamentals and strategies of the game. I think baseball is much like a chess game and a ballet all in one.

What is one important thing you want your students to learn about music?

I hope for them to understand that music is a lifetime endeavor. By playing a musical instrument and continuing to study and practice, one becomes a lifetime learner. A musician has a craft that he can always enjoy and can also share with others.

Anything else you'd like to add?

It is an honor to be a part of the PDS faculty and family. My goal each day is to try to live up to Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. It is the Lord Jesus Christ you are serving."

ALUMNI LUNCHEON DRAWS DYNAMIC GROUP TO CELEBRATE PAST AND FUTURE

Honoree Fred Smith '56 returns to reminisce, offer praise for progress, and relay his thoughts on a 21st century education

An energetic crowd of approximately 400 alumni and school friends gathered for the annual PDS alumni luncheon to reconnect with classmates and former teachers, recall their days at PDS, and commemorate Fred Smith '56, Founder, Chairman and CEO of FedEx, as he was presented the school's 2010 Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Smith's mother, Sally Hook, who was in attendance, remembers the days when Smith graduated as Salutatorian and recalls it was her son's enthusiasm, not necessarily musical talents, which landed him a front row spot during the annual Christmas pageant.

These stories and other light moments in Smith's life were enjoyed by attendees as Smith was celebrated by fellow classmates and teachers. Smith also gave a thought-provoking, invigorating talk as he shared his ideas on a range of topics from the importance of a quality education to current economic conditions both in the United States and abroad. Smith is the third alumnus to receive the award. Previous recipients are Pitt Hyde '55 (2008) and Rick Moore '57 (2009). Recipients are chosen by the alumni board based on contributions to society.

While a student at PDS, Smith received the school's English and history awards

(continued on page 8)

- 1 Chase Moore '01 and Kem Wilson chat after the luncheon
- 2 Lon Magness '79
- 3 Food and fellowship is shared by Joe Morrison '72, former headmaster Len Sumner, Jack Stokes '73 and Will Thompson '79
- 4 Jamie White and Treat Macdonald '72
- 5 PDS 6th Graders wait patiently for the luncheon to begin
- 6 Lester Crain, Lee Burns, and Fred Smith '56 have a lot to smile about.
- 7 Fred Smith '56 shows appreciation to his smiling mother, Sally Hook, as Marilyn Seaton looks on.
- 8 Lon Magness '79 presents Fred Smith '56 with the 2010 Distinguished Alumnus Award.
- 9 Sixth Graders Mark French, Austin Hord, Edwin Hussey, Patton Orr, Saatvik Mohan, Will McAtee, Philip Fentress, Tom Fowlkes, and Jackson Pacheco
- 10 William Rantzow, sixth grader, offers a closing prayer
- 11 Time for dessert!
- 12 Bob Loeb '67 and Norma Wilson
- 13 Enjoying their PDS connections are Gavin Murrey '80, David Warlick '80, Andy Wright '80, Greg McGowan '80, Bo Allen '80





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and the coveted A.W. Dick Trophy, still given annually to an outstanding PDS sixth-grader. Smith impressed his peers and teachers as a boy “who preferred to talk more about others than himself,” said Headmaster Lee Burns.

Smith spent part of the morning meeting the boys and their teachers as he visited classrooms and toured the school. “Our boys were excited to see and meet him, and our sixth graders had the opportunity to hear him discuss challenges and opportunities facing our country in today’s global community,” says Burns.

The sixth grade boys were in attendance and played several key roles as Jackson Pacheco presented a talk on his thoughts of being a PDS boy. Additionally, a number of underclassman shared their ideas and asked questions via videotape about similarities and differences between PDS and FedEx, and asked such questions as, “Our colors at PDS are red and blue. Why are yours orange and purple?” The boys researched Smith’s life and company and then folded the facts into a PowerPoint presentation. Smith praised the presentation as one of the most meaningful he has received.

“Their ideas were well-researched and creative,” says Burns. After introducing

Smith, Saatvik Mohan and classmates Reece O’Keefe and Dylan Jones, along with Alumni Association President Lon Magness ’79, presented Smith with the Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Smith was highly complimentary of PDS and its commitment to 21st century education. He cited numerous examples where excellent teaching and learning are second to none in a number of areas from genetics to Mandarin Chinese to creative problem solving.

“As an alumnus, I was so proud to hear one of the world’s business leaders praise the philosophy, curriculum, and direction of our school,” says Magness ’79.

The school recognized the classes of 1960 and 1985 as they celebrated their 50th and 25th reunions. Those present were given a video overview of upcoming enhancements to the music, art and science programs, as well as a peek at the future media center, learning center, and cafeteria at PDS.

“What a happy and exciting day in the life of PDS,” said Burns. “To see so many alumni back on campus thrilled us. We were particularly delighted to honor Mr. Smith for his remarkable accomplishments and the inspiration he is to many,” said Burns.

- 14 Lee Burns discusses PDS’s 21st century view on education.
- 15 Dr. Wiley Robinson ‘69, Richard Scharff ‘74
- 16 PDS Sixth Graders
- 17 Saatvik Mohan, sixth grade speaker
- 18 Chuck Smith ‘61
- 19 Van Jones, Patrick Demere ‘78 and John Stevens ‘71
- 20 Brad Martin and Lee Burns
- 21 Ralph Braden ‘64 is all smiles.

- 22 John Stokes ‘73 and Will Thompson ‘89 reminisce about PDS football plays.
- 23 Tom Fowlkes and Jackson Pacheco offer Fred Smith ‘56 a few PDS tokens.
- 24 Dudley Lee ‘79 listens attentively.
- 25 Mark Crosby ‘73 and Tom Batchelor enjoy good company.
- 26 Jackson Pacheco, sixth grade speaker
- 27 Tom Fowlkes, sixth grade speaker



14



17



20



24



15



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CRAIN CENTER BROADENS HORIZONS AT PDS

Global curriculum opens opportunity for students, teachers, and community

We live in a dynamic and interconnected global community, and thanks to a generous and visionary gift by Lester and Brenda Crain, PDS boys will be better, more closely connected students of their world.

The Crain Center for Global Curriculum enhances the PDS curriculum in world languages and social studies, and it will also bring speakers and residents to PDS to share their global knowledge and perspectives. The center will help PDS foster a formal partnership with an overseas school, and it has already begun to fund opportunities for teachers to travel abroad so that they may have a deeper and fuller understanding of the world.

“The Crain Center for Global Curriculum is a fabulous opportunity to strengthen the learning of our boys,” says Headmaster Lee Burns. “To be an effective citizen and leader today, you must have a knowledge of other countries and cultures and the ability to collaborate with people and institutions around the world.”

Currently, the Crain Center enables PDS to offer Mandarin, the most common Chinese dialect, to boys in

pre-kindergarten through first grade. Eventually, PDS boys in all nine grades will have the option of taking Mandarin or Spanish. Boys in early childhood take both Spanish and Mandarin, and parents of these boys who reach the first grade will choose for their son to take either Spanish or Mandarin for first through sixth grades.

“We believe that both Spanish and Mandarin are important and strategic languages, and the Crain Center enables us to offer both languages,” says Burns.



Lester and Brenda Crain's generous gift supports PDS's efforts to expand our global vision.

During the past 18 months, the school's Teaching and Learning Committee, a group of teachers who serve as a curricular think tank, have revamped the school's social studies curriculum to give it more of a global focus. It takes time and money to change a curriculum, and the center allows PDS the resources to do so.

PDS Spanish teacher Jessica Chandler will serve as director of the Crain Center in addition to her teaching responsibilities. “I am so excited to think about how the center is going to enrich our boys' knowledge of the world,” says Chandler. “It will help them understand that they are global citizens.”

Brenda and Lester Crain are the parents of PDS alumnus Chip Crain '74 and the grandparents of alumni Lewis Williamson '99, Christopher Williamson '00, and Drew Crain '10. They are also the grandparents of PDS students Collie and Preston Lowrance.

My favorite memory here at PDS was being able to play in the Student-Faculty game in March, where I got to play against the coaches and have lots of fun.

– Philip Freeburg

BOYSPEAK

**WHAT IS YOUR
FAVORITE
MEMORY
OF YOUR TIME AT PDS?**



PDS Teacher Jessica Chandler will serve as director of the Crain Center for Global Curriculum



One Way PDS is Going Global: PDS Mandarin teacher Ting Ting Davis instructs PDS boys.



The Martin Institute
FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

THE MARTIN INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE LAUNCHED

New PDS program will attract world-class thinkers and professionals to train teachers throughout the community

If an institution is very fortunate, it may, once in a lifetime, receive an investment that significantly strengthens it, expands its horizons, and generates new ways of executing its mission. Such is the case in 2010 with PDS, thanks to the forward-thinking and very generous philanthropy of PDS parents Dina and Brad Martin, whose Martin Family Foundation has established *The Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence*. Brad Martin serves as a PDS trustee.

Housed at PDS, the Institute will provide world-class professional development not only for PDS teachers, but it also will make its programs available to teachers and administrators at other private and public schools. Through an on-going series of conferences, seminars and workshops, the Institute will host some of the world's leading thinkers and researchers on education. The Institute will send PDS and

other public and private school teachers to study at Harvard. It will include a teacher residency program, similar to Teach for America, that enables talented young teachers the opportunity to spend a year in training with master teachers at PDS.

“The Institute will enhance the quantity and quality of professional development we are offering PDS teachers,” says Headmaster Lee Burns. “Even more than that, it enables us to share and leverage the resources PDS has for the greater good of the Mid-South. We believe that private schools should have public purposes, and *The Martin Institute* is a way to assist teachers and children throughout the region.”

The Institute's many programs will be partially or fully subsidized for teachers and schools who lack the financial resources to pay for them.



In a field in which teachers are often isolated, the Institute will facilitate the networking and exchange of ideas and best practices among teachers at many schools, as well as create a series of formal mentoring relationships. Both new and veteran teachers need ongoing professional development, especially in how to promote in students the acquisition of 21st century skills.

Teachers new to the profession of education will have the opportunity, like a resident in medical school, to experience a year of “rounds” as they observe PDS teachers practice their craft. As the year goes on, they will have opportunities for student teaching and working with PDS boys in small groups. Their residency program will include observation and teaching at a public school as well, in addition to regular meetings with the Institute’s executive director, Dr. Clif Mims, and PDS administrators and mentors (and even a year-long research project).

“We want to produce each year a group of highly-trained, well-supported new teachers who will be equipped to be excellent teachers at schools all over our region,” says Burns. “In receiving this training, they will also be bringing even more learning resources to the boys of PDS and students at other schools, all of whom will benefit from their work in the classrooms,” says Burns.

The annual number of teacher residents, who will be recruited both locally and nationally, will depend each year on the Institute receiving additional philanthropic support. As additional philanthropic gifts are received, the Institute will send an even greater number of teachers to study at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

In reflecting on PDS, the Institute and the importance of teacher development, Brad Martin, the former CEO and Chairman of Saks Incorporated, says, “PDS has become one of the finest boys’ schools in America, and we are fortunate to have this treasure located in Memphis. PDS is an outstanding school in large part because it hires and invests in outstanding teachers. The Institute supports this commitment to the continuous development of PDS faculty by providing funding for faculty participation in programs at Harvard and other internationally renowned venues for teacher training.”

Martin continues: “The Institute will also help create a pipeline for more great teachers—specifically, those who would become part of PDS or other schools in the Memphis and Shelby County area. We also believe PDS itself can become a

center for excellent teacher training and development right here in Memphis. We will do so by producing excellent seminars and workshops and provide access to this programming for public and private school teachers throughout the region. The Institute will extend the reach and mission of PDS beyond its existing student body.”



“The Institute will also help create a pipeline for more great teachers—specifically, those who would become part of PDS or other schools in the Memphis and Shelby County area.”—Brad Martin, Trustee

“While the Martin family has made a very, very significant investment in teacher development in Memphis, we will need additional support to grow the impact the Institute can have,” says Burns.

PDS and the College of Education at the University of Memphis have collaborated and partnered on the Institute, and they will continue to do so. “It is a great opportunity to draw upon the talent and resource of the university, as well assist their students enrolled in the College of Education,” says Burns.

“The Martin Institute is a very innovative partnership among public and private schools, the philanthropic community, and two educational institutions:

PDS and our neighbor, the University of Memphis,” says Burns. “It is exciting for us at PDS to be at the center of a synergistic collaboration centered on the most important part of a school: developing excellent teachers.”

The Martin Institute will provide professional development for teachers representing the full spectrum of educational needs, including children with special needs.

For more information about The Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence, including sponsoring a teacher resident or sending a teacher to Harvard, visit the website at www.martininstitute.org or contact its executive director, Dr. Clif Mims, at cmims@martininstitute.org.



FORGING AHEAD

Surveys show strength, enthusiasm, and areas to improve

PDS conducted an anonymous on-line survey consisting of 270 questions in a variety of areas involving the school. Participation included 75% of all parents/families, 95% of all sixth graders, 40% of alumni polled, and 85% of all faculty and staff.

In a continuous effort

to achieve excellence and move toward improvement, PDS recently conducted a survey to gain feedback from four key groups: parents, faculty and staff, sixth grade boys, and alumni in grades 7 through 12. The results were resoundingly positive with all groups agreeing that PDS is doing an outstanding or great job in nearly every area.

“We want specific feedback,” says Headmaster Lee Burns. “Even if we think we are doing a great job, we can have blind-spots. We can always be better. If we are doing great in an area, we want to be outstanding instead of just great, and we want to move the goods to greats,” says Burns.

Dr. Bill Weary, a consultant from Washington, DC, who works with premier independent schools and universities, analyzed the four surveys and noted that the combined averages of “completely agree” and “mostly agree” were typically above 90%.

Weary says, “Imagining a more positive group would be hard. Faculty, administrators, and staff found excellence in the school’s treatment of them, its valuing of them, its ability to empower them, and its dedication to their professional growth,” he says. “Very clearly, they knew and appreciated the school’s mission and found it well implemented. The school’s religious foundation was reflected in their own commitments as well,” says Weary.

“As educators, they value the school’s focus on a 21st century curriculum, as located within a national perspective, and they take

pride in being one of the nation’s finest elementary boys’ schools,” says Weary. “They find PDS boys to be happy, well taught, and subject areas were strong.”

Jamie Baker, also a school consultant and president of Reverb Consulting, studied the results and identified PDS’ culture as “cohesive and focused.” She claims teachers and administrators know where PDS is headed and why. They feel empowered to be contributing members in the mission. They are compensated and supported in their work and in their lives.

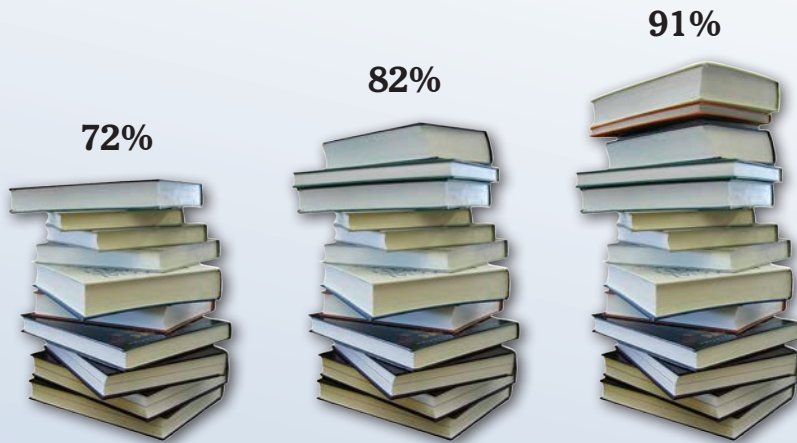
“As I work with many other schools seeking to shift their educational emphasis from traditional teaching of content to student-centric learning with a 21st century relevance, the single hardest aspect of this shift is achieving significant change and renewed commitment in the adult culture,” says Baker.

Describing parent responses, Weary claims: “If anything, parents are even more enthusiastic than the administration, faculty, and staff. They expressed, strongly, their pleasure in the school’s knowledge and love of their boys, its instilling in them a sense of Godly manhood, the 21st century curriculum, and pride in being one of the city’s top academic schools,” says Weary.

“PDS, they said, knows boys, has an excellent faculty, is safe, and provides a good learning environment in a spiritual atmosphere with Christian values,” says Weary. “Class work was challenging and fun, overall subject matter well handled, technology strong, and self-discipline, confidence, and moral character were promoted. Communication between the school and parents is excellent; parents appreciate the chance to

PDS Alumni, Seventh – Twelfth Graders

Excerpts from the survey of PDS alumni currently in grades seven through twelve



of PDS graduates have been selected for at least one position/group of leadership

of PDS graduates have earned a place at least once on an academic honor roll

of PDS graduates maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher

89% of PDS graduates report that a relationship with God is important to them

84% of PDS graduates have participated in at least one community service project

34% of PDS graduates have a GPA or 4.0 or higher

ALSO:

- 65% of PDS graduates maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher
- 87% of PDS graduates believe PDS helped them develop the skill of collaboration and teaming

PDS Parents

Excerpts from the survey of the parents of PDS boys



87% believe PDS understands boys' academic and social needs

90% believe PDS has an excellent faculty

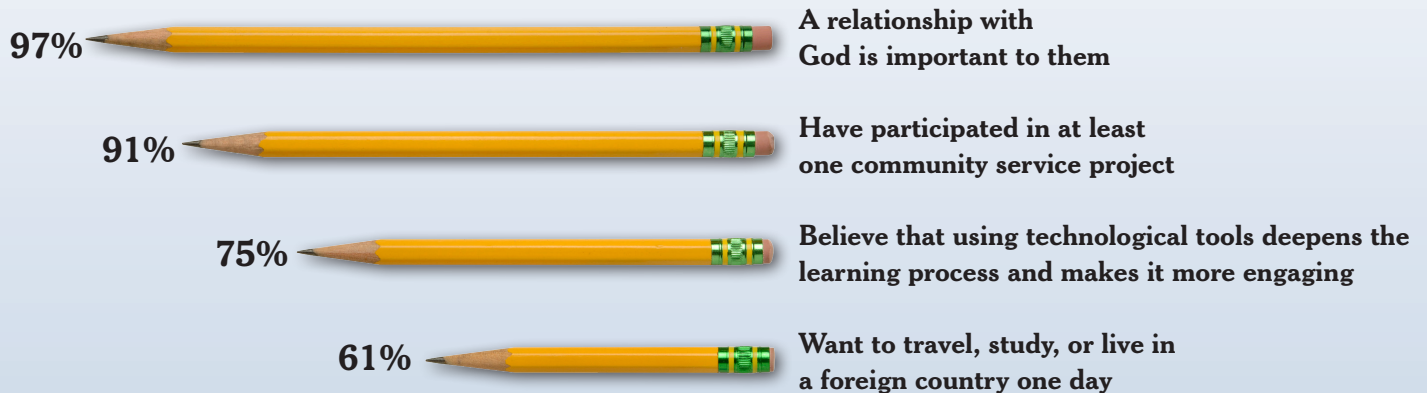
91% feel their son is known, loved, and nurtured

92% believe PDS is fulfilling its mission

93% feel PDS provides boys a godly vision of manhood

PDS Sixth Graders

Excerpts from the survey of PDS Sixth Grade boys



93%
say PDS has done a good job of teaching in their core subjects

93%
say they've gained a godly vision of manhood

97%
feel known, nurtured, and loved

96%
feel they are cared about as a person at PDS

94%
know teachers provide extra help when they don't understand

PDS Faculty and Staff

Excerpts from the survey of PDS faculty and staff



100%
are clear about the school's mission and philosophy

100%
view themselves as intellectually curious and lifelong learners

94%
feel that they are treated as professionals

97%
believe they are growing professionally

97%
believe a global, 21st century perspective on education is important

88%
feel valued

94%
believe they work well as a team

ALSO:

- 97% are growing professionally
- 97% say PDS is serving the broader needs of Memphis
- 97% believe teachers are living up to Christian standards expected from students
- 94% are happy at PDS
- 91% believe communication is good

learn more about parenting boys, and know they can become involved if they wish,” says Weary.

Baker was impressed by the “strong parental support and approval of the direction of PDS,” especially given that PDS has made a number of changes such that PDS boys are experiencing school in ways that parents are not accustomed to from their own school days.

“Our parents are savvy enough to know that in a dynamic and interconnected world, the skills of yesterday are necessary but no longer sufficient for students and leaders of tomorrow,” says Burns.

Other encouraging data from PDS alumni, 7th through 12th graders, shows this group as thriving personally, spiritually, and academically. Says Weary: “Recent alumni were especially thrilled with teachers’ willingness to help, and felt that they had a Godly vision of manhood. Their academic records after PDS were distinguished, they had become community leaders and servants, their relationship to God was important to them, and they sought to grow spiritually.”

The vast majority, 82%, earned places on academic honor rolls in years since PDS, and nearly all, 91%, had a 3.0 GPA or higher. A remarkable 65% had 3.5’s or higher, and 34% had a 4.0 or higher.

“A performance like that speaks to excellent preparation at PDS and excellent teaching and learning at their future schools,” says Burns. “It’s important to know that our graduates are thriving in their future schools...schools with both similarities and differences to PDS,” says Burns.

Current sixth graders also felt well prepared for their future and gave PDS high marks. They report being known, nurtured and loved; gaining a godly vision of manhood; and becoming better thinkers. They indicated that their teachers are willing and available to give them extra help when they need it. They believe that technological tools deepen the learning process and make it more engaging. Most want to travel, study, or live in a foreign country one day. They report, almost unanimously, that a

relationship with God is important to them and that they are striving to grow spiritually through prayer, Bible reading, or church/youth group. In addition to feedback from professional consultants, the headmaster and his administrative team continue to review the surveys, as have various faculty groups.

“We are spending a lot of time with the data, looking for trends, sorting things into outstanding, great and good, and considering how we get better,” says Burns.

Areas for improvement are being addressed with phase two of the capital campaign, which includes a new music and art center, media center, and cafeteria/kitchen. “Currently, our facilities are somewhat limiting us. Our boys are hungry for more and different curricular opportunities,” says Burns.

Feedback from recent graduates shows that seventh grade is different and harder, and while they are earning high grades as 7th through 12th graders, current PDS boys need to expect to work harder than they did in elementary school. This group also suggested that boys need more independence.

Teachers, meanwhile, struggle with finding a good balance between their professional lives and personal ones. “They work so hard,” says Burns, “often involved in their PDS work into the evenings and on weekends, and we need to protect and promote a good balance that will keep them at their best.”

A consistent mark of PDS is continual assessment and improvement. Says Baker: “This survey reflects school leadership and a school culture that is truly committed to being an educational institution of world-class caliber. There is a true willingness to do the work to get there, which includes repeatedly looking in every dark place, reviewing all assumptions, and soliciting and using feedback responsibly.”

Echoing Baker, Weary says: “I find conducting and exploring the results of this thorough survey another sign of PDS’ excellence and of its intention to keep on growing.”

“Imagining a more positive group would be hard. Faculty, administrators, and staff found excellence in the school’s treatment of them, its valuing of them, its ability to empower them, and its dedication to their professional growth,” says Bill Weary, renowned school consultant.

be like Google

By Lee Burns,
Headmaster


HOW SCHOOLS
CAN BENEFIT
FROM EXPLORING
AND IMPLEMENTING
THE STRATEGIES
OF A HUGE SUCCESSFUL
SEARCH ENGINE COMPANY

This past winter, three colleagues and I were chosen to present a three-hour workshop we developed, “Be Like Google,” at the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Annual Conference in San Francisco. Our session, selected from more than 500 proposals, explored what independent schools might learn from Google’s Nine Principles of Innovation. Presenters were Susan Droke, assistant headmaster for teaching and learning, Cathy Kyle, chief information officer, Jamie Baker, consultant, and me.

Why did we feature Google’s strategies as a springboard of ideas for today’s schools? Google, an eleven-year-old internet search engine company, is an integral part of the world today. Everyone, or just about everyone, Googles. Google continues to develop new ideas that meet the needs of its users. Google is creating a culture of learners and problem-solvers. Google is, in the eyes of many, the epitome of the new economy, the information age, the digital age, and globalization—all big shifts in how the world operates... all shifts where schools should prepare students in order to achieve future success.

Today’s schools often lack experience in innovation because they have not had to be remarkably innovative. We, as individuals, lack experience in innovation because we have not had to be remarkably innovative either. However, ways of accomplishing things have become far different in the past decade, and as a result, there is an ever growing need to alter our thinking and our ways of finding solutions to new challenges. Adapting to and learning about new technologies and discoveries is now a way of life. Because information is so easily and readily available from a global perspective, more can be learned about the histories and culture of people who are in conflict all over the world. It is a necessary responsibility to both think and act globally. For schools in particular, it is important to graduate students who are not afraid to find ground-breaking solutions to current problems so that their academic learning truly prepares them for the future. Students must be ready to survive and thrive within the shift. A key question for schools is: how can we develop a more innovative culture where

experimenting and learning inspire more creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills in our students? We believe this is one of the greatest challenges for schools today. In his 2009 University of Michigan commencement address, Google Co-Founder Larry Page said: “The people who come to Google are interested in making a meaningful and positive impact on people’s lives and want to participate in Google’s entrepreneurial culture.” In line with this thinking, we believe that to be able to nurture students who are capable of this pinnacle of engagement, it is vital to have participatory and innovative

 ***For schools in particular, it is important to graduate students who are not afraid to find ground-breaking solutions to current problems so that their academic learning truly prepares them for the future.***

cultures for faculty, staff, and students. During our workshop, we attempted to demonstrate how PDS thinks about and applies Google’s principles of innovation. We presented the argument that working toward a dynamic learning culture, like Google’s, offers a great start to thinking about and taking steps toward creating school cultures of innovation, critical thinking, and responsibility for teachers and learners alike.

The ideas in our “Be Like Google” session overlapped with themes which were woven throughout the conference, especially the notion that American independent schools need to reinvent themselves to be relevant in the world of today and tomorrow. Numerous conference speakers stressed the importance of creativity and innovation, of collaboration and critical thinking, of a mindset of lifelong learning, and of using technical tools and global connections to enable students to create, produce and connect. Stanford professor Dr. Tina Seelig stressed that schools need to force students to take

GOOGLE'S NINE PRINCIPLES OF INNOVATION STATE:

- **Don't kill projects, morph them**
- **Share everything you can**
 - *You are brilliant, we are hiring*
- **Users, not money**
- **A license to pursue dreams**
 - *Innovation, not instant perfection*
- **Creativity loves constraint**
- **Ideas come from everywhere**
- **Data is apolitical**

risks out of their comfort zones and give them projects without clear answers. She says that students need to be encouraged to fail frequently and fail often. She, in fact, makes her students keep a resume of their failures. Speakers, including Michael Horn, author of *Disrupting Class*, stressed that the most fundamental problem in independent schools today is that there is a significant misalignment between how students best learn and how teachers teach, and that major disruptions will be coming to schools, including the elite ones, over the next decade. Harvard's Dr. Juan Enriquez reminded us that the world's most common language is not Mandarin or English but code—digital language (0's and 1's) upon which 94 percent of the growth of the global economy is based—and that we are educationally negligent when we graduate students who are digitally illiterate. Others, including Harvard's Tony Wagner, stressed that even Advanced Placement classes are no longer relevant in their current form.

Schools like PDS need time to digest this information, and they also need safe spaces in which to tinker with the ideas. We need a culture that is open to new ideas that challenge the successes and comforts we have enjoyed and prided ourselves on for years. We need institutional flexibility and boldness. We need smart, dynamic people...people like the PDS alumnus I met who works for Google. When I asked him what the greatest threat to Google is, he responded "complacency." We at PDS need many of the things that Google seems to have, including their hunger to learn and improve in a changing world.

What if all schools provided an inspiring, magnetic work culture like Google's? What if all schools graduated the sort of motivated, energetic, and inspired learner and contributor of which Larry Page spoke? At PDS, this is our aim. We are committed to lead the education industry in the innovation of learning and teaching. We are glad, honored, and enthusiastic about sharing our learning—it's the Googley thing to do.

Ready for Graduation. Members of the Class of 2010 line up for their processional march into the sanctuary.



AFTER PDS:

CLASS OF '10 MATRICULATES TO MUS AND OTHER SCHOOLS

Continuing a long-standing tradition, the vast majority of the class of 2010 will be attending Memphis University School (MUS) next year as 7th graders. Of the 74 members of the class, 69 applied to MUS, all 69 were accepted, and 66 of those will be attending there.

Graduates of the class also will be matriculating at Evangelical Christian School (ECS), Grace St. Luke's Episcopal School, St. George's Independent School, and White Station.

"We work hard with our 6th grade families to promote a process in which every PDS graduate enrolls in the school that is the best fit for him," says Assistant Headmaster for Teaching and Learning Susan Droke. "We are pleased that our placement record is such that almost 100% of the applications of our boys results in acceptances. It is competitive to be accepted into these schools, and this record speaks to the outstanding preparation that our boys are receiving at PDS."

The academic and leadership accomplishments of PDS boys continue at their future schools. Among 7th-12th grade PDS alumni, 91% of them have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher; 65% of them have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher; and 34% of them have a cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher. 82% of them have earned a place on an academic honor roll since graduating from PDS. 72% of them have been elected to a leadership position. "It is obvious that our boys are well prepared for their future schools, as they continue to achieve at high levels," says Headmaster Lee Burns. "This signifies excellence and learning at PDS and at their future schools."



CLASS OF '04 AWARDED \$5.95 MILLION IN SCHOLARSHIPS

Impressive scholarships, honors, and college opportunities are awarded to graduates

Though it seems like just last week they graduated from PDS, the Class of 2004 has received high school diplomas, and its students are headed to colleges around the country.

Graduates will attend 24 different colleges and universities in 14 states ranging from Hawaii to New Hampshire. Choices include small liberal arts colleges, larger state universities, Ivy League, and engineering schools.

An astounding \$5.95 million was awarded in merit-based scholarships, with an average of \$85,398 per PDS alumnus in the class. More than 265 applications were filled out, and 79% of those resulted in acceptances.

“It’s pretty remarkable to think about their high acceptance rates and the scholarships they were offered,” says Headmaster Lee Burns. “It is obvious that these are bright, high-achieving, well-prepared young men. Their records speak to excellent teaching and preparation at PDS and their subsequent schools.”

“It is very competitive and expensive to get accepted into colleges today, and investing in a PDS education clearly pays big dividends and returns down the road,” says Burns.

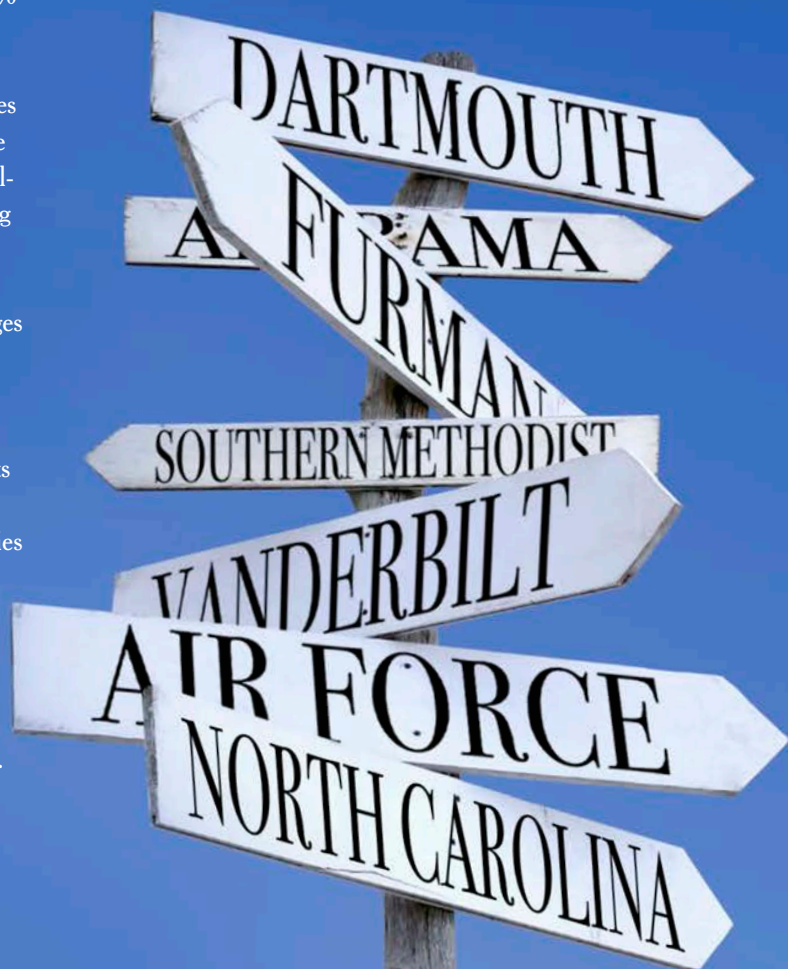
One measurement to rate a school’s success is to note where its graduates matriculate. Members of the Class of 2004 were accepted into some of the most selective colleges and universities in the country, including Harvard, Dartmouth, and Penn, among others; multiple graduates are attending UNC, Vanderbilt, Virginia, and the Air Force Academy. Several students are scholarship recipients, including the Morehead and Robertson at UNC, and numerous acceptances into honors colleges at various state universities were also awarded.

PDS salutes the Class of 2004 on their splendid high school careers and wishes them well as they depart for their colleges in the fall.

The PDS Class of 2004 will be attending:

Auburn University, Dartmouth College, Furman University, George Washington University, Mississippi State University, Oberlin College, New College of Florida, Samford University, Southern Methodist University, Texas Christian University, The United States Air Force Academy, The University of Alabama, The University of Arkansas, The University of Hawaii, The University of Miami, The University of Mississippi, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, The University of Tennessee at Knoxville, The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Virginia, Vanderbilt University, and Washington and Lee University

Graduates were also accepted to many prestigious institutions including Harvard, The University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse, Boston College, Boston University, California Polytechnic, Emory, Northwestern University, Rhodes College, Sewanee, Wake Forest, and the United States Naval Academy, but decided to pursue opportunities at other universities.



PDS EARNS KUDOS & RE-ACCREDITATION

Feedback and insights from accreditation process help gain understanding for current & future growth

Once every five years, all independent schools are required to undertake a comprehensive assessment and planning process as part of maintaining their accreditation status conferred by the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). This past school year, 2009-2010, marked such a time for PDS.

“A process like this assures that schools are reflective and forward-thinking,” says Headmaster Lee Burns, “and it’s a way to get meaningful, objective feedback on how a school is doing.”

Kim Bullard, PDS science teacher, appointed by Burns to serve as the school’s leader of this process, organized faculty and staff into various review and planning committees. The goal was to conduct an institutional overview of the past five years where current strengths and areas for improvement were assessed and feedback was gathered from parents, students, alumni, and faculty. The product of this year-long process was the school’s in-depth self-study, which is available, in full, on the PDS website.

Additionally, a visiting team of educators from other independent schools in Tennessee, Georgia, and North Carolina spent several days making an on-campus visit where they met with boys, parents, alumni, teachers, and trustees. The team also observed classes and reviewed school data and performances. Headmasters and administrators within the group then wrote a report consisting of various commendations and recommendations, and conferred PDS’s re-accreditation. This report from school peers is also available on the website.

Both the self-study and the visiting team reveal PDS to be a strong and dynamic institution that has accomplished much in the last five years, including:

- Construction of a new Early Childhood Center, Physical Education Center, sports fields, and playgrounds.
- Establishment of the Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence and the Crain Center for Global Curriculum.
- An outstanding academic performance of PDS boys where that they outperform their peers at the country’s leading independent schools (the nation’s toughest comparison group) in every subject.
- Training of 60 teachers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

With these many accomplishments in mind, the visiting team noted that PDS had refused to rest on its accomplishments and that a “healthy restlessness pervades the community.” They went on to say: “Everywhere we turned, faculty were asking some version of the question: ‘How can we make this better?’”

The PDS self-study and plan for the next five years includes a focus on delivering a world-class education to boys in a dynamic and interconnected global community in which they must be strong critical and creative thinkers. It includes enhanced opportunities in music and art so PDS boys can better develop their creative thinking. A focus is also being made in laboratory science instruction so the boys can be trained to think and reason like scientists and develop a deeper passion for both science and engineering. It affirms the school’s commitment to global education, extraordinary professional development for teachers, and the Building Boys, Making Men program that gives boys a godly vision of manhood. The plan includes many other goals and measurable benchmarks for PDS boys, including outperforming their peers at the nation’s most competitive independent schools.

The visiting team's commendations included:

- Creating a vision that is ambitious and relevant for the 21st century
- Creating a culture of open communication and transparency
- Creating a dynamic school that fully embraces change and new ideas
- Launching a global education program
- Diversifying the student body
- Instituting a systematic, professional development plan for teachers
- Creating a culture of lifelong learners in faculty and boys

As they reviewed surveys and data and met with PDS constituents, the team found happy and confident boys achieving at very high levels across all subjects, parents who were overwhelmingly positive about our school, and a faculty and staff who were deeply committed to their work and growing professionally, and that they felt valued by the school.

“While we are delighted by the praise and affirmation we were given, we must remain in a posture of continuous improvement,” says Burns. “We want to stay humble, hungry, and open to feedback and new ideas.”

The visiting team offered a few recommendations including:

- More clearly defining global citizenship and developing a partnership with a school abroad
- Providing more leadership opportunities for the older boys
- Prioritizing and harmonizing the school's many worthy goals into a comprehensive plan
- Intentionally educating all PDS constituents (alumni, parents, grandparents, friends of the school) about the mission and programs of the school

“We have already begun a careful review of their report as well as an analysis of the hundreds of survey questions we asked this year,” says Burns. “It's nice to know that we plan our future from a position of great strength and



CLASS AWARDS

SIXTH GRADERS RECOGNIZED AT AWARDS DAY

Congratulations to the following sixth graders who received awards for their outstanding achievements during the 2009 – 2010 school year.



THE HEADMASTER'S TROPHY
Philip Freeburg



THE ROBERT J. HUSSEY SCHOLARSHIP
Saatvik Mohan

HEADMASTERS LIST

*Daniel Tancredi, Patton Orr, Saatvik Mohan, Chris Galvin,
Forest Colerick, Austin Hord, Cole Morgan*





MUS BOOK AWARD
Tom Fowlkes



THE A.W. DICK TROPHY
Buck Billings



THE CHARLOTTE NEAL SPIRIT AWARD
Beck Blake



THE VICKY C. SPICER TROPHY
Forest Colerick



THE MINNA THOMPSON BIBLE SCHOLARSHIP
Cole Morgan



THE MOTSEY HUDSON SPEECH AWARD
Sam Bartz



THE HENRY EDWARD RUSSELL SCHOLARSHIP
Tucker Colerick



THE MARY HEARN COLEMAN AWARD
Gil Humphreys



THE ROBERT E. GENTRY CREATIVE WRITING AWARD
Patton Orr



THE WENDY EDWARDS AWARD
Bolton Gayden



THE ELISABETH HORTON LAIOS TROPHY FOR GENERAL EXCELLENCE
Daniel Tancredi



THE JANE EAST AWARD
Austin Hord

OUR MISSION

PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL
STRIVES TO GLORIFY GOD
BY DEVELOPING BOYS
IN WISDOM AND STATURE
AND IN FAVOR WITH GOD AND MEN

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31 & LUKE 2:52



Presbyterian Day School

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