

PDS SPIRIT

WINTER 2010



A QUEST FOR MANHOOD THE FUTURE IS HERE... CAN YOU SEE IT?

THE 2010 PDS ALUMNI LUNCHEON

THIS YEAR'S DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS: FRED SMITH



2009 Distinguished Alumnus Rick Moore '57 (right)



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IN THIS ISSUE OF *PDS SPIRIT*



The 2009-2010 school year has been especially eventful at Presbyterian Day School. This year has seen the opening of the Norma T. Wilson Early Childhood Center. Boys are being challenged to overcome new obstacles in the Lifetime Fitness Center. It is hard to believe that so much of what was thought up, discussed, and churned around during meetings months and years ago, has actually come to fruition.

PDS continues to be richly blessed. While, yes, the new physical space is beyond incredible, it's the people I work with each day who continue to amaze and inspire me. Teachers new, experienced, and somewhere in the middle, who relentlessly recreate the way they teach, and administrators, who continuously explore new ways to make our school a better place, all share one common goal – they love the process of teaching boys.

On a sadder note, in the last few months, PDS has lost three family members. You can find a tribute to two long-time former teachers on page 30. Additionally, one of our more recent family members—LaKelia Grimes—died in a car wreck in December.

We hope this issue will give you an appreciation of the deep and heartfelt commitment we share as a PDS community and the importance of mentoring, supporting, and nurturing boys.

Grace and Peace,
 Winston Baccus

On the Cover: 2nd grade student Tre Johnson scales a climbing wall in our new Lifetime Fitness facility.

PDS SPIRIT

WINTER 2010

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Susan Droke

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Mark Fruitt

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PDS SPIRIT is published by
Presbyterian Day School

4025 Poplar Avenue
Memphis, TN 38111
(901) 842-4600
www.pdsmemphis.org

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Send it to info@pdsmemphis.org

BOYSPEAK

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES?

of light generated by electricity. Thomas brainstormed ways of making this work. For months, his only achievement was failure. Fortunately, he did not give up. He said, "I have not failed: I've just found 10,000 ways that don't work." Because of his heroic perseverance, Thomas Edison finally succeeded. – Brooks E., 5th

In school, Thomas Edison's teacher told him to give up trying to learn; yet Thomas kept striving to become great. He had an idea about a bulb

For this issue, we asked the students: *Who are your heroes?*

My hero is my dad. He is strong. He fixes eggs and bread. He is very nice. My dad is the best!!! – Akbar, 1st

My hero of my fantastic life is Dwayne Wade. He has no tattoos and he spends most of his time in the gym and in NBA Cares. He doesn't care about money; he cares about kids who don't have money. He is not doing it to get attention. He does it because he cares. Maybe that is a flashback of his life. I call this love and that is what everyone should do to set an example. – Max S., 5th

Look for more answers from PDS boys on subsequent pages.

Blue Dog

Artist Inspires Fourth Graders on Life and Creativity



Louisiana Artist George Rodrigue visited PDS fourth graders to instruct and talk about his work and life as an artist. Rodrigue is best known for his "Blue Dog" images, which were originally painted for a Cajun ghost storybook.

"The boys were very excited to meet Mr. Rodrigue," says Darla Linerode-Henson, art teacher. "They were intrigued about things like where his ideas came from and how long it took him to make a painting. When questioned about his favorite piece, he said, 'The one I'm working on now,'" says Linerode-Henson.

Currently, the boys are creating four different giant (6'x7') versions of Rodrigue's Millennium Blue Dog painting. Each boy is drawing a section of the same painting, and when hung together, it will be a Picasso-like version of Rodrigue's original painting. These finished oil-pastel drawings will be installed as permanent art in a new section of La Bonheur Children's Hospital.





Dads and Sons Bond on Road Trip

PDS annual father/son trip with sixth graders builds camaraderie beyond expectations

By Larry Buser

Surely there's a less-dramatic way for a father to show his love for his son than by agreeing to be strapped into a 22-story tall, steel roller coaster called Mr. Freeze that goes from 0 to 70 mph in less than four seconds. Maybe so, but not on the annual PDS Father-Son Weekend in St. Louis, that included an afternoon of tough love at Six Flags in Saint Louis, Missouri (Sept. 18-20).

"The ride was obviously intense," said Dr. Gregory Dabov, a Mr. Freeze survivor. "And it was thankfully short."

Son David's take: "Mr. Freeze was awesome. It was just a little too short."

The three-day father-son excursion included a Cardinals-Cubs game (a 3-2 Cardinal win), a Saturday morning trip to the top of the 630-foot Saint Louis Arch (one group briefly got stuck), Six Flags in the afternoon, an evening of swimming, ice hockey, basketball and football viewing at the Rec-Plex community center at nearby Saint Peters, Missouri, and a visit to the world-famous zoo on a rainy Sunday morning.

"This will be something you will remember forever and the boys will

remember it forever," Dennis Smith promised the 75 dads, including 21 alums, before the Friday morning three-bus departure. "It's like a big family vacation."

With Smith, on his 22nd trip, and his coaches on top of every last detail, it was indeed a vacation to remember.

"They made it so easy," said Neal McAtee. "Every time we got somewhere, they simply handed us tickets and we went straight in. It was nice to be focused on Will Mac and not the logistics of things like tickets and parking. PDS sponsors many great events, but I believe the father-son trip to Saint Louis has been the single best event of our time at PDS."

Added Mims Clayton, a/k/a Chandler's dad: "It far exceeded expectations."

And so it went the entire weekend. The main responsibility of the rest of the group: Show up and have fun.

"I enjoy the camaraderie and fellowship of hanging out with the boys, their dads, and the PDS staff," said Headmaster Lee Burns. "It's rewarding in particular to see the special father-son relationships and to know that these boys and men will remember this weekend for the rest of their

lives. I'm excited to participate as a father when my own PDS son reaches the sixth grade."

Though the trip each year has a similar format, each one has its own unique moments and adventures, from game-winning home runs to a server spilling a food tray on someone. (Mr. Burns!)

A few other memorable moments included Chaplain Braxton Brady getting whacked on the shin with a hockey stick, Spanish Teacher Russ Norment getting a surprise water facial from his water-gun toting colleagues, and young Ben Daniel doing a face-plant at the Rec-Plex ice rink, which left him looking like a real hockey player sporting a gash under his chin. Even though Ben's sore arm later turned out to be a fracture, his dad said it only added to the trip.

"Thinking back to my time at PDS, I remember three things: My mean math teacher, the student-faculty basketball game, and mostly the sixth grade father-son trip to Saint Louis and the Arch," said big Ben Daniel. "It was a great time, and I have no doubt Ben will remember it, especially fracturing his arm ice skating."

SOURCES OF PRIDE

Chandler Selected to International Research Team



Jessica Chandler, pre-kindergarten through second grade Spanish teacher, has been selected to serve on the International Boys' School Coalition action research team. Chandler will meet with her team, consisting of educators from around the world, during the IBSC conference to be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in June, 2010. The group

will collaborate on the question, "How can boys' engagement and achievement in the study of foreign languages be developed and enhanced?" Research will begin during this summer's conference and will continue online throughout the year. Chandler and team will present their findings at next year's conference to be held in London, England, in July, 2011. Chandler was chosen from the largest number of applicants since the program's inception five years ago. Chandler joins Susan Droke and Sherry Creasman who were accepted to attend in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

"It is quite an honor that PDS now has three representatives who were selected to join this international team," says Debbie Isom, head of early childhood. "What a testimony to the incredible talent our teachers and staff bring to the table every day."

Cooper-Young Young Artists Recognized

PDS had a strong showing at the Cooper-Young Young Artist Contest that was held on November 5, at Peabody Elementary school. More than 330 entries from around the city were on display, and PDS had 50 boys participate. Clay Harrison, third grader, won first place for a prize of \$500. Drew Lacy, third grader, won third place and a prize of \$75.

Alumni Awarded as National Merit Semi-Finalists

Eight boys, eleven percent of the 2004 PDS graduating class, have been recognized as National Merit Semi-finalists. Seven of the PDS alumni scholars are attending Memphis University School, and one is attending Houston High School. Congratulations to Nelson Freeburg; Cliff Guyton; Amir Kahn; Wade Laycook; Michael Lewandowski; Patrick Massey; Reid Sanders; and Matt Williams.

Only seven schools in the state had more semi-finalists, and all of them are much larger schools with an average of 1,360 students. In order to achieve this ranking, a student must score in the top one percent out of the 1.5 million students who took the PSAT last year during their sophomore year of high school.

Crusaders Win Championship

Completing their second undefeated season, the sixth grade Crusader football team defeated the Houston Mustangs 20-0 to win the Division One Trailblazer Conference of the Crosscheck Athletic League. The team went undefeated for two years, ending with eight wins in fifth grade and 11 wins in sixth grade.

38

362

TOTAL POINTS SCORED DURING BOTH SEASONS

Dwight Creasman, head football coach, remarked, "I am so proud of my team and all that they accomplished this year. It is a team that is extremely talented and was so much fun for me to coach," says Creasman. "One thing that stood out to me through the whole season was how resilient they were in all situations. What an awesome team!"

Burns Elected Vice President of National Headmasters Association



Lee Burns, headmaster, was elected vice-president of the Elementary School Heads Association (ESHA) at the annual meeting in Washington, DC, in October. The organization, founded in 1973, consists of approximately 240 current and former headmasters of private kindergarten through eighth grade schools from around the United States.

"This selection demonstrates the high regard that private schools around the country have for PDS and our headmaster," says Chief Advancement Officer Steve Hearn.

Food Drive a Huge Success

This year's November food drive was a huge success with 3,000 cans delivered to the Neighborhood Christian Center. Sixth grade boys gathered the can goods from each classroom and helped load them onto the Neighborhood Christian Center truck. The food donation was a way for PDS boys to give thanks and offer food to students and families in need.

SACRIFICING A SNACK

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” Matt. 25:40



PDS boys committed to a “Give up Your Snack Day” in order to meet a request made in the *Commercial Appeal* to help the Ronald McDonald house stock its empty cupboards. Because of their efforts, the school is able to deliver approximately 450 wrapped snacks to help out-of-town families in need who have children being treated at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

“I discussed this need with the boys during one of our weekly mentoring groups, and they came up with the idea to skip their snack one day each month,” says Mark Fruitt, principal of elementary division. “Two things excite me about this community service effort. First, we as a school are able to serve the families who have sick children at St. Jude’s,” says Fruitt. “Secondly, the boys are the ones sacrificing; it’s their actions that are making a difference. It is not mom or dad giving money or sending in the snacks.”

Coaches Fruitt, Ross Spain, and Braxton Brady and four randomly picked sixth graders will help deliver the snacks to the Ronald McDonald House each month. Boys in first through sixth grade are given the option to donate their snack.



🌸 Model UN Offers Real World Experience

“Will the patrons yield to a series of questions? I reserve my right to speak afterwards,” could be heard from 22 different PDS sixth graders at the recent YMCA Middle School Model United Nations Conference on Friday, December 4, 2009.

This one-day event, involving international politics and issues promoting world peace, was held in City Hall chambers and provided hands-on experience for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from a variety of area schools. Students were challenged to develop both leadership and speaking skills while debating under the rules of parliamentary procedure.



“All of these sixth grade boys who participated were more than capable of holding their own in a debate with older students,” says Nina Haley, study skills and learning styles coach. “They were articulate, knowledgeable, and confident throughout the all-day conference. Congratulations are in order to the PDS boys for maintaining such a high standard for future Model UN teams,” says Haley.

The following boys received awards at the 2009 YMCA Middle School Model United Nations Conference day:

Outstanding Delegate: Saatvik Mohand

Outstanding Resolution: Trip Gibson/Jackson Dickinson (Israel)

Outstanding Resolution: Tom Fowlkes/Mark French (Botswana)

Final Docket Team: Saatvik Mohan/Philip Freeburg (Cambodia)

BOYSPEAK

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES?

My hero is my dad. When I am feeling down my dad makes me feel better. He gives me Coke in the morning. When it is thundering, my dad takes care of me. My dad is the best. –Sam S., 1st

THE FUTURE IS HERE.

CAN YOU SEE IT?

Excerpted from a speech to *Memphis University School* students by PDS Headmaster Lee Burns

As hockey legend Wayne Gretzky says: "Skate to where the puck is going to be as opposed to where it is at the moment." The ability to see around the corners or being able to make a highly educated guess of where things are headed is important for leadership today.

Dr. Tony Wagner, Harvard professor and author of *The Global Achievement Gap*, interviewed scores of business leaders, college presidents, and other successful men and women. He studied global economies, demographics, and educational systems in Singapore, India, China, the U.S., and elsewhere and came to this conclusion: The world has changed dramatically in recent years, and skills that worked for America's last generation will not be good enough in the future.

American-Centricity in a Global Arena

Two summers ago I was in China having lunch with a native high school senior. He asked me, in easily understandable English, where I was born. When I replied Chattanooga, Tennessee, he spoke about the Tennessee Valley Authority, FDR, and the New Deal. I was stunned that he knew so much about my relatively small hometown and the American history surrounding it. An 18-year-old in Beijing could converse about American politics and history as comfortably as southerners can discuss SEC football.

We are an American-centric people. We are accustomed to being the world's



superpower, and many of us do not know or care about what happens beyond our shores. Technology, however, has transformed the world. It connects us by shrinking boundaries between countries, companies, and citizens. New York Times Columnist and Author Thomas Friedman writes that the world is now flat: technology has, among other things, levelled the playing field because we can access and exchange, at little or no cost, information and ideas from anywhere.

In his book, *The Post American World*, Fareed Zakaria dismantles this naïve assumption of America remaining the ultimate power by observing that the tallest building in the world was recently completed in Dubai, the richest man is a Mexican, the largest publicly traded corporation is Chinese, the leading oil refinery is being built in India, London is emerging as the world's financial center, the United Arab Emirates has the world's most richly endowed investment fund. The movie industry in Bollywood, India, is bigger than Hollywood in America. Finland

and Singapore have the best elementary and secondary schools in the world, and most of the new engineers, scientists, and mathematicians are not Americans.

During his visit to Bangalore, India, Thomas Friedman, *New York Times*, columnist and author, watches wave after wave of young professionals streaming into Infosys, one of the world's leading

technology companies, and he stops in his tracks and says to himself, "There are so many of them, and they just keep coming...how in the world can it be good for my daughter and millions of other Americans that these Indians can do the same job as they can for a fraction of the wages?" I recently had lunch with an old friend I hadn't seen in years. He's in his 30s and works for a successful financial firm based in New York. The internet and video-conferencing allow him to live and work out of Memphis. The same technology that lets him work for a New York company in Memphis has enabled him to have half his team in India. He tells me that the Indians on his team are very bright and hard working and that, while he pays his New York team members about \$250,000 a year, he can pay his Indian-based team about \$25,000 a year. I wonder if in three years his whole team will be from India.

Wagner and others believe there are seven vital skills needed for success in the 21st century:

Access and Analyze Information

For all of its benefits, the digitization of information and the internet has created an overwhelming mountain of information that is readily accessible. What you and I can read in the *New York Times* in one week is more information than the average person in the 18th century came across in his whole lifetime. But that's just one newspaper in a world of millions of websites and wikis, books, and blogs. How do you find what is relevant? How do you sift the good from the bad, the sophisticated from the simplistic, fact from opinion, and true from false? How do you synthesize—how do you connect—all the different ideas to craft a coherent headline or narrative?

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Closely related to accessing and analyzing information are critical thinking and problem-solving skills: the ability to take something you know and apply it to a real problem or new situation. As Wagner





American CEOs say that young American professionals struggle in such teams. They have done very little teaming and collaborative projects.

was interviewing CEOs from some of the most successful companies in the world, they discussed the habit of asking good questions; figuring out what is important and what is not; being curious about why things are the way they are; thinking on their feet; seeing past the present; thinking broadly and deeply and systematically; and connecting the dots.

Creativity, Imagination and Entrepreneurialism

They also talked about the need for non-linear thinking. Most jobs today are linear: they depend on a long series of logical steps in a particular order...much the way a computer operates. The danger of such jobs is that their tasks are either being done by computers or they are being done by people in foreign countries where the pay is a lot less. Increasingly, preparing a basic legal document or a tax return, or reading a medical chart or writing software, is done abroad. Today 48 percent of General Electric software is designed in India.

Here is how Daniel Pink, the author of *A Whole New Mind*, puts it: “In a world in which more and more average work can be done by a computer, robot, or talented foreigner faster, cheaper ‘and just as well,’ vanilla doesn’t cut it anymore. It’s all about what chocolate sauce, whipped cream, and a cherry you can put on top. So our schools have a doubly hard task now—not just improving reading, writing and arithmetic but entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity.” For most of the last century, schools have largely ignored or underdeveloped right-brain capacities, focusing instead on left-brain skills of logic, analytical reasoning, and linear thought. Clearly, there is a growing voice that says people who can create and design, imagine, provide harmony, and make meaning are those who will lead in our new century. Already, a wide range of companies are hiring a relatively fewer students with a master of business administration degree and hiring a growing number of students with a master of fine arts degree. A colleague told me a few days ago that Yale Medical School is requiring their students to take art classes to enhance their abilities to observe and to think creatively about medical solutions.

Adaptability and Lifelong Learning

The US Department of Labor estimates that today’s high school students will hold 10 to 14 different jobs before they hit their early to mid 30s. Becoming an agile and adaptable learner is key.

A year or so ago, I met with the chairman and CEO of a Fortune 500 company. I asked him what his daily routine was, how he stays sharp intellectually, and how he keeps improving his company. He told me he reads six to seven newspapers a day, reads several books simultaneously each month, and meets with people outside of his industry field so he can learn something that could be creatively applied to his profession. His goal, each month, is to learn one thing he did not already know.

Integrity and Values

Being a man of integrity is irreplaceable. Many leaders today, for all their talent and hard work, often lack integrity: the inclination to do the right thing, to do what is fair and just, and to be honorable. As I consider our current economic mess, part of the blame surely lies with a handful of greedy and dishonest

men and women in positions of high power. Many such men and women are graduates of our country's premier independent schools and universities.

I remember well my sophomore year in college, when our tennis team was playing another school at the end of the season, with our league title and an NCAA berth on the line. Around match-point of a third-set tiebreaker of a decisive doubles match, I saw one of our opponents make what seemed to me a terribly incorrect call in his favor, giving them that match and the overall team victory.

A few years ago, while sitting in my office, I got a call from an old teammate, and he said he was forwarding me an article about that player who had made, years ago, what appeared to me a dishonest call. He was being investigated for insider trading on Wall Street.

Ability to Team and Collaborate Across Boundaries

American CEOs say that young American professionals struggle in teams. They have done very little teaming and collaborative projects. They are not accustomed to thinking across disciplines and seeing connections. They are uncomfortable in situations in which they must lead by influence rather than authority. They know relatively little about other countries and cultures.

Successful football plays and beautiful orchestras depend on the exquisite execution of individuals all doing different yet related and coordinated tasks, all relying on one another. The challenge, I think, for Americans is to do learning and global teams as well as we do football teams.

Effective Communication Skills in Various Media

And finally, Wagner identifies effective oral and written communication as a critical 21st century communication skill, focusing particularly on writing with purpose and voice and communicating ideas in a clear and well-organized manner.

Recommended Regimen

1. In the next year, learn about three countries you know virtually nothing about right now. One of them should be India or China.

2. Study abroad or travel abroad at some point before you graduate from college.

3. Read the international section of the newspaper at least twice a week.

4. Learn for the sake of learning—not for the grade or a college. Your grades, no matter how high they are, will be of little good to you one day if you do not develop a love of learning and intellectual curiosity by the time you get to college. Your habits of mind will be far more important than your old grades and diplomas.

5. Be open to change. Those with an underdeveloped ability to change will be disadvantaged in a changing world. Asking questions and taking chances grow that inclination and ability.

6. Most importantly, develop your faith, character and values as intentionally as you do your academic and professional skills. Jesus says in Mark 8:36, “What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?”

Lee Burns has served as headmaster since 2000. A native of Chattanooga, Tennessee, Burns graduated cum laude from Dartmouth College and he earned his master's degree in educational administration at Harvard. He has also studied at the London School of Economics and worked at a law firm in New York City. Prior to PDS, he served as teacher, coach, and administrator at Christ School in North Carolina and previously as Director of Day Student Admission at the McCallie School in Chattanooga. He currently serves on the Executive Committee of the Elementary School Headmasters Association (ESHA) and is a member of the Visionary Heads Group. He served as a task force member to help the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) develop Principles of Good Practice for Middle School Educators. He has been a presenter

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PARADIGM SHIFT

Five seasoned PDS teachers share their views on teaching intentionally for boys and how teaching techniques have changed.



Beth Diaz, Second Grade Teacher – 21 years at PDS

A few summers ago, our faculty summer reading assignment was *Teaching the Male Brain: How Boys Think, Feel, and Learn in School*, by Abigail Norfleet

James. We were challenged to understand male learning styles and to embrace successful techniques for educating boys.

Below are four of several areas I utilize in order to make my teaching practice more “boy-friendly” as we say at PDS.

Guys Read. A culture of reading is encouraged school wide at PDS. I find that boys love nonfiction and all kinds of stories about strong male heroes, sports stories, adventure/action stories, animal stories, and tall tales. They love graphic novels, jokes, riddles, and humor in literature. We encourage them to read to each other daily in my classroom. The boys are also directed toward male role models who read.

Mathematical Models for Real-Life Problem Solving. Boys seem to think better when given a manipulative or something to use as a model. We often use a variety of materials such as mathematical models when solving problems. We use tiles to discover properties of square numbers by building swimming pools, base 10 blocks to construct structures, straws to construct pyramid models, and a rolling meter stick to calculate the perimeter of our new athletic field. Males typically have better spatial ability, and we make use of that ability whenever possible.

The Game is On. Research shows that competition can improve academic performance in boys. We use games to engage students in cooperative competition and to motivate and engage them. If you want to get a boy’s attention, make learning a game.

Communication and Collaboration. In many instances boys practice communication and collaboration as they work together on whole class projects and collaborate with peers in small groups and other students across the globe. Even a young boy may teach his classmates to use new computer software one day, and the class might build a voice thread using that Web 2.0 tool the next day. Technology also enables us to write a story with other classes from around the globe, to make a tongue twister book with classes inside and outside of the US, and to post our thoughts on a class blog or class wiki.

Dee Gibson, Sixth Grade Teacher – 16 years at PDS

Reading is such a multifaceted subject. When I first began teaching reading in 2003, I used a literature book, had the boys read stories, and we then discussed them as a class. During the year, the boys also wrote a speech from scratch and presented it to their classmates.



Seven years later has seen dramatic changes. The boys now read two novels, *Brian’s Winter*, in the fall and *Treasure Island*, in the spring (also available online if a boy forgets his book or prefers to read it on the computer). In addition to reading the novels, the boys create PowerPoint presentations on their computers pertaining to the novels. They make these presentations in class as slideshows, movies, or three dimensional displays.

We now spend an entire quarter learning to prepare and give a speech. We are able to view United Streaming Videos of famous speakers and speeches in order to evaluate good and poor speakers as well as determine points to use in their own speeches. The boys love to do anything connected with computers. A computer program allows their speech to be verbalized back to them once typed in. Each boy records his speech on computer so that he can watch his body language as well as listen to his diction. What a great resource!

Collaborative working groups are also vital for helping the boys learn to share and work together. It helps them develop responses to current problems that are often brought up through reading and a variety of stories.

Sharon McCall, Second Grade Teacher – 21 years at PDS

When I was a math student, the real life applications of what I was learning were seldom explained.



Technology, that once mysterious tool, has become a natural part of the teaching and learning process at PDS. With my second graders, we use technology for research, to practice skills, and to assess knowledge and gain a greater understanding of the content. We now understand that boys need a greater level of movement and activity in the classroom, and as a result, our school is much more boy friendly. Boys are encouraged to work with partners, collaborate on projects, and share their ideas, realizing there are often many different ways to solve a problem.

Children’s literature is utilized to stimulate the boys’ imaginations and creativity. There is nothing better than a beautifully written story! I also utilize questioning techniques that engage the boys and encourage them to think critically. Additionally, emphasis is placed on boys seeing the relevance of math in their personal lives.

Betty McGreger, Kindergarten Teacher – 18 years at PDS

When I first began to teach at PDS, I took a more traditional approach. The boys were encouraged to sit quietly at their tables without much movement or interaction as I “taught” the lessons. Now we realize that boys learn better when they are allowed to do hands-on activities using manipulatives, working in teams or groups, and moving around the classroom as they are actively engaged in learning. PDS has provided me with a state-of-the-art classroom, including a Smartboard and laptops for the boys. We use technology for work with the Smartboard and use the laptops to work independently. After my opportunity to go to Harvard, I now understand the importance of thinking routines, which help encourage boys to ask questions, use prior knowledge, and make connections between new and prior knowledge. These routines help boys to become both better critical thinkers and problem solvers.



Jean Nabers, Sixth Grade Teacher – 26 years at PDS

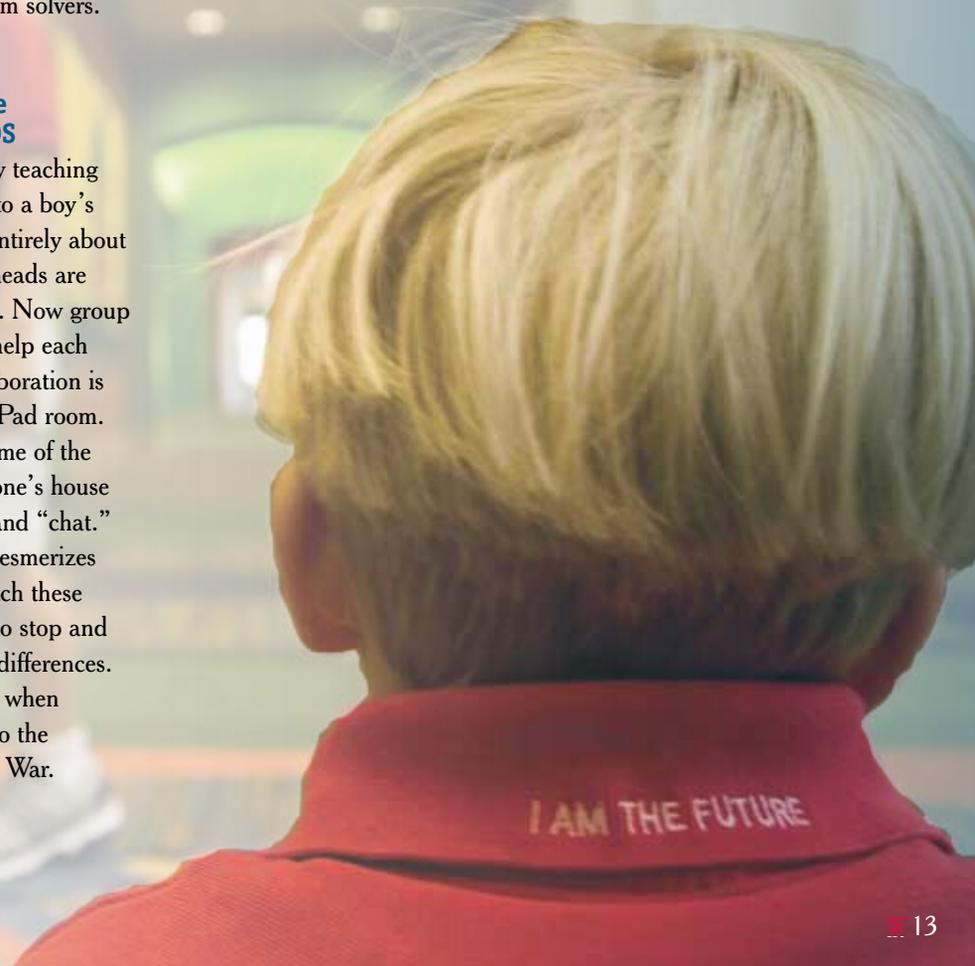
As experience allowed my teaching to “blossom” and I moved into a boy’s setting, I changed my views entirely about the classroom setting. “Two heads are better than one,” is my motto. Now group work is used frequently; boys are encouraged to help each other and share ideas on an ongoing basis. Collaboration is done in real time on the computer or in an EtherPad room. Students can edit and complete projects at any time of the day or night. They no longer have to go to someone’s house to work together; they can hop on the computer and “chat.”

I also use United Streaming Videos which mesmerizes the boys as they see history come alive. They watch these videos on their personal computers and are able to stop and start them as needed to meet individual learning differences. A web-based program was used as a supplement when I noticed our textbook devoted only one column to the Korean War and not much more on the Vietnam War.

It’s especially exciting to witness boys listening to audio recordings of pilots and veterans who actually participated in the wars we are studying. Learning history can go so much deeper than mere glimpses that textbooks often offer.

Boys also love music, and they enjoy putting their thoughts into a musical score – now, it’s all possible via the computer.

Because boys need stimulation, I find that using a Smartboard to view websites, servers, etc. are very effective ways to keep their attention. Boys also need a way to look back at what was previously said in class in order to understand the content and digest it fully. I find that videos, which can be accessed from the server, are great tools. Recently, we’ve introduced the Smartrecorder so that my lectures can be recorded. Last week we had a student record our class! As the boys view the recording, which has been dropped into a folder on the student server, they hear me, but they see a desktop moving from a website to EtherPad notes. It is truly amazing to see what can be done in our 21st century.



A Calling Card to the Future

Early Childhood Center promotes creativity, learning, and laughter

From the tiled ceiling to the textured carpet inserts on the floor, the Norma T. Wilson Early Childhood Center at Presbyterian Day School is all about boys. The vision for a state-of-the-art environment designed specifically to facilitate the learning and development of young boys has been realized. Years of study and research about what is best for boys has resulted in this unique new learning facility.

Heading this enormous project to make the space attractive, functional, yet durable was Head of Early Childhood Debbie Isom, teacher Shari Caruthers, and Interior Designer Consultant Julie Gasaway with Fleming/Associates/Architects. This trio spent numerous hours making educated decisions about color, lighting, furniture, and many other facets of what it takes to put together a premier school for boys.

“There was such a broad range of research that we were able to compile about how to make a school *really* boy friendly,” says Gasaway. “Debbie and Shari did a very thorough job of visiting other schools, taking pictures and then showing me what they did and didn’t like. It was quite an undertaking; a complete group effort with lots of feedback from teachers and administrators,” says Gasaway.

The new spacious classrooms, filled with bold colors, enable boys to move comfortably around the room using their bodies as well as their brains to absorb the world of wonder that surrounds them. The natural light that floods the room brings the outdoors in and gives a feeling of warmth to the learning environment.

“We really worked hard to make this a place for the boys. Every decision we made was about promoting





learning, creativity, and self sufficiency,” says Gasaway.

Boys travel effortlessly throughout the building using carefully placed visual cues to help them navigate the space with confidence. A spacious common area allows boys to gather with students from other classes for chapel, programs, and meetings, which foster an attitude of “my school.”

“We wanted the new school to have a whimsical feel that could help boys flow from imagination to real-life situations,” says Gasaway. “It also had to be extra durable to accommodate for the wear and tear of normal boy activities. We used textured, antibacterial carpeted squares on the floor so that single squares can be removed or replaced for cleaning purposes,” she says.

As plans are made for the future about what boys will need in the 21st century, the recognition that early childhood is multifaceted remains forefront. Technology must be used in unique and creative ways. Currently, each classroom has a SmartBoard to allow for an expanded curriculum that moves the boys toward a global understanding of the world. Teachers bring art from around the world into the classroom. Students virtually visit the countries for which they are praying in Bible class; they video conference and skype with Mandarin and Spanish speaking countries. Music is no longer limited by the instruments within the classroom.

“All aspects of what the boys will be accomplishing each day were taken into consideration when making design decisions,” says Gasaway. “We opted for a global design in the main lobby, which is composed of children from several cultures. There is also a built-in fish tank in the wall and overstuffed chairs nearby to make the area

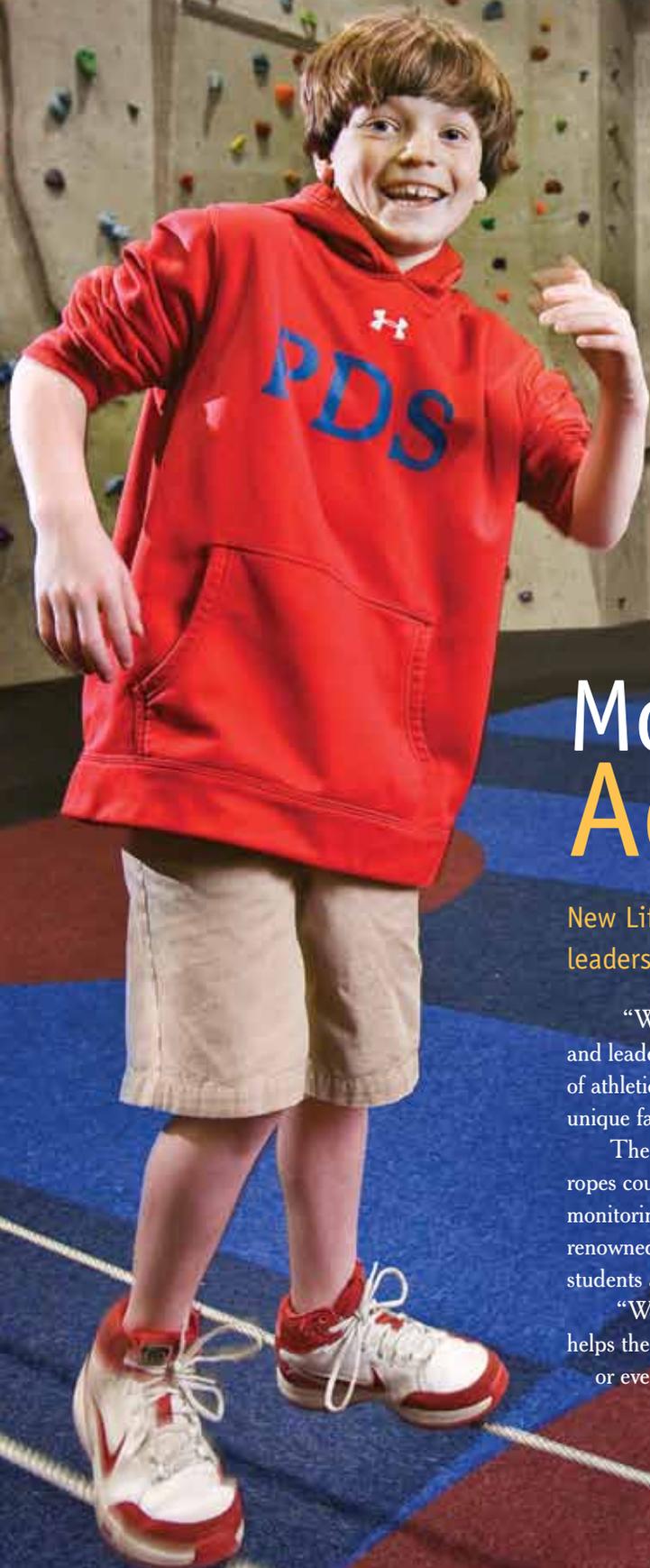
comfortable for both children and adults,” she adds.

Outside, the playground is designed specifically to take advantage of the critical stage of development when learning goes from the hand to the head. There are more opportunities for boys to strengthen large muscles, interact socially, and move their bodies in an effort to develop the whole child physically as well as cognitively.

Student learning continues beyond the walls of the classroom as students go directly out the door into an outdoor classroom. A safe, secure space is equipped with kid-sized tables for science experiments or art projects. It is a place where PDS boys collaborate and solve real-world challenges like discovering why one shadow is longer and whether the time of day affects a change. Regardless the task, each carefully crafted design area is a well-suited match for every task of the moment.

“This was an immense process to move away from the way it had been at PDS for 20 years,” says Gasaway. “It’s always been a wonderful school and I couldn’t have worked with more delightful, dedicated people throughout the entire process. I truly believe this new early childhood center speaks for itself,” she says. “It says there are people who are very intentional about offering a premier education for boys, like no other school in the country. The new school is quite simply PDS’s calling card,” states Gasaway.

We really worked hard to make this a place for the boys. Every decision we made was about promoting learning and creativity.



More than an Adventure

New Lifetime Fitness Center helps teach lessons of leadership, perseverance, health, and more

“We are able to provide a whole different dimension of fitness, health, and leadership with the opening of this center,” says Dennis Smith, director of athletics and operations. “It is, by far,” says Smith, “one of the most unique facilities in the U.S.”

The new indoor facility boasts a 30-foot rock climbing wall, low ropes course, inflatable ladder, several other agility stations, and a fitness monitoring station. Designed and engineered by Baldo Lallman, a world-renowned adventure course builder, the room can accommodate 18 to 20 students at a time.

“We encourage boys to keep pushing past their stopping points. It helps them learn perseverance in a way that can’t be taught in a classroom or even say on a basketball court,” adds Smith. “We see this facility as another way to support our boys to become better men and future leaders through the development of lifelong fitness habits and healthy lifestyles,” adds Smith.

Feed My Sheep

Boys learn the meaning of service over self by adopting a school in need.

Hope is the greatest gift PDS has to offer Berclair School, where 91 percent of its students are from families at or below poverty level. While on the surface statistics may look dismal, the reality of what has evolved through a partnership between a private and inner city school is nothing short of miraculous.

“It’s a win-win situation for both schools,” says Sam Shaw, principal of Berclair School. “Our school has much limited resources, and most of our parents don’t have the means or the time to help. This is where PDS has stepped forward to help us close some of the gaps,” says Shaw. “On the other hand, PDS students have an opportunity to see the workings of a city school and get a glimpse of some of the poverty in our city. It’s a way to prepare them for future leadership,” he says.

Shaw notes that PDS has also been successful at lifting certain burdens from the shoulders of teachers. “Because PDS has ‘adopted’ our school, we can offer teacher appreciation week where parents from PDS bring lunch to our teachers. It’s something they wouldn’t otherwise receive, and the PDS boys see their parents helping others,” says Shaw.

“PDS has also provided our school with books, school supplies, and clothing for the children. They’ve come over to read to our children and tutor them in math,” he says. “The younger children look up to the boys who are showing, through their actions, the importance of an education,” says Shaw. “Many of our children live in homes where there are no books,” he adds. “This kind of support has been vital to our success.”

After several years of substandard scores, Berclair, which has a majority of Hispanic students from families who speak English as a second language or not at all, has passed the TCAP (a standardized test for city schools) for the past three years in a row.

“Our hope from this program is that our students will be able to break free of public assistance and join the middle class,” says Shaw. “Our goal is to produce students, who one day, will have the opportunity to become community leaders themselves.”





A QUEST FOR MANHOOD

Mentorship program delves into the deeper issues of what it means to grow up God's way.

"There is something special, sentimental, and sad about the approach of adolescence for a boy. The enchanting and magical moments of boyhood are slipping away. Much will be changing—and changing quickly and dramatically—in the upcoming months and years." – Lee Burns, headmaster

As certain sports stars, politicians, celebrities, clergymen, community leaders and successful businessmen come tumbling down, it's no wonder that boys are often confused and even bewildered to answer the simple question: What does it mean to be a man, a real man? For that matter, how many boys have

men in their lives who are capable of answering this question? Often, they are left "to figure it out," and unfortunately modern day feedback about manhood is mostly gleaned from media characters like those mentioned above. Such begins a vicious culture cycle.

Now in its third year, the **Building**

Boys, Making Men seminar program teaches boys, through example, a much different view of manhood. During a year-long program each sixth grader is paired with a mentor who meets with them once per week in small groups where they study *A Boy's Journey*, *A Man's Mission*, a book staff members developed because of the need for a character education textbook. The book covers subjects including friends, peer pressure, girls, sex, purity and

pornography, drugs and alcohol, family, happiness, success, and money. The boys explore what it means to live and become a man after God's own heart.

Headed by Braxton Brady, chaplain, and Mark Fruitt, principal, the seminars are designed to look with clarity and honesty at the issues that boys face today.

Fathers told me they didn't have a clue on some of these issues when they were growing up. Even men with great fathers weren't encouraged to address these hard to talk about issues with their dads.

"Because each boy is paired with one of eight male staff members, a trust level is gained, and the boys know there is someone at school who they can talk to about most anything," says Brady. "These relationships go way beyond just time spent in seminar class. It's a way for us to be intentional about each of the boys who are under our care," says Brady. "It helps us do a better job of encouraging the boys to be accountable; we're constantly checking in to see how they're doing with grades and a lot of different issues," he says. "We want to know what is going on with their hearts as well as in their heads."

Fathers are encouraged to read the materials with their boys on a weekly

basis, and the results have been positive. "I've received great feedback from fathers who have told me they didn't have a clue on some of these issues when they were growing up," says Brady. "Even men with great fathers weren't encouraged to address these 'hard to talk about issues' with their dads. The book is a good icebreaker, and it serves as a way for dads to get more involved and even learn for themselves," says Brady.

"We all struggle to be good parents at times," he says. "Our goal is for our boys to hear what the gospel teaches us about these subjects and not allow the only information they receive to come from the secular world, which is often untrue and even harmful," adds Brady.

The sixth grade seminar program is a piece of the overall character program being taught at PDS from the youngest grades all the way to graduation.

Monthly parent luncheons with speakers discussing an array of issues encourage parents to build stronger families. Community service, father/son trips, and chapel talks are all a part of the overall program. Additionally, teachers and mentors are continuously looking for those opportunities inside and out of the classroom where they can reinforce those foundations.

"I'm always encouraged when we are being intentional about those teachable moments with our students," says Brady. "Often we are able to help a boy grow more through his struggles," he says. "During times where things aren't going so well with a boy, it's much easier to get to his heart, let him know he's not alone, and then lead him in the right direction when there is a close relationship already established. It's also great to be there and celebrate their successes," says Brady.

AUTHOR PRAISES MENTORING PROGRAM

"I have the privilege of traveling across the country and interacting with parents and educators who want to better understand and serve the boys in their care. I was deeply encouraged during a recent visit to Presbyterian Day School in Memphis, Tennessee. I discovered a community of

educators and parents highly invested in creating a learning environment specifically designed to work for boys. PDS is strategically serving boys from pre-school to middle school in ways that should inform, inspire and challenge all of us in our hunger to educate, steward and nurture the young men we love. I believe their mission and intentionality is richly impacting the Memphis community. My hope is that it will become a model that schools across the country can look to as they explore the most strategic ways to structure a boy's learning, play, and character development. Rarely do I find educators this committed to nurturing a boy's mind, body and spirit, and delivering in that mission. We are fortunate to have this kind of resource available as a model for caring for young men."

—David Thomas, Therapist and author of *Wild Things: The Art of Nurturing Boys*



Not *Just* a School for Boys

PDS explores the benefits of boys being boys in an environment geared for their success.



Recent research shows that male and female brains are not only wired differently, but brains between sexes actually develop at entirely different rates and patterns.

Unfortunately for boys, most coed schools today are geared more toward the female brain, which as a whole, matures faster and is generally better at multitasking and more sedentary assignments.

Alarming, more and more boys are either making poor grades or dropping out of school than ever before. If statistics continue, by 2014 only 40 percent of college students are projected to be males.

According to Headmaster Lee Burns, “The problem for boys, especially at the elementary level, is that the schools are nearly always rigged against them. Most elementary schools are designed and taught by women,” says Burns. “The ability to be quiet, sit still, pay attention for long periods of time, and regurgitate information is rewarded. Most of this drives boys crazy,” he says.

Boys Should Be Boys

One of the fundamental tenets of our educational approach at PDS is to give boys the permission to be boys. Whether learning involves mathematics, reading skills, history, or spiritual development, our approach is tailored for boys.

Studies show boys tend to be a year or two behind a typical girl in reading and verbal skills during the elementary years. PDS hired five reading specialists and developed a unique reading program where almost half of reading comprehension is taught in small groups. These groups allow for intense discussions and focus can be on higher thinking skills. Boys like excitement! Stories that include action, struggle, and sometimes even gruesome images spark an interest and a love of reading.

“After two years of research and reading, we developed a rubric of 67 boy-specific things we can do in our classrooms to help assure our boys are receiving the most effective, efficient, and exciting learning possible,” says Susan Droke, the Assistant Headmaster for Teaching and Learning, who chaired the school’s committee on boys. “We want our boys to

be outstanding readers because it is a skill that cuts across every subject. Our success in the area has turned what is often an area of weakness for boys into an area of strength,” says Droke.

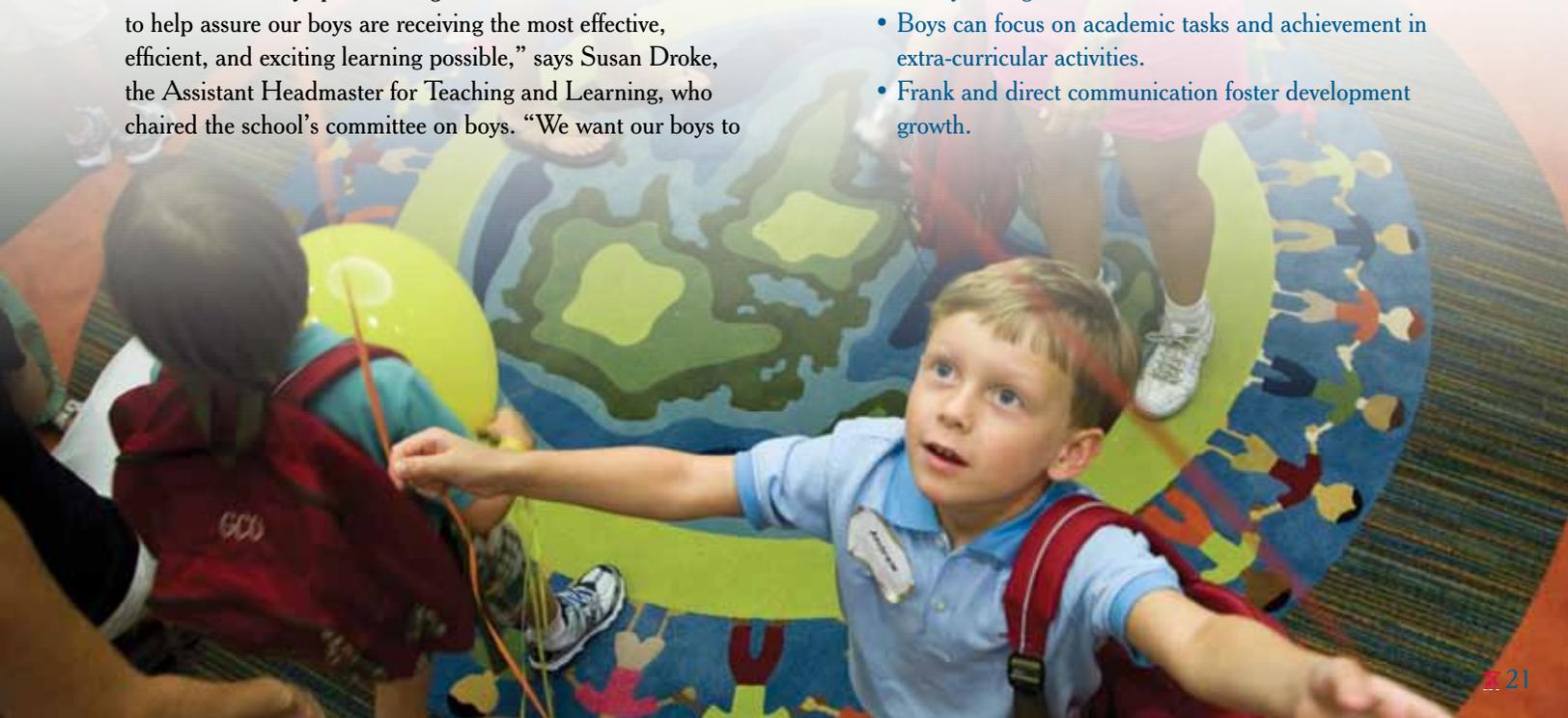
“We are intentional about having a school where boys can succeed on all levels,” says Burns. “We hired several male teachers and administrators because we understand the need for boys to have strong male role models. It helps create a sense of security, a place where they are understood and challenged. It’s rare you will find male elementary teachers in most schools,” he says.

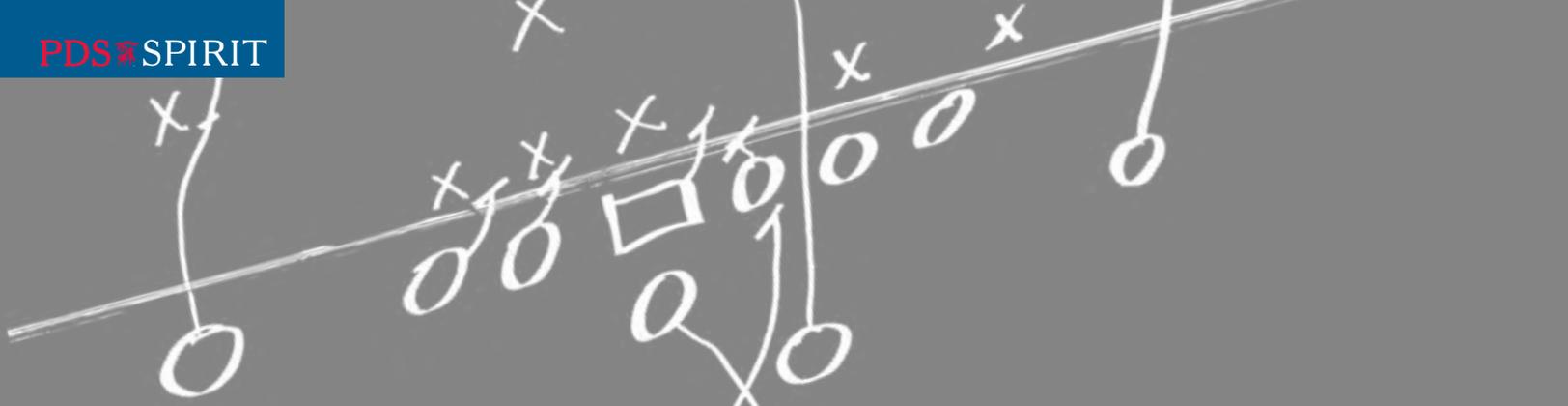
Keys for a successful learning environment for boys:

- Ability to move. Boys need to appropriately channel their physical energy.
- Books with themes that excite
- Big picture presented first because they are generally deductive learners.
- Clear structure and rules.
- P.E. every day.
- Male role models.
- Ability to mature at their own pace.

Some of the advantages of a single-sex learning environment from the International Boys’ School Coalition:

- Encourages full participation by boys in all activities (arts, athletics, community service).
- Promotes self expression and a respect for the many different paths to manhood.
- Provides an atmosphere to explore sensitive gender and sex-related issues.
- Boys need not waste energy posturing or trying to live up to the gender stereotypes so prevalent in the media and society at large.
- Boys can focus on academic tasks and achievement in extra-curricular activities.
- Frank and direct communication foster development growth.





LESSONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WINS

By Braxton Brady, *Chaplain*

“Dad I don’t like to lose, but I know football is not the most important thing in the world,” said my son as we drove home after being defeated at the championship game.

I credit Mark Fruit, fifth grade head coach, for instilling in our players over and over again to not let their lives become defined by a football game. As much as I love football, that’s the kind of guy I want my kids to play for every year.

After listening to my son, Preston, I thought about how to help him evaluate the season. My mind immediately went to a book called *Raising Kids for True Greatness* by Dr. Tim Kimmel. In this book Kimmel lists ten ways to be a great teammate, and I’ve decided it will be a measuring stick for my son and me. My prayer for all parents is that we will not judge a season by wins and losses, but by the character of our kids.

1 Show up for practice on time, with a good attitude, and ready to work hard.

2 Decide at the outset that you love (not just tolerate, but love) every member of your team.

3 Never shortcut or minimize warm-ups, calisthenics, wind sprints, distance runs, and cool downs. These are more than just conditioning. They are part of building cohesiveness and endurance.

4 Never whine or complain about the work. It’s sports; it’s supposed to be difficult.

5 Don’t get fixated on winning

6 Listen to your body. Respond properly when it’s warning you about an injury.

7 Don’t limit your involvement with team members to practice and competition. Think as a team at all times.

8 Encourage kids who aren’t as athletic or who have extenuating circumstances that might be distracting them.

9 Never speak poorly of a fellow teammate or criticize the coaches.

10 When you win, win humbly. When you lose, hold your head up and never take it out on the coach or teammate.

Seems like a great way to set goals and evaluate to me. I pray for a movement of parents who are willing to evaluate not based on performance alone, but on character and the things in life that really matter.

TEACHER FEATURE

How long have you been a teacher at PDS?

I came to PDS in 1994, and this is my 16th year. All of my years have been spent in junior kindergarten.

Have you taught anywhere other than PDS? If so, where and when?

Westwood Elementary—Kindergarten and 1st grade class (1986) and Ross Elementary in Shelby County schools (1989-1994)

What inspired you to go into teaching?

My grandmother. I admired her love for her students. Originally I wanted to teach home economics. I've always liked working with little children. I love little children. My favorite class was child enrichment because I was able to work with the young children.

What do you love most about being a teacher at PDS?

Family-like community, teach with best friends, wonderful to come to work and see kids, wonderful kids and wonderful parents.

What is your least favorite thing about being a teacher at PDS?

Those special days when we have to park across the street and deal with crossing Central Avenue.

What is your funniest moment at PDS?

There's not one funny moment; everyday has something funny that happens. It's my favorite part of the job when kids say or do something funny.

What, do you feel, are some of your biggest accomplishments as a teacher?



SHARI CARUTHERS

Interviewed by Dylan Echlin and
Jim House, 6th Grade

Junior Kindergarten Teacher Shari Caruthers shares her insights on why, after 24 years, she is still excited to be in the classroom. Sixth graders Dylan Echlin and Jim House had a candid interview with Caruthers to find out what makes a great teacher tick. PDS is pleased to boast that Caruthers has shared her gifts with boys here for more than a decade and a half.

When former students call me during the summer. One student said she started teaching because of me. It's exciting knowing that I'm making a difference in their lives.

If you could change one thing about teaching in general, what would it be? Around the country? It would probably be the amount of paperwork that teachers have to keep up with because it takes time away from the children.

What characteristics make a successful student?

One who may not make the best grades, but who works hard and has a good attitude.

What characteristics make a good teacher?

A teacher who enjoys having fun and creating new ways of learning. Someone who loves her students the way she loves her own children.

ALUMNI NEWS

PDS Alumni Hit the Holiday Hoops

The first annual Alumni Holiday Hoops was held on Tuesday, December 22, 2009. More than 40 alums were enthusiastically challenged during a round robin 3-on-3 tournament. Alumni finalists were challenged to upset the PDS coaches team in the final round. A heated semi-final battle



The alumni semi-final winners, (L to R) Michael Cross '02, Teddy Klug '02, and Jack Klug '05.

ensued between two teams consisting of alumni brothers **Alex Rainer '00**, **Peter Rainer '04**, and **Will Rainer '07** and another team with **Teddy Klug '02**, **Jack Klug '05**, and **Michael Cross '02**. Congratulations to the team of Klug, Klug, and Cross for winning the semi-final game. While competition for the final win was close, the coaches eventually secured the championship title after taking on the semi-final winners.

PDS Alumni Awarded as National Merit Semi-Finalists

Eight boys, or eleven percent of the class of '04, have been recognized as National Merit Semi-Finalists. Seven of the PDS alumni scholars are attending Memphis

University School, and one is attending Houston High School. Congratulations to **Nelson Freeburg '04**; **Cliff Guyton '04**; **Amir Kahn '04**; **Wade Laycook '04**; **Michael Lewandowski '04**; **Patrick Massey '04**; **Reid Sanders '04**; and **Matt Williams '04**.

"We are proud of these boys for this outstanding achievement," says Headmaster Lee Burns, "and we are proud of our school for having such a large percentage of these scholars."

PDS What Goes Around

Did you know that 28 percent of this year's sixth grade class have dads who are PDS alumni?

Class of 2010 with alumni dads include:

Buck Billings '10
father **Russ Billings '74 (deceased)**

Drew Crain '10
father **Chip Crain '74**

Ben Daniel '10
father **Ben Daniel '80**

Philip Fentress '10
father **Phil Fentress '64**

Philip Freeburg '10
father **Philip Freeburg '75**

Trip Gibson '10
father **Ralph Gibson '77**

Will Harwell '10
father **Bill Harwell '75**

Jim House '10
father **Jim House '76**

Gil Humphreys '10
father **Herbo Humphreys '60**

Edwin Hussey '10
father **Rob Hussey '75**

Bob E. Mallory '10
father **Bob Mallory '76**

Louis Martin '10
father **Jerry Martin '73**

Murray Morrison '10
father **Joe Morrison '72**

Stephen Ogle '10
father **John Ogle '74**

Jonathan Peters '10
father **Jon Peters '78**

Trammel Robinson '10
father **Wiley Robinson '69**

Hayes Scott '10
father **Jody Scott '81**

Jasce Smith '10
father **Kuhen Smith '69**

Henry T Stratton '10
father **Henry Stratton '69**

Colin Threlkeld '10
father **Steve Threlkeld '76**

Mac Treadwell '10
father **Carey Treadwell '80**

PDS Davidson Returns to Speak of Character and Career



Beau Davidson '93, singer, songwriter, guitarist, keyboardist, model, and actor, spoke about his career and lessons learned while

at PDS. Davidson reminisced about his PDS experiences and emphasized that much of what he experienced as a student still helps carry him through life.

Davidson discussed the importance of being loyal to friends, but also about

being loyal to himself by doing what is right. While he works in an industry that claims many addicts, Davidson was able to share with PDS students how his early commitments and supportive mentors kept him from going down destructive paths.

After graduating from Memphis University School, Davidson attended Northwestern University where he graduated with a degree in vocal performance and political science. Davidson has had parts on TV shows such as *Days of Our Lives* and *Gilmore Girls*. He began writing his own songs while in college and recorded a handful of them for his self-released CD, *Good Hurt*, which came out in 2007.

At the end of his talk, Davidson performed songs he wrote and produced and then sang a duet with Mrs. Jean Nabers, who was his sixth grade teacher.

PDS Athletes Recognized as Finalists

Congratulations to three PDS alumni who were named “Mr. Football” finalists. **Davis Childers ‘05**, currently a junior running back at Evangelical Christian School, rushed for 1,108 yards and 14 touchdowns. Childers was named a finalist

as D2-A back of the year. **Christian Kauffman ‘04**, a senior at Memphis University School, was named as a finalist for kicker of the year. Kauffman holds a perfect record of 12 attempts and 12 field goals during regular season play. **Harrison Martin ‘04**, an MUS senior, was named a finalist for D2-AA lineman of the year. Martin holds a team record with 93 tackles.

PDS Making the Mark on MUS Honor Roll

First quarter honor roll at Memphis University School had a strong showing of PDS alumni with 61 percent of the seventh graders and 55 percent of eighth graders out of each class recognized for grades.

PDS We want to hear from you!

If you have alumni news or updates for the *PDS Spirit*, please send your information to PDS Alumni Office, 4025 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111 or alumni@pdsmemphis.org.

PDS ALUMNI BOARD



Lon Magness '79, (chairman)
Bo Allen '80
Coors Arthur '84
Oscar Atkinson '90
Casey Bowlin '59
Carter Campbell '85
Oscar Carr '94
Claude Crawford '55
Patrick Crump '82
Ben Daniel '80
Paul Gillespie '95
Cam Hillyer '87
Frank Jemison '60
Jay Keegan '82
Jay Keras '91
Warren Milnor '88
Richard Moore '91
Gavin Murrey '80
John Ogle '74
John Sartelle '86
Richard Scharff '74
Will Thompson '89
Walker Upshaw '78
Matt Weathersby '90
Jason Whitmore '88
Hunter Witherington '92
Philip Wunderlich '84

BOYSPEAK

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES?

My parents are my heroes because when I am down they will help me and always love me. My parents encourage me throughout sports, academics, and all of the things that I do. When I have a test, they will send me upstairs and make me study. I may think it is not fun, but my parents are just trying to love me and care for me, and build me into the kind of young man I am yet to become. – McCall K., 5th

GRANDPARENTS SALUTED WITH PATRIOTISM

An impressive number of grandparents, nearly 1,000, from around the country attended the grandparents' day celebration in November. The event kicked off in the gym with opening comments by Headmaster Lee Burns. Sixth grader Tom Fowlkes gave reflections on being a student at PDS and thanked the grandparents for the important contributions their lives have played in regard to our rich American heritage.

The group then moved to the Sanctuary to enjoy a musical salute entitled, "Celebrate America!" Retired Four-Star General Burwell Baxter Bell spoke on sacrifice and patriotism and the crowd broke into a hardy applause with two standing ovations. Grandparents had the opportunity to attend two of the following presentations on the way PDS shapes its current curriculum:

21st Century Classroom

School has changed! How do 21st century classrooms differ from the classrooms of even a few years ago? Each day our teachers create learning environments that foster the development of skills and strategies necessary in our rapidly changing world.

America's Place in the World: Teaching American History in the 21st Century

How are your grandparents learning about the rich history and vital role of the United States in a dynamic world? Jean Nabers demonstrates how the boys use powerful learning tools of this century to study and think about the lessons of past centuries. This textbook-free curriculum, created by Nabers, has received national acclaim.

Boys and the Brain

What makes boys do the things boys do? Significant studies and research show that male and female brains operate in different ways. At PDS, we seek to be experts in how boys learn, and we teach in very boy-friendly and boy-specific ways.

Building Boys, Making Men

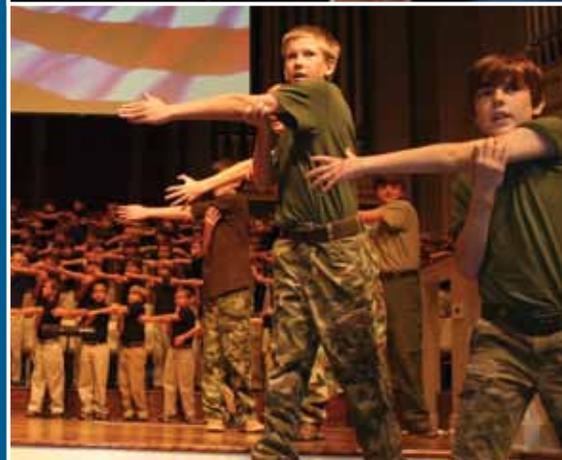
What does it mean to be a man? We are guiding our boys through answers to this question by means of a program that we have designed called Building Boys, Making Men. It's about building character and more!

Leadership and Team Building Through Lifetime Fitness & Physical Education

PDS boys have the unique opportunity to experience leadership training and team building through our state-of-art Lifetime Fitness Center and Program.

Technology and its Implications in the World Today and Tomorrow

Today's students are the first generation to grow up with digital technology, which has changed the way we view knowledge, access information, and relate to our world. Grandparents were invited to witness how we prepare students to cope with the amount and speed of information at their fingertips. The possibilities are endless.





Retired Four-Star General Burwell Baxter Bell (left), pictured with Chief Advancement Officer Steve Hearn, spoke on sacrifice and patriotism.

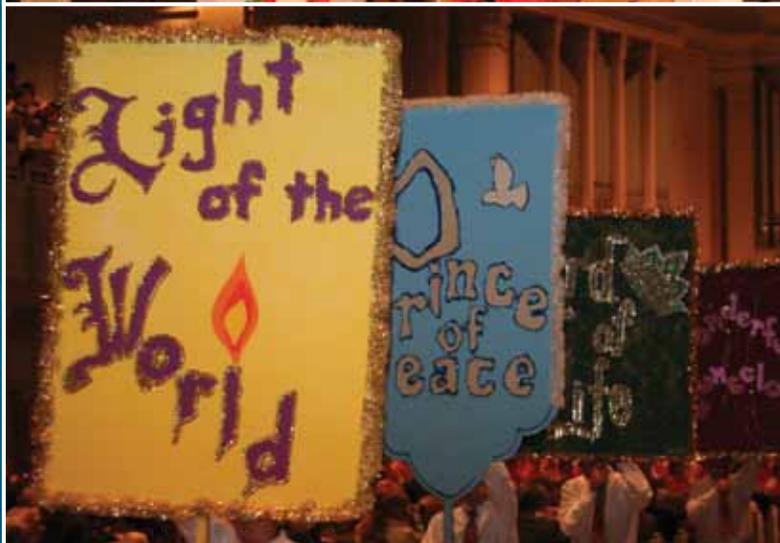


A SPIRITED PERFORMANCE FOR CHRISTMAS



In grand style, as in decades before, the PDS Christmas pageant was performed by boys in grades first through sixth. This year's program, written by Elizabeth Bell, pre-kindergarten teacher, and directed by Dawn Southerland, choral music director, was held on December 17.

A whimsical story about the true meaning and significance of Christmas was told through the eyes of a few modern-day elves. Interspersed with the festive sounds of Christmas carols and even a few antics from a rap group, this light-hearted musical comedy was enjoyed by both families and friends. The grand finale included a procession of the Christ child, accompanied by the three wise men, shepherds, and angels galore. This year's program cover was designed by Jackson Pacheco, sixth grader.







Cullen Weeden



Laurel Childs

TRIBUTE TO BELOVED TEACHERS

Two special educators leave a legacy of love and learning

Treasured friends and former PDS teachers Laurel Childs and Cullen Weeden both fought courageous battles with cancer before they died in December, 2009. Although they are physically no longer with the PDS student body, their encouragement, passion, and infectiously positive presence lives on among students, faculty, and parents. Both Childs and Weeden helped many students discover the joy of what it means to be an inquisitive learner. Their zest for loving and serving others is a testimony to all who had the pleasure of knowing and working with these two exceptional teachers.

Childs was a PDS Kindergarten and Transition teacher from 1992-2005. She was known for her contagious smile and laughter and often referred to as “the best” teacher in the school by teachers, parents, and students alike. She had a zeal for taking her boys on field trips and generally making learning come alive in her classroom. Previous students often reflect back on Childs’ classroom as among their favorite and most unique school experiences. Childs is survived by her husband

Steve; her children, Catherine and Casey; sisters, Sharon Hutchison and Nancy Blake; her brother, Evan Jones; and her mother, Cara Jones.

Weeden taught in the PDS Discovery Center from 1988-2002 and then returned two years later to head the PDS Library from 2004-2009. As an avid reader herself, Weeden enjoyed helping boys find that “first book” that introduced to them a love of reading. She had an uncanny ability for striking the perfect match between reader, author, and subject matter. Many students relied on Weeden’s innate knack to point them toward a book or series that would keep them engaged until the final page. Weeden is survived by her husband of more than 42 years, Art; her children, John and Mary Cullen; and her only brother, Vernon Taylor.

The PDS staff, faculty, and parents deeply appreciate the wonderful role models that these two devoted teachers were to hundreds of students during their many selfless years of service.



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