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the falconer

Fairhill School News, Information and Events

SINCE 1971

From the Executive Director

Fairhill prides itself in providing opportunities for our students to reach their potential. Potential is defined as the ability to develop, achieve, or succeed. Reaching one's potential is a process that is facilitated in multiple ways in the life of a school. That process is evident in the classroom, the sports field, the stage, the library, and even in the halls of a school. That potential is realized in both the struggles and triumphs that are experienced on a child's academic journey.

Nothing demonstrates this more than our high school graduation. Graduation represents realized potential as well as future potential. Each graduate landed at Fairhill because they needed a school that could help them meet their potential, to find a way to turn struggles into successes, to provide opportunities to learn and develop, and ultimately to achieve more than could be imagined. Graduation is an opportunity to recognize each graduates' successes and achievements in their academic careers. At the same time, we are launching them into adulthood where they will continue to develop, achieve, and succeed as they pursue a future that is full of potential.

No sooner did we bid farewell to the graduates than we began the process of preparing for the next school year. Completing the building renovation has certainly been a focus and if you drive down Preston Road you can see daily progress. The building renovation is well on its way to completion! In addition to preparing the physical school environment, teachers and administrators are busy planning and developing curriculum, activities, and materials to provide an engaging school experience for our students.

In this newsletter you will see other evidence of how Fairhill provides opportunities to develop potential and celebrate successes. We are grounded in developing solid academic foundations while celebrating the many gifts and talents of students through athletic, fine arts, and leadership. We are committed to providing a learning environment that leads to future success,



Executive Director, Carla Stanford, M.Ed.

which leads to realized potential. While this newsletter highlights the events and accomplishments of the previous school year, we are anticipating the beginning of the next. We are looking forward to the potential opportunities that are before us!

Fairhill Fund

The Fairhill Fund "We Love Fairhill" campaign kicks off on September 19, 2024, alongside North Texas Giving Day.

We love Fairhill School because of the following attributes…

- **Individualized Attention:** Personalized instruction tailored to each child's needs.
- **Specialized Teaching:** Educators trained in methods for various learning challenges.
- **Supportive Environment:** Nurturing setting that fosters safety and confidence.
- **Access to Resources:** Innovative programs and tools for enhanced learning.
- **Holistic Development:** Emphasis on academic, social, emotional growth.

Fairhill School truly empowers students to embrace their potential and celebrate their strengths, making it a place we love and cherish. This year, Lauren and Ben Fine serve as the Fairhill Fund Chairpersons and will share their personal story in a letter to families being mailed this fall. However, what you may not know is that their story started 25 years ago.

In 1999, Ben's parents, like many Fairhill parents, sought a school where he could be successful. Transferring him to Fairhill before his seventh-grade year proved to be the best decision, as Fairhill provided Ben with the tools, knowledge, and confidence he needed to return to his previous school for high school. Today, he is a successful Director of Purchasing at McKesson and a proud Fairhill parent. Similarly, Ben and his wife Lauren faced the same decision for their daughter, Shoshana. Starting in fourth grade at Fairhill, Shoshana has flourished, feeling welcomed and supported, gaining academic confidence, bonding with teachers and classmates, and improving her grades. All of this would not be possible without the dedication and support of Fairhill's teachers and staff, who are truly her biggest cheerleaders.

Please join us in being a cheerleader for Fairhill and make your donation on September 19, 2024. Your contribution to the "We Love Fairhill" campaign provides funding for educational initiatives that make an immediate impact on Fairhill students. Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference. Together, we can continue to build on our successes and provide an exceptional educational experience for every student at Fairhill. To make or schedule a donation online, go to **https://bit.ly/3rSZQRN** or the North Texas Giving Day site **northtexasgivingday.org/fairhill-school**.

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SECURING
OUR FUTURE
A Fairhill School Campaign

Fairhill is embarking on a major capital campaign. Securing our Future is a special campaign funding a variety of initiatives to advance the future of Fairhill School.

This campaign is putting the critical needs of our community at the forefront as we invest in student safety, renew our facilities and visibility to prospective families, and bolster the student and community resources that we are able to offer.

Your family's involvement in the Fairhill community has made a significant impact on the legacy of our school. We hope you will join us in continuing to uplift the LD community for years to come by participating in this transformational campaign.



STUDENT SAFETY

School Entry Remodel



When our students and educators come to campus, we want their focus to be on learning, growing, and maximizing student potential. We are redesigning our school entrance with a completely separated front reception that can be secured from the rest of the building. This reception area/welcome center will boast up-to-date security technology that will provide school staff with greater ability to keep our students and families safe.

FACILITIES & VISIBILITY

Classroom & Communal Space Upgrades



Investments in lighting, flooring, window coverings, paint, and technology were made in every classroom and across community spaces throughout the school. A new HVAC system was also installed to enhance student health by filtering pollutants, allergens, and airborne viruses while improving airflow. In addition, a new student lounge area on the second floor will provide space for collaborative learning and social connections. These improvements will ensure our students feel empowered by a quality backdrop to their education and will help us attract more prospective families to enroll at Fairhill.



Exterior Building Enhancements



We are enhancing our visibility and prominence on Preston Road with refreshing our school's facade and signage, reflecting the outstanding education and services provided to our students and families.

STUDENT & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Diagnostic Assessment Center Reactivation

As part of our plans to reopen our testing center doors to the general public, the Diagnostic Assessment Center (DAC) has been moved to a more forward position in the building, near our front entrance. The revitalized DAC will offer new and improved services to both current students and the North Texas community. For many families, the DAC is their first window into the Fairhill experience.

Multi-Purpose Performance Space

Relocating the DAC allowed us to construct a black box theater and additional classroom space for our fine arts students. In addition to performances, this space will be a place for a variety of activities, including band rehearsals, special events, and student meetings.



Endowment Support

Our endowment serves a variety of student and school needs through the Building, Scholarship, and Discretionary Endowment funds. With increased endowment funding, Fairhill will be able to:

- Preserve our highly qualified full-time staff of educators, psychologists, and specialized professionals
- Grow our ability to provide financial aid to families in need
- Maintain our campus and facilities into the future

We would like to thank the early philanthropists who have generously stepped forward to support this endeavor in its beginning phases.

Transformational Naming Contributions

Reception Area / Welcome Center
The Fleeger Family Foundation / Mr. and Mrs. Matt Fleeger

Library
Charles R. Lathem / The Lathem Family Foundation
In Memory of Louise Lathem

Lower School Wing
Aum Ventures Foundation / Dr. Maushmi and Nilay Sheth / Lonestar Neurology

Science Department
Dr. and Mrs. Henry Edwards / Texas Instruments Foundation

Courtyard
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Davis

EARLY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SECURING OUR FUTURE CAMPAIGN LEAD THE WAY

The renovations and new construction detailed here are made possible by overwhelming early support from our entire community. We extend special recognition to the Fairhill Board of Directors, Feasibility Study Participants who contributed through interviews or surveys, our dedicated Campaign Cabinet, and other enthusiastic early supporters.

Thanks to the financial expertise of our Board of Directors, we were able to take decisive action this school year to advance some of these critical projects, ensuring the health and safety of our students without delay. We are now excited to officially launch the ***Securing our Future*** campaign to fund these initiatives.

This pioneering effort will redefine philanthropy at Fairhill, supported by a remarkable group of volunteers who are instrumental in shaping a new chapter in our legacy. These volunteers include current and former Fairhill parents, Board Members, and distinguished Alumni.

A special acknowledgment goes to our Campaign Cabinet:

Cabinet Chairs

John Dziminski, Board Chairman and Alumni Parent

Hal & Susie Edwards, Alumni Parents

Michael Westbrooks, Alumni Parent

Jane Sego, Former Executive Director and Current Board Member

Members

Max Golman, Fairhill Graduate - Class of 1993

Chase & Suzie Graham, Alumni Parents

Cindy Rickerby, Board Member and Alumni Parent

Nilay Sheth, Current Parent

Charlie & Shelby Sokolash, Former Parents

Lisa Whisler, Board Member and Alumni Parent

Carl Zorn, Current Parent

Carla Stanford, Executive Director and Current Board Member

Deann Badura, Director of Development, Alumni Parent

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DONATIONS

Transformational Leaders
W. K. Gordon III Estate
The Fleeger Family Foundation / Mr. and Mrs. Matt Fleeger
Charles R. Lathem / The Lathem Family Foundation-In Memory of Louise Lathem
The Ginger Murchison Foundation

Leadership Donors
Aum Ventures Foundation / Lonestar Neurology / Dr. Maushmi and Mr. Nilay Sheth
Anonymous / Donor Advised Fund Fidelity Charitable
Mr. and Mrs. John Dziminski / The Rosewood Foundation - Matched Gift
Dr. and Mrs. Henry Edwards / Texas Instruments Foundation - Matched Gift
Hillcrest Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Co-Trustee

Significant Donors
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Westbrooks / Michael and Loree Westbrooks Giving Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Zorn

Blue and Gold Supporters
Mr. Bill Bell and Ms. Jane Sego
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Burton / Sammons Corporation Matched Gift
Dr. Caroline and Mr. Jason Ford
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Davis
Mr. and Mrs. Chase Graham / Donor Advised Fund Fidelity Charitable / Givinga Foundation (Sanofi) – Matched Gift
Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Sokolash
William and Sylvia Zale Foundation

Soaring Falcon Supporters
Mr. Arthur Anderson and Ms. Katherine Baxter
Mr. and Mrs. Brad Badura
Mr. and Mrs. Rod Baltzer / Baltzer Family Charitable Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Ken Bartley in Memory of Lindsay Jane Bartley
Mr. and Mrs. Eli Columbus
Mr. Max Golman
Mr. and Mrs. Josh Goodell
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hsu
Mr. and Mrs. Carter Keith
Mr. and Mrs. Neil Lange
Luther King Capital Management
Lyda Hill Philanthropies
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Murchison
Mr. and Mrs. John Rickerby
Mr. and Mrs. Murray Rose
Mr. and Mrs. AJ Rassi / Donor Advised Fund of Franklin Charitable Giving Program
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Schwab
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sokolash
Mr. and Mrs. David Stanford
Mr. and Mrs. James Westbrooks / Westbrooks Family Charitable Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Tim Whisler, Jr.
M.B. & Edna Zale Foundation

Fairhill Fund

Donations made through the annual fund, golf tournament, and gala directly enhance the education of Fairhill students. We thank our donors for helping to provide services to students and incremental training to our specialized staff.

2023-2024 ANNUAL FUND* *
Annual Fund includes donations made through North Texas Giving Day (Communities Foundation), "Giving Tuesday", "Happy New Year" and the "Love Your School" campaigns.

Founder's Society - $3000 and above
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Fleeger
Mrs. Stephanie Sick

Chairman's Circle - $1000-$2999
M.B. and Edna Zale Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Alford
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Brown
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Davis
Mr. and Mrs. John Dziminski
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Evens
Mr. and Mrs. Josh Goodell
Mr. and Mrs. Chase Graham
Dr. Cathy Hernandez and Mr. Steve Herod
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Mason
Dr. and Mrs. Ashish Monga
Mr. Brian Prelesnik
Mrs. Maria Portis
Ms. Garet Sanchez
Drs. Neil and Patricia Shaw
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Sickler
Mr. and Mrs. Joram Wolanow

Falcon Club - $500-$999
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Carrell
Ms. Anjanette Decoudreaux-Hafizi
Mr. and Mrs. David Haynes
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kobyluch
Mr. Charles Lathem
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Reichenstein
Mr. and Mrs. John Rickerby
Mr. and Mrs. John Savill
Mr. and Mrs. Doug Sedwick
Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Sokolash
Mr. and Mrs. David Stanford
Ms. Jo Tuck
Mr. and Mrs. Scott Webb
Mr. and Mrs. Brad Weinstein
Mr. Fred Wilshusen and Ms. Leslie McFarlane
Mr. and Mrs. Kert Wilson

Blue and Gold Sponsor - $300-$499
Mr. and Mrs. Brad Badura
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Collins
Mr. and Mrs. Eli Columbus
Mr. and Mrs. Rob Hilts
Mr. and Mrs. Scott Norby
Mr. and Mrs. Blake Stall
Mr. and Mrs. Tim Whisler, Sr.

Friend of Fairhill – up to $299
Mr. and Mrs. Brantley Allen
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bigham
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Billingsley
Mr. and Mrs. Clay Bonner
Mr. and Mrs. Jon Buchanan
Mr. Virgil Burkhardt
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Burton
Ms. Kerry Carder
Mr. and Mrs. Tim Castelli
Ms. Salia Castillo
Ms. Sandra Castillo
Mr. William Poon and Ms. Linda Chan
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Mr. Jason Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Ben Fine
Ms. Breck Gamel
Mr. Donald Gilbertson
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Goldschmidt
Ms. Dianne Gomez
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Mrs. Tracey Horton
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Mr. and Mrs. Carter Keith
Mr. Paul Kirkley, Realtor
Mr. and Mrs. Randy Kramen
Mr. and Mrs. William Krueger
Mr. and Mrs. James Lake
Mr. and Mrs. Neil Lange
Mr. Brett Lazarus
Mr. and Mrs. John Leal
Ms. Kasey Leal
Ms. Danielle Leger
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Lewis
Mr. Mario Lopez and Ms. Enna Avilan
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Lopez-Rogina
Mr. Jason Luque
Mr. Fernando Martinez and
Ms. Suley Castillo
Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Mathers
Mr. David Mathews
Mr. and Mrs. Greg McCandless
Ms. Betsy McEver
Mr. and Mrs. Shawn McGhee
Mr. and Mrs. Wade Mercer
Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Mix
Dr. and Mrs. Mark Mlcak
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Murchison
Mr. and Mrs. M. Richard Murphy
Ms. Karyn Olschesky
Mr. and Mrs. David Oram
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Paul
Ms. Elizabeth Phifer
Mr. and Mrs. Jorge Pineda
Mr. and Mrs. Lance Price
Mr. Ron Price
Mr. and Mrs. David Primeaux
Mr. Shinu Punnoose and
Mrs. Romy Abraham
Mr. and Mrs. David Reichert
Mr. and Mrs. Clint Richey
Mr. and Mrs. Murray Rose
Ms. Mindy Rudisill
Mr. and Mrs. Terry Schleski
Mr. and Mrs. Josh Schraeder
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Schwab
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Schwarcz
Ms. Laura Shelton
Mr. and Mrs. Trevor Slaughter
Ms. Maggie Smyth
Mr. David Souther
Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Stathatos
Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Stern
Mr. and Mrs. Tony Stern
Mr. and Mrs. John Traweek
Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Tucker
Ms. Marilyn Tucker
Mr. Philip Weinberg
Mr. and Mrs. Tim Whisler, Jr.
Drs. Phillip and Mary Whitaker
Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Whitfield
Mr. and Mrs. Brian Wieters
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Williams
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Willoughby
Dr. and Mrs. John Wills
Ms. Peggy Zorn

Matching Gifts

America's Charities / Dwight Mathers
Berkadia Commercial Mortgage, LLC / Vicky Billingsley
Edward Jones / Bob Gidlow
McKesson Foundation / Ben Fine
Microsoft / (John Savill)
Raytheon Technologies Corporation PAC / Christina Kirkley
Renaissance Charitable Foundation / Anthony (AJ) Rassi
Texas Instruments Foundation (TI Foundation), William Sick, Dirk Anderson
T-Mobile / Jason Hayes
Toyota Connected North America Fund / Jolie Stall
Toyota4Good/Benevity (Steve Brown, Kert Wilson)
USAA / Doug Sedwick

Restricted Gifts

Journalism Department
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Sickler / The Sickler Award for Journalism
Fairhill Library
Mr. and Mrs. Matt Fleeger
Drama Department
Mr. and Mrs. Chase Graham / Fidelity Charitable Donor Advised Match
Caterpillar Foundation (Anthony Rassi)
Peer to Peer Fundraising Campaigns
Facebook Fundraising / Deann Badura and Anonymous Donor

Community Partner Programs

Let Your Purchases Support Fairhill!

Register for one or more of the following programs!

Tom Thumb/Albertson's Good Neighbor Program
Kroger's Community Rewards
Shopraise.com/for/fairhill

FAIRHILL SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Fairhill School is a community of dedicated, caring, and experienced educators that empowers students who have learning differences. The student-centered curriculum focuses on differentiation, multi-sensory experiences, executive function development, and intervention for individualized learning needs. Fairhill fosters students' unique potential while guiding them on their journey toward becoming confident 21st century citizens.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Dziminski, Chairman
Leslie Zale Greco, Vice-Chairman
Cindy Rickerby, Treasurer
Elizabeth Phifer, Secretary
Neil Lange
Jane Sego
Carla Stanford
Lisa Whisler

ADMINISTRATION

Carla Stanford, Executive Director
Tony Moreno, Head of School
Ashli Cheung, Assistant Head of School
Caroline Ford, Ph.D., Director of Diagnostic Assessment Center

ADVANCEMENT

Deann Badura, Director of Development, Public Relations, and Alumni Relations
Susan B. Stern, Director of Admissions and Outreach

16150 Preston Road | Dallas, Texas 75248
Phone 972.233.1026 | Fax 972.233.8205
fairhill.org

FAIRHILL SCHOOL
ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC

Fairhill hosted a successful golf event on a beautiful afternoon on October 2nd, 2023 at Twin Creeks Golf Course in Allen, Texas. Over sixty golfers attended the scramble event, which kicked off shortly after lunch. The tournament began with a putting contest for both junior and adult divisions. There were several hole-in-one opportunities, and an exciting new game called "Advance to the Hole" provided additional fun and competition sponsored by Groove Tango / The Sanders Family.

This event would not be successful without the support of our generous sponsors:

TITLE SPONSOR:
FLEEGER FAMILY FOUNDATION
Mr. and Mrs. Matt Fleeger

PLATINUM SPONSOR:
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Davis

GOLD SPONSOR:
Mr. and Mrs. John Dziminski; Techscape Landscape/Mr. Kevin Winner; Soko Consulting/Mr. Charlie Sokolash; Canteen/Mr. Charles Coon; The Magnet Group

SILVER SPONSOR:
Mr. Paul Kirkley, Realtor; North Dallas Bank and Trust. GrooveTango/ Mr. and Mrs. JD Sanders

Meal Sponsor: Aum Ventures Foundation/Lone Star Neurology/Dr. Maushmi and Nilay Sheth

Tee Box Sponsors:

Katie and John Dziminski Family
Soko Consulting
Thomas Webb, Class of 2024
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Water Sponsor: Ms. Brownie Newton

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LONE STAR NEUROLOGY



Golfers also had the chance to purchase raffle tickets for various items, including Dallas Stars tickets, donated by Steve and Macey Davis, a two-night stay in Snider Plaza donated by the Dixon family, Top Golf Gift Card donated by Techscape, Chick fil A, Café Gecko, and other gift cards to several local restaurants.

Chairperson, John Newton expressed his gratitude, saying, "This event would not be successful if not for our corporate support along with tournament players and raffle sponsors. We are looking forward to next year's tournament; so, come join the fun either as a player or volunteer on October 7, 2024. Check out the website FairhillGolfClassic.com for more details."






Parent Council Update

By Elyse Rose, President of the Fairhill Parent Council



As we close out the 2023 - 2024 school year, I would like to reflect on what a memorable year we experienced, filled with successful events and meaningful contributions to our school. The Parent Council extends our gratitude to our parents, teachers and staff that have helped our school flourish.

We kicked off the year with a welcome breakfast, where we had the opportunity to meet new families and discuss ways in which they can become involved. In October, we organized a parent social, allowing our new and tenured parents to mingle. Our Annual Golf Classic in October and The Blue & Gold Gala in March were exceptional fundraising events. These events combined raised a record breaking $130,000. This year, in addition to "Teacher Appreciation Week," we planned additional exciting events throughout the year. "You Are Souper," a Superbowl themed lunch 'soup' buffet, organized by Clay Bonner, will now be a new tradition for our staff to look forward to every year.

Lastly, we extend our heartfelt thanks to our 2023-2024 Parent Council board, including Vice President, Brooke Tucker; Treasurer, Andrea Sanders; Secretary, Melody Greenwood; Fundraising Chair, Macey Davis and Shelby Sokolash, Past President. Without their leadership, we would not be successful. Regarding critical fundraising endeavors, thank you to John Newton, Golf Classic Chair, Nadine Schwab, our Gala Chair for the last 2 years, and Emily & Frank Paul and Brad Weinstein for chairing our Annual Fund Campaign. These dedicated parents worked diligently throughout the year to ensure the success of every event. To our room parents, library and lunch volunteers and more, we want to thank you for your continued support over the entire school year.

As the new school year approaches, be sure to keep an eye out for opportunities to get involved and volunteer. Your commitment makes us that much stronger.

We look forward to the start of school in the coming months.

FAIRHILL SCHOOL

Blue & Gold gala and auction

The Fairhill School Blue and Gold Gala and Auction had tremendous success yielding an impressive gross revenue of just over $120,000. This is a testament to the immense generosity and steadfast support of our Fairhill community. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all who contributed to the success of this event. A special acknowledgment to our presenting sponsors, the Fleeger Family Foundation and Lone Star Neurology, whose generous contributions played a pivotal role in underwriting the event.

FLEEGER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Candee and Matt Fleeger

LONE STAR NEUROLOGY

Aum Ventures / Dr. Maushmi and Nilay Sheth

We would also like to acknowledge additional sponsors including:

PLATINUM SPONSORS:

Cintia and Johnny Powers

Anonymous

GOLD SPONSORS:

Macey and Steve Davis

SILVER SPONSORS:

Katie and John Dziminski

Soko Consulting / Charlie Sokolash

Anonymous

Dessert/Favor Sponsor: Mason Real Estate / Shelby Sokolash

Auctioneer Sponsor: Kirkley Realty Group / Christine and Paul Kirkley

Wine Pull Sponsor: Groove Tango / Andrea and JD Sanders

Cocktail Hour Sponsor: Roberta Lazarus / Brett Lazarus

Music/DJ Sponsor: Alford Family / Alford Family Farm

Live Auction Sponsors:

Casa Migueleño in Puerto Vallarta / Macey and Steve Davis / Ms. Suzan Kedron

Gem Voyage Diamond Jewelry / Samantha Kerfoot

Gunter Goldendoodles / Andra and Ralph Williams; Natalie and Josh Reichert

Marriott Hotels / Nadine and Kevin Schwab

Southwest Airlines / Melissa DeJesus, Brian Prelesnik, and Cole McGuire

Planet Lincoln, Bobbies, and Algiers /Planet Lincoln / Megan Dennen / Shelby and Charlie Sokolash

Please save the date for next years' event which will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2025 at Venue 40|Fifty. Also, if you want to get involved, reach out to Deann Badura, dbadura@fairhill.org.









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ALFORD FAMILY FARM

Fairhill's Advancement Team Welcomes Susan Stern as Director of Admissions



A school's advancement team is charged with promoting the vision and mission of the school. In September, Fairhill's advancement team made a significant step by hiring its first Director of Admissions, Susan Stern, M.A.Ed. With a vision to boost enrollment and expand the school's external network, Mrs. Stern set ambitious goals for the department.

Since assuming her role, Mrs. Stern has conducted tours and mini tours (10-15 minutes) each week. The mini tours have proven particularly effective; every parent who participated in one has continued with the admissions process.

In February, Fairhill hosted a revamped Admissions Preview event. The session began with a brief history of Fairhill and followed by division tours led by an administrator, concluding with a Q&A session in the library. This revamped format attracted increased attendance, highlighting the community's growing interest in Fairhill.

Beyond enrollment efforts, Susan has focused on external outreach, engaging with educational consultants, testing centers, pediatricians, and psychologists to enhance Fairhill's network and visibility.

About Susan Stern:

Mrs. Stern brings over 20 years of experience in education to Fairhill, having served as both a teacher and an administrator. She graduated from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and French and earned a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership from the University of North Texas. Known for her enthusiasm, Mrs. Stern values collaboration, encourages creativity, and fosters a culture of lifelong learning.

Under Mrs. Stern's dedicated leadership and innovative strategies, Fairhill's Advancement Team has already shown remarkable progress over the past year. This significant increase in engagement and outreach is poised to lead to higher enrollment rates, positioning the team for strategic growth and success in the coming years.

A Fond Farewell



After a remarkable and impactful career spanning over two decades, we bid farewell to a beloved educator who has dedicated her life to nurturing young minds. Since 1999, Lee Ann Mix has been an integral part of our school, teaching Language Arts with an emphasis on reading, writing, and Language Connections. Her passion for education and unwavering commitment to her students have left an indelible mark at Fairhill. As she steps into retirement, we celebrate her extraordinary journey and the lasting legacy she leaves behind.

Mrs. Mix's journey in education began with certifications in elementary education, reading, and learning and language differences, leading to her first teaching role in special education within the Dallas Independent School District. During her time there, she completed her master's degree.

After five years, she took a break from teaching to raise her children. When her youngest daughter reached fifth grade, she decided to return to the profession. She resumed teaching at her daughters' private school, where she initiated a program to support children with learning differences in the classroom.

In 1999, she found her true calling at Fairhill, where she has dedicated the last twenty-three years. She has enjoyed working with children in elementary and middle school. Their positive attitudes, dedication, and the joy they feel when they succeed constantly amaze and inspire her.

She stated, "It has been a privilege to watch your children grow and transform into the remarkable individuals they are today."

As she looks forward to retirement and new adventures, it is with mixed emotions that she leaves this wonderful community of parents, teachers, and friends. She will cherish the memories made and carry them with her as she creates new ones with her devoted husband, Chuck, two daughters, Katherine and Theresa, and granddaughter, Aiden.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Class of 2023:

Carly Raspberry-Moore is currently pursuing a BFA in Acting at Dean College. She made the Dean's Honors Society, Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society as well as the Dean's List. She earned the role of Kelly in the Dean College production of *"Pocatello,"* in the spring semester.

Alan DeOrta is attending Texas A&M Engineering Academy at Dallas College. He is enrolled in core classes coupled with engineering classes with A&M professors.

Class of 2022:

Allison Kokal is a sophomore at the University of Illinois majoring in plant biotechnology with a minor in informatics. She is a member of the Cross Country/Track and Field club team and has participated in the national championship meets. Allison has an internship in plant biotechnology this summer.

Laura Kokal is a sophomore at Oklahoma State University majoring in electrical engineering. She is a member of the D&D club and secretary of the Archery Club.

Class of 2020:

Maddie Hand completed an associate's degree at Dallas College and is now enrolled at Texas Tech University in August 2024 to complete her degree in social work.

Mitchell Johnson graduated from the School of Automotive Machinists and Technology. He moved to Topeka, KS where he is living his dream life as a high-performance Engine Machinist at Siebert Performance.

Tanner Puckett attended Texas A&M Commerce, earning a degree in Electrical Engineering in May 2024.

Jerry Don Vanciel graduated with his Associates of Science degree from Dallas College - Richland Campus in December of 2023. He is currently attending Texas A&M working towards his Bachelor of Science in Biology with hopes to graduate in 2027 and follow his passion to do medical biology research.

Continued on page 15

Illuminating the Power of Stories and How they Connect Us

By Dana DeAndrea



What could be better than the latest novel by award-winning author Kate DiCamillo? How about an autographed copy! This April, I had the pleasure of attending a book signing event in Austin, Texas, for Kate's new middle grade novel, Ferris. I was accompanied by Dr. Jan Kirkland, the former Head of Literacy at Fairhill, who dedicated over 22 years to our school, even serving as the Fairhill librarian for some time.

Reading a book aloud unlocks the door to imagination and wonder—essentials that spark a lifelong love of reading and a hunger for more books. Kate DiCamillo's works achieve this and much more. Since I began teaching at Fairhill in 2017, I have been reading her books to our students. From the Newbery Medal-winning Flora & Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures to The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane, building literacy skills is at the heart of what we do for every student, in every grade. For each student, it is a miraculous journey that illuminates the power of stories and how they connect us.



At Fairhill, we are not just building literacy; we are building a legacy where every student matters.

Unleashing Potential: How Instructional Coaching Transforms Teaching and Learning

By Dr. Ragan Brown

Envision a supercharged partnership where experienced educators team up with new teachers to refine their skills and strategies. Through Fairhill's instructional coaching initiative, teachers receive personalized support, invaluable feedback, and innovative techniques to contribute to the success of each student's unique needs. Instructional coaching at Fairhill is a collaborative culture that fosters a spirit of teamwork, allowing teachers to share ideas and grow together.

Teachers reflect on ways they would like to enhance student-teacher connections, instruction, and progress. Having access to tailored support allows teachers to meet their unique needs. Whether it is integrating new technology, sharing strategies for various learning differences, executive functioning strategies, our teachers receive customized guidance. This also includes analyzing various pieces of data to brainstorm innovative approaches to learning or managing classroom dynamics.





Fairhill teachers and leaders are committed to continuous growth to unlock their own potential. Actionable feedback assist teachers with reflecting on and improving their practices. Cultivating this atmosphere is one of the keys to positively impacting student outcomes. Enhanced teaching methods lead to improved academic performance and a love for learning.

Every child gets the support they need to thrive.

A vibrant, supportive classroom with confident and equipped teachers boosts student confidence and motivation. Students benefit from this additional support during Advisory, during class, and study hall.

Instructional coaching encompasses a mindset of relationship building, collaboration, and a commitment to ongoing development. As Fairhill continues to grow, instructional coaching will expand creating a richer, more effective learning environment for each Fairhill student. Together, we can ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed, thrive, and unleash their potential.

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024





Thursday, May 30th marked Fairhill School's commencement ceremony for the Class of 2024. The graduates had family and friends supporting them as they walked across the stage to receive their diplomas. Immediately following the ceremony, Fairhill hosted a reception, where everyone gathered to congratulate the new graduates and wish them well in their future endeavors.

Mrs. Jennifer Allen, Senior Class sponsor and National Honor Society sponsor, began the ceremony by recognizing the Class of 2024's achievement of reaching a significant milestone in their lives. She reflected on the changes the class experienced at Fairhill, including new principals, campus renovations, and personal growth from many of them starting as senior buddies to present, driving to school and more. She quoted Mahatma Gandhi, "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." She emphasized that their education and experiences at Fairhill have equipped them to embrace and adapt to inevitable changes as they move forward into the future.

She closed by introducing Salutatorian, Zachary Ellis and Valedictorian, Joshua Rassi who were the highest academic ranking students in the class.

In her introduction of Salutatorian, Zachary Ellis, she praised Zach as a talented musician, actor, athlete, and more, whose enthusiasm and positivity have significantly impacted Fairhill over the past 12 years. Zach, who has achieved excellent grades and contributed to the Fairhill community, will be attending Hofstra University to major in Music Business as well as explore communications and broadcasting. His scholarship with the Tuition Exchange Program is worth $220,000. Mrs. Allen then introduced the valedictorian, Joshua Rassi, who moved to Fairhill in 10th grade from Illinois. She admired his perseverance, character, and resilience in adapting to a new environment, and his positive example for his peers.



Joshua expressed his honor and humility at receiving the valedictorian award, a dream he had since he was thirteen. He thanked his parents, especially his mom for her guidance and his dad for his hard work and sacrifices. He also expressed gratitude to his classmates and teachers for their support and inspiration.

Joshua encouraged his classmates to pursue their dreams with determination, emphasizing that their journey is just beginning. Joshua will begin his journey by attending Dallas Baptist University to major in Cybersecurity. He received the Christian Service, Christian Leadership & Dean's Award totaling $65,000.

Following the Valedictorian's address, Ms. Kathy Daley, Drama Teacher, and Mrs. Lissa Dallas, Senior Class Sponsor, read letters of reflection. These letters, filled with heartfelt and humorous anecdotes, nicknames, and observations, encapsulate each senior's journey throughout their years at Fairhill.

Mr. Tony Moreno, Head of School, introduced Dr. Mary Kay Stratis, Doctor of Humane Letters and Board Chair of the Victims of Pan Am Flight 103 who shared her personal story of "Commencing" in life in unexpected and meaningful ways. Her message is following.

Today, I am honored to speak at your graduation commencement ceremony, a significant milestone marking both an end and a beginning.







Reflecting on my own life, I've had several commencements. After high school, I began my college career, became a high school math teacher, got married, and started a family.

In 1988, my life changed dramatically when a terrorist act made me a single parent. This unexpected path led me to advocate for airline security changes and seek justice for the Pan Am Flight 103 bombing. This journey turned me into a crusader for justice, another commencement.

After 9/11, I commenced another path as a grief counselor, helping others navigate their loss. These experiences taught me the power of new beginnings.

Today is your commencement, a new chapter for further education, work, or community service. Embrace the opportunity to make a difference. Remember, as Socrates said, "you can move the world by first moving yourself." You've already shown dedication by reaching this milestone. Now, use your education to make a global impact.

Following the address, Mr. John Dziminski, Board Chairman, and Mrs. Carla Stanford, Executive Director presented diplomas to each graduate. This was followed by a beautiful rendition of "Unwritten" sung by our own Dr. Caroline Ford. The graduates then moved their tassels and recessed through a cheering crowd of proud families, guests, and educators.

Class of 2024

Valedictorian:
Joshua Michael Rassi
Salutatorian:
Zachary Michael Ellis

Zachary Michael Ellis
Hofstra University,
Long Island, New York
Major: Music Business and Exploring Communications and Broadcasting

John Moore Graham
University of Arkansas,
Fayetteville, Arkansas
Major: Sports Management

Phoebe Pearl Poon
University of Texas at Dallas,
Dallas, Texas
Major: Engineering

Joshua Michael Rassi*
Dallas Baptist University,
Dallas, Texas
Major: Cybersecurity

Caleb Riley Saulters
Gap Year
Construction Field Interest

Grant Jameson Stathatos
Gap Year
Computer Science Interest

Thomas Walter Webb*
Oklahoma State University,
Stillwater, Oklahoma
Major: IT / Instructional Technology

**National Honor Society*

The Class of 2024 was awarded scholarships totaling more than $325,000.



Senior Walk and Cap and Gown Ceremony





2024



Fairhill Class of 2024 celebrated their final day with an unforgettable senior walk, a Kona Ice tailgate, and a butterfly release. Congratulations to our seniors as they prepare for graduation!

The following Friday Fairhill seniors marked their Cap and Gown ceremony with pride, receiving cords and stoles for maintaining memberships in the National Honor Society, International Thespian Society, the Spanish Honor Society, as well as Student Council leadership. The event featured personal letters written from their parents celebrating their accomplishments. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Mr. Tony Moreno, Head of School, announced this year's Salutatorian, Zach Ellis and Valedictorian, Joshua Rassi.









Fly like a Falcon

A Fairhill tradition and loved by all, middle school artists created their own miniature treehouses.

Chess Club

These "Kings" and "Queens" are advancing their chess skills every week with guidance from chess instructors, Jennifer Thompson and Lisa Nolte.



Sports at Fairhill

Varsity football is just one of the sports offered at Fairhill. Our students participate in Volleyball, Basketball, Golf, Cross County, Tennis, Bowling along with Track and Field. Go Falcons!



We Got Your Number!

Mrs. DeAndrea's dedication to nurturing a love of reading and learning goes above and beyond. She brings books to life with costumes, activities, and fun experiences, igniting imaginations and enriching the educational journey for both students and educators.



The Fairyland Detective Agency

Middle School drama class performed a familiar cast of characters involved in somewhat unfamiliar situations. When Red Riding Hood hires Jack Sprat to find Grandma, Jack's secretary Tinkerbell is suspicious. Turns out, Red Riding Hood is conspiring with Prince Charming, but with assistance from Humpty Dumpty, Pinocchio, and others, it all gets right in the end.



13 Ways to Mess Up Your College Interview

Fairhill's Acting Troupe delighted audiences with their spring show, featuring college recruiters navigating interviews with eccentric high school seniors offering what NOT to do during a college interview!



Learning abroad expands knowledge and experiences

Many students enhance their skills and gain new expertise through off-campus opportunities, which they then share with their classmates.



Basketball Season Kick-Off

Falcon fans enthusiastically kicked off the 2023-2024 basketball season with a pep rally led by Dallas Mavericks' MavsMan and Champ.



The Falcon Award

The Falcon Award recognizes the student who embodies the essence of being a Fairhill Falcon. Award recipients, Melisa Schwab and Jack Graham balanced their roles as leaders and team players, exhibiting respect toward teachers and peers, trust in teammates and coaches, sportsmanship, and dedication to representing the Falcon spirit.



Students create a campus mural "Day in the Life of a Falcon."

Fairhill fine art students created a mural, located in the fine arts wing, symbolic of a day in the life of a Falcon, displaying all the wonderful things offered at the school.





Camp Learn-A-Lot

The younger students had a blast participating in various outdoor activities, such as nature hikes, arts and crafts, and team-building games at Camp Learn-A-Lot towards the end of the first semester.

Student Council (STUCO)

A key objective of STUCO is to positively impact the school community. Both Middle School and High School STUCO strive to achieve this by organizing events throughout the school year. Here is a list of STUCO activities for the year.

High School

October: Spirit Week, Homecoming Dance, and Red Ribbon Week.

November: North Texas Food Bank Food Drive (441 lbs. donated /367 meals provided)

December: Annual Grinch-Off raised funds ($1,054) for HALAH (Home at Last Animal Haven) halah.org. Special thanks to Coach Bruno and Coach Madeley for dressing as the Grinch and his dog, Max.

January: The Help Children Thrive Backpack Drive benefitting the Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County was a huge success, with students filling 100 backpacks with essential items. Participants also enjoyed the inaugural Slipper Day event.

February: Spring dance was a treasure in A Night at the Museum.

March: Door Decorating Contest celebrating all things spring to help beautify our hallways.

April: Green Week provided students with a chance to learn about environmental impact through themed dress-up days inspired by superheroes like The Hulk and Black Panther. The week concluded with a schoolwide celebration and a Parent Picnic featuring hamburgers and hot dogs.

May: Fairhill admin, parents and STUCO planned a week of daily treats and tokens of appreciation for our teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week.



Elementary and Middle School:

September: Plano Fire Department Peanut Butter Drive for North Texas Food Bank.

April: Dog food drive for HALAH (Home At Last Animal Haven) halah.org (200 lbs. collected and playdate with Biscuit, Coach Madeley's Puppy!)





Fairhill is grateful to Student Council and its sponsors for the good work they do on behalf of Fairhill School.





High School Officers and Class Representatives: *President (Sadie Darnell); Vice President / Public Relations (Ellie James); Secretary (Joshua Rassi); Parliamentarian (Oliver Gamel); Representatives: Grade 9: Annie Fisherman, Maahiya Monga / Grade 10: Maddie Fix, Khushi Sheth, Jack Traweek /Grade 11: Luke Brown / Grade 12: Grant Stathatos*

Middle School Class Representatives: *Grade 8: Paige Price, Graham Lake, Carolann Day, Eme Paul, Dylan Daniel / Grade 7: Faye Allsup / Grade 6: Naftoli Geldman*

National Council of Excellence (NCOE)



Congratulations to our incredible Student Council for achieving the prestigious 2024 National Council of Excellence (NCOE) award from the National Association of Student Councils (NASC)! This recognition highlights outstanding dedication to excellence, leadership, innovation, and community involvement. This award sets the standard for quality and serves as an inspiration to student councils across the nation. We are proud of your continued commitment to making a positive impact and leading with excellence!

ALUMNI UPDATES (CONT.)

Class of 2019:

Beth Kokal graduated from the University of Illinois in May 2024 with a B.A. in Linguistics and a minor in Spanish. She is a Specialist in the Illinois National Guard and deployed to the Middle East in June for a 1-year assignment. She was a member of the Illinois Cross Country and Track and Field club team and the League of Linguists.

Cameron Furtaw is attending veterinary technician school in Frisco. He married Alexandria in 2020 and they have a beautiful daughter named Josie who is 3 1/2 years old.

Class of 2018:

Claire Austin attended Concordia University, Austin, Texas, where she earned her B.A. and M.B.A in Business Administration. She consistently made the Dean's List and maintained a 4.0 GPA in her MBA program. As an undergraduate, Claire led the varsity women's tennis team to its first conference appearance as a freshman and to conference semi-finals in her junior and senior years. She earned All-Academic All-Conference honors and served as a graduate assistant during her MBA program.

Sarah Beskok attended the University of North Texas, earning a degree in Rehab Studies with a specialization in Autism in 2018. She graduated with honors (Summa Cum Laude) and was on the President's List. Sarah works as a paraprofessional at Plano Senior High School while getting certified in other areas of teaching and is working towards certification in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

Rina Harrison is working as an IT / Audio tech at the University of Texas at Arlington. While Rina was in her senior year at UTD, her senior project was selected for projection at the side of Omni Hotel Dallas. Rina would not be where she is today without Fairhill School.

Ethan Skufca earned his Bachelor of Business Administration (Marketing) from University of North Texas in December 2023 with honors.

Vincent Trezza earned an Associates of Applied Science from the School of Manufacturing and Industrial Technology from Dallas College in 2023. He is an Aircraft Maintenance Apprentice at DFW Aero Mechanix, in Addison, Texas which is part of the AA aviation maintenance program at Tarrant County Community College. He also serves in the Texas National Guard.

Class of 2017:

Lauren Badura earned a teaching degree in Early Childhood (EC-6) from University of North Texas in May 2022. Lauren is teaching math, science, and social studies to third graders at Riverchase Elementary School in Coppell, Texas.

Nick Lange graduated from the EMPOWER program at the University of Arkansas in 2021 with a certificate in Hospitality. He was thrilled when he officially got his name on the sidewalk as an alumni, a long held tradition at the school. Nick loved the area so much he chose to stay in Arkansas and moved to Bentonville. Go Razorbacks!

Jessica Rickerby and husband, Angel Gutierrez, have son, Maximus, who celebrated his first birthday in June 2024. Jessica will be attending the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) to pursue another undergraduate degree in Equine Studies with a minor in Photography. She also plans to earn a master's degree in photography from SCAD, as well.

Hannah Westbrooks graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of North Texas in May 2024, earning a Bachelor's degree in Studio Art with a focus on Painting and Drawing. She is now a first-year tattoo artist with Isekai Tattoo. In May 2024, she also got engaged to Parker Sams.

Wilson Lathem is studying Computer Science at Utah Tech University with an emphasis in Artificial Intelligence.

Class of 2015:

Evan Cantor attended the University of North Texas and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services. He was an active member of Alpha Epsilon Pi. Evan now works as a Customer Relationship Advocate at Fidelity Investments.

Class of 2011:

Ari Disraeli attended Collin College and obtained an associate in arts degree. He owns an event Promotion company in Dallas. He is also a Disc Jockey and Entertainment Director for venues and performance companies in DFW area.

Class of 2009:

Michael Alford attended Austin College, Sherman, TX, earning a bachelor's degree in environmental science and business administration. Michael manages Alford Family Farm as well as owns I Dig It Bonsai. The Alford's invite alumni to visit them for seasonal u-pick opportunities.

Sarah Vint works as the Consolidations and Reporting Manager at Liberty Global, where she focuses on preparing group consolidations and financial statements. Sarah collaborates with operating companies and joint ventures based in Europe.

Class of 2008:

Blake Reyes earned his Bachelor of Business Administration and Management from Sam Houston State University. He is currently the Community and Growth Manager at PolySwarm, where he oversees customer success initiatives and marketing operations for overseas markets. Blake relocated to Puerto Rico a little over two years ago.

Class of 2007:

Bill Jones attended Brookhaven College and received his Associates of Arts degree. He currently works as a certified welder and CNC Machinist for Control Products Corporation, welding simulators and aircraft parts for the government.

Emily Menchaca (Uthlaut) got married to Eric in December 2023 and they currently live in Denver, Colorado.

Class of 2005:

Coleton (Mike) Burch attended Baylor University, earning a Bachelor of Science in Marketing with a Minor in religion. Coleton works as an apartment broker for Rowan Multifamily Advisors and has sold over $2 billion in apartments. He married Cassie Watson in May 2019, who is a homemaker and interior designer. They have one child, Brooks, born in August 2023.

Jonathan K. Haynes recently started a new job as Fire Inspector for the Frisco Fire Department.

Lauren Powell (Stone) relocated with her husband, a documentary filmmaker, to his hometown, Cleveland, MS. Recently, Lauren is the Executive Director for the Bologna Performing Arts Center at Delta State University.

Jessica Szulerowski has dedicated herself to volunteering. For the past 10 years, she has volunteered at a local elementary school library, although this will soon come to an end as the librarian is retiring. Jessica plans to continue her volunteer work at the used book shop at her alma mater, the University of Wollongong.

Class of 2004:

Andrew Furth currently serves as an Advanced Weapons Trainer and Firearms Instructor for the United States Air Force (USAF), managing conventional and nuclear weapons programs for the Air Force Global Strike Command and training military personnel on various weapons systems and procedures. Andrew married Melissa, in 2008, and together they have three children: Cayden (18), Emma (15), and Landon (12).

Class of 2001:

Nick White attended Granite State College and is currently an EPIC Software Analyst for Beth Israel Lahey Health (BILH) in Milford, NH. He married Jennifer Woithe in 2011, and together they have a 10-year-old son.

Class of 1991:

Jennifer Henson (Weyandt) earned a Bachelor of Science in Communication Sciences with a focus on Deaf Education from Texas Woman's University. During her time at Texas Woman's University, she served as Vice President of the student government. Jennifer is a retired teacher and is active in her community as a Celebrate Recovery leader, a volunteer for differently-abled children at her church, a food pantry volunteer, and a greeter. She has two dogs, Linus and Lucy.

Stay In Touch!

Please complete the form located at **www.fairhill.org/alumni/** or email Deann Badura, Director of Development, PR, and Alumni Relations at alumni@fairhill.org. Fairhill can communicate better with you when we have accurate emails, mailing addresses and phone numbers. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Fairhill School

16150 Preston Road
Dallas, TX 75248
fairhill.org



Students witnessed the solar eclipse, a once-in-a-lifetime "full totality" event in April.

FOLLOW US

SAVE THE DATE 2024-2025

AUG

15 Meet Your Teachers and Schedule Pick Up
19 First Day of Classes
29 Curriculum Night for Parents Only

SEPT

16-20 Book Fair
19 North TX Giving Day/ Fairhill Fund Kick-Off
20 Moms' Visiting Day

OCT

5 Parent Social
7 Golf Tournament
10 Prospective Family Preview Coffee
19 Homecoming
23 Parent Conference Day

NOV

25-29 Thanksgiving Break

DEC

6 Tip-Off Night
20 Early Dismissal for the Winter Holiday
Dec. 23-Jan. 6 Winter Break

JAN

7 Return to School
31 Dads' Visiting Day

FEB

6 Prospective Family Preview Coffee
12 Parent Conference Day

MAR

1 Fairhill Gala
7 Junior Ring Ceremony
17-21 Spring Break

APRIL

21-25 Green Week
25 Earth Day/Parent Picnic

MAY

16 Senior Walk
23 Cap and Gown
29 Graduation
30 Parent Conference Day

JUNE

2-27 Summer Program

JULY

1-4 School Office Closed