



NOTRE  
DAME  
ACADEMY

ANNUAL  
**REPORT**









# LETTER FROM **DR. JUNGELS**

“We belong to one another.”

– St. Teresa of Calcutta

*We belong to one another.* St. Teresa of Calcutta understood that connection and community is at the forefront of a joy filled life in Christ.

Our 2022-2023 school year was one filled with community and fellowship. What a gift to enjoy a full year of Notre Dame Academy activities and events. Some of the highlights for me included our Marathon (reading *Is Your Mama a Lama?* and starting a dance party from the roof) as well as hanging out with our families and my llama friends, teaching 8th religion (discussing our posse of saints, choosing one word for the year, going on the pilgrimage and planning graduation) implementing The Groves Believe and Read program (seeing the amazing positive reading growth), hosting an Accreditation team (see more details in this magazine), and finally, taking part in an in person Grand Beginnings - the sense of community was intense and tangible.

I feel so grateful for all of the little moments and big moments that make NDA a very special place to belong as we watch students learn, grow and realize their full potential.

God's peace and grace to you,

**Dr. Bonita Jungels**  
*Principal*



# STATE OF THE SCHOOL

The Minnesota Nonpublic Schools Accreditation Association requires schools to go through an accreditation self study review process which includes a team visit to determine our strengths and areas of growth. This process is a great opportunity to gain perspective and continue excellence and growth in our school. Notre Dame Academy hosted the accreditation team visit in April of 2023 - a culmination of two years of self-study.

The identified areas of strength and areas for growth by the visiting team include:

## **MOST SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHS IDENTIFIED AT NDA:**

- Notre Dame Academy has a very strong sense of community consisting of school leadership, faculty and staff, students, parents, board members, and priests as noted through every encounter and conversation with the MNSAA team.
- There is a strong commitment to meeting the diverse needs of each student.
- The Notre Dame Academy teachers utilize a variety of instructional methodology, in collaboration with the learning specialists, to create engaged learning opportunities for their students.
- The opportunities for enriched and extracurricular activities reflect the school's commitment to serving the whole child.
- The staff and students embrace the Top 20 program which supports the lived culture of the staff and students of Notre Dame Academy.

## **MOST SIGNIFICANT AREAS IDENTIFIED FOR GROWTH/IMPROVEMENT IDENTIFIED AT NDA:**

- The team recommends Notre Dame Academy develop a more formal process to review the use of standards to drive instruction and assessment through a more aligned approach in K-8.
- The team recommends Notre Dame Academy develop and implement a process for ongoing evaluation and

development of their curriculum standards to ensure K-8 vertical alignment.

- The team recommends Notre Dame Academy develop a more streamlined, and consistently enforced, approach to behavior management throughout the grade levels.
- The team recommends Notre Dame Academy review their security protocols to lessen vulnerability regarding access between the school and church.
- The team recommends Notre Dame Academy further develop a robust School Strategic Plan that is more strategic in nature, reflects the results of the self-study, and incorporates the community vision.

## **RESPONSE TO AREAS FOR GROWTH**

We are very proud of the strengths identified in the report. And we have taken many steps to address the areas brought forward for growth as well. We have begun creating a tool to track our alignment of standards covered in each subject at each grade level. Regarding a new behavior management system, we have created a comprehensive plan that includes our Peace of Mind perspective with our Top 20 language that will be clear and consistent across grade levels. We revised our school strategic plan which flows directly from the team identified areas for growth.

## **SECURITY ENHANCEMENT UPDATE YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK**

Regarding safety and security, we were blessed to raise over \$85,000 at our Grand Beginnings Fund-A-Need to address our safety concerns. We recently installed cameras both inside and outside the school and church. We are implementing a new PA/communication system to be assured that everyone can at any time receive communication via a speaker or lights. Additionally, we have brainstormed solutions and are getting quotes from contractors to better reduce vulnerability in the NDA/IHM shared space. We have created a greater awareness of this space with regard to who uses the space and when. We are grateful that we can address many of these security and safety concerns due to the generosity of so many donors.





NOTRE DAME ACADEMY  
*Having Faith in All Children*

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# MAP TEST DATA

Each year NDA students in grades 1-8 takes the MAP assessment twice a year to track their growth and allow faculty to see valuable information on student skills therefore increasing their ability to differentiate and individualize learning for students. Grades 1-2 take an auditory assessment in reading

and math. This assessment is one snapshot in time but also provides valuable data. Grades 3-5 take reading, math, and language arts assessments and grades 6-8 also add science. Our data shows that our students consistently outperform national norms.

## READING

| Grade | National Norm Score | NDA Mean RIT Score |
|-------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1     | 171.4               | 179.1              |
| 2     | 185.6               | 197.4              |
| 3     | 197.1               | 202                |
| 4     | 204.8               | 210.7              |
| 5     | 211                 | 219.2              |
| 6     | 215.4               | 220.8              |
| 7     | 218.4               | 221.8              |
| 8     | 221.7               | 225.3              |

## MATH

| Grade | National Norm Score | NDA Mean RIT Score |
|-------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1     | 176.4               | 182.7              |
| 2     | 189.4               | 206.5              |
| 3     | 201.1               | 207                |
| 4     | 210.5               | 218.8              |
| 5     | 218.8               | 227.7              |
| 6     | 222.9               | 228.1              |
| 7     | 226.7               | 235.4              |
| 8     | 230                 | 240                |

## LANGUAGE ARTS

| Grade | National Norm Score | NDA Mean RIT Score |
|-------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 3     | 198.3               | 202.5              |
| 4     | 205                 | 212.4              |
| 5     | 210.2               | 218.4              |
| 6     | 214.2               | 217.6              |
| 7     | 216.5               | 224.9              |
| 8     | 218.8               | 229.8              |

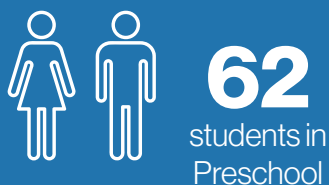
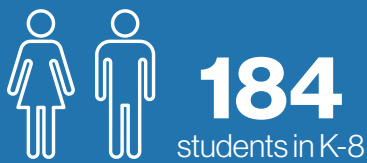
## SCIENCE

| Grade | National Norm Score | NDA Mean RIT Score |
|-------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 6     | 208.5               | 212.4              |
| 7     | 210.6               | 217.8              |
| 8     | 213.4               | 224                |

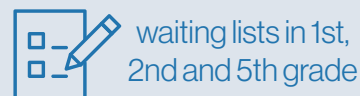
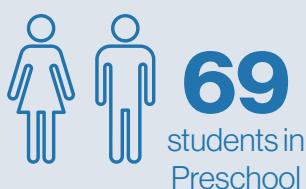
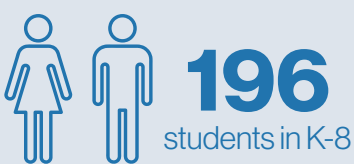




# ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION FOR 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR



# CURRENT ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION SNAPSHOT FOR 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR\* \*As of the print of this publication



## OUR STUDENTS



Notre Dame Academy is a regional Catholic school that has students that come from 13 different surrounding school districts.

**28%**

28% of our students receive financial aid. NDA prioritizes keeping tuition affordable so that all parents who desire Catholic education can invest in their children's future.

**5** 

Our school community is made up of a diverse mix of families with over 5 native languages spoken in homes. We provide a welcoming atmosphere for all students and families.



# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

## Q/A ABOUT TOP 20 WITH MRS. SCHNEEMAN

*1st Grade Teacher*



**Q: How would you describe Top 20 to a new parent or someone outside of our school?**

Top 20 is a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum that gives students the skills and tools they need to be effective in dealing with

everyday situations and problems. In addition, Top 20 teaches students how to be reflective and compassionate toward themselves and others.

**Q: How has SEL and differentiated learning influenced you as a teacher? Colleague?**

As a Top 20 school, we engage in Top 20 staff workshops. We learn to apply the concepts we teach in a way that benefits us as educators and as adults. We discuss the importance of ideas like Honoring the Absent and Keep your Day as ways to foster a healthy school culture. When our students feel like they belong,

they can be more positive and effective thinkers both in and out of the classroom. Top 20 helps us to achieve that goal.

**Q: Can you share how Top 20 concepts help students develop life skills used outside of the classroom?**

A few Top 20 concepts that my students really resonate with are the “parking lot” and OPOs. The parking lot is a tool I teach students to use when they have a lot on their mind. We call this having life on your mind and when this happens it makes it hard to focus on the task at hand (whether in school or out of school).

Students learn to put the distracting thoughts in their mental parking lot until there is a better time to think about it (i.e. at recess, lunch, etc.). At first, I am the one that often directs students to put their distracting thoughts in the parking lot but eventually it’s something that they are able to do on their own.





The other concept my students have resonated with is letting go of Other People's Opinions (OPOs). We discuss what an opinion is and study situations when OPOs aren't beneficial to us and how we can let them go. They learn it's as easy as identifying whether or not the OPO is in our best interest and if it's not, they let it go and don't give it a second thought. "If it's an OPO, let it go!"

**Q: What tools do you see these programs providing parents?**

As a Top 20 school, we have parent courses offered to educate parents on the concepts and skills that their children are learning in school. If parents are familiar with the Top 20 concepts, they can use the language and the skills at home. These concepts can help parents work through hard situations collaboratively with their child.

**Q: Can you share a favorite story of success?**

I had a student a few years ago that loved the parking lot tool. One day before our class prayer she closed her eyes and whispered "put it in the parking lot" before we prayed. I asked her about it later and she told me that she was excited for an upcoming birthday party but knew it would distract her from the prayer so she put it in the parking lot so she could give her full attention to God.



When our students feel like they belong, they can be more positive and effective thinkers both in and out of the classroom.

**– Katie Schneeman**  
*1st Grade Teacher*



# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

## KIRSTEN SEGAR

*Learning Specialist*



At Notre Dame Academy, our curriculum is not one-size fits all. We have several learning specialists that meet our students where they are at, providing support or challenge to accommodate individual needs. We sat down with one of our learning specialists, Mrs. Kirsten Segar, to talk about differentiated learning.

### **Q: How would you describe differentiated learning to someone outside unfamiliar with this concept?**

Differentiated instruction is based on finding out what each student needs and then matching their instructional goals to their level. We have a variety of different ways to determine needs and strengths including formal and informal assessments as well as teacher observations. Needs fluctuate over time, so the process is continually evolving. There are a variety of instructional strategies that help make it manageable to meet the needs of the students. Flexible grouping is one of the ways, but there are several ways to differentiate assignments and projects for students during whole group instruction as well. With technology, assignments can more easily be personalized for each student so that they can be challenged and supported

in the ways that will help them grow the most. Prodigy, Google Classroom, Seesaw, Khan Academy, Readworks, Think Central, and Storyworks are some of the online resources that we use the most to personalize learning for students.

As a learning specialist, I have the opportunity to teach students in small groups to enhance their learning. I work closely with classroom teachers to determine the needs and design and implement educational activities to help students grow. I have done higher level math and reading lessons for kids who need a challenge and spent time going over the day's lesson with kids who need to see it another way to understand the concept. I help kids catch up after an absence and go over homework with students who need some extra support.

Makerspace is another opportunity for differentiation. It is a class for students to use their creativity and try new things using Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) concepts. Normally, students get some choice as to what they work on in their weekly makerspace class. Options range from coding robots to creating things out of paper, beads, pipe cleaners, or other crafty materials. Students can design and build structures out of a variety of different objects. Sometimes there is a specific challenge that students work together to solve using specific materials.





**Q: How has social emotional learning and differentiated learning influenced you as a teacher?**

Just like everyone has their own unique learning styles, strengths, and needs, we all have our own emotional styles, strengths and needs as well. It is important to understand all we can about our students in order to best meet their needs. Relationships are the most important part of education. In order for students to learn to their full potential, they need to be in a community where they feel comfortable sharing and trying new things. It is so important to build trust with and among students so that they are able to do their best.

Top 20 has given the NDA students and staff a common language to use to help each person understand how they are feeling and what to do about it. Peace of Mind is a new program that works with Top 20 to further increase awareness of our emotional needs and strengths that we bring to the community. The staff is going through training to help set up rules that allow students to know what is expected of them in all parts of the school.

**Q: Are there social emotional learning tools for parents?**

Yes, there are resources available. When parents take advantage of the resources we have from Top 20 and have conversations with their children using the ideas that are taught in school, they will be helping their children become caring, resilient, confident, responsible people who view mistakes as an opportunity for learning.

**Q: Can you share a favorite story of success?**

I always love seeing the changes in children over the years. With my unique position as a learning specialist, I get to work with the same students for several years. It's amazing to see the growth that they experience over time. For example, one student took most of his 2nd grade year before he would talk in class. He was uncomfortable sharing his answers with the group, and didn't really want to talk one-on-one either. Now as a fifth grader, he updates me on what he's doing outside of school and he volunteers daily to answer questions and explain how he solved problems. It is so much fun to see how relationships and Top 20 skills have helped him become so confident and successful in school.

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Relationships are the most important part of education. In order for students to learn to their full potential, they need to be in a community where they feel comfortable sharing and trying new things

– **Kirsten Segar**  
*Learning Specialist*



# UNIQUE PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE (CSCOE)

As a select CSCOE partner school, NDA has access to unique programs such as Believe and Read and Peace of Mind that further promote excellence for our students.

## BELIEVE AND READ

Believe and Read is a three-year program that transforms literacy instruction through outstanding professional development and teacher coaching. The program supports ALL students, both struggling readers and high fliers. After one year of program participation, 98% of all 1st-3rd grade NDA students improved reading speed and accuracy.

## PEACE OF MIND

We are lucky to partner with CSCOE and Phoenix Counseling to offer the Peace of Mind program. This program offers training for staff to address their own mental health as well as the mental health and mindset of our students. Phoenix Counseling provides a counselor on-site at NDA one day per week who is available to meet with students or staff.

## ADVANCED MATH PARTNERSHIP WITH HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

We have the unique opportunity to partner with Holy Family Catholic High School to offer an advanced math track for our students who desire more challenge. This program allows students to take Honors Algebra II for high school credit at no additional cost to our families.

## LAKE AREA DISCOVERY CENTER (LADC)

We are grateful for a strong partnership with Lake Area Discovery Center. LADC is a Christian-based early childhood program provider for children from 2 – 5 years of age. NDA's Discovery Center is a NAEYC Nationally-Accredited and Four-Star Parent

Aware Rated, the highest quality rating possible in Minnesota. Site Director, Heather Discher, is also a parent of NDA elementary and middle school daughters. Her insight has played an instrumental role in the development of a strong and well-aligned partnership.

## TOP 20

Students come to NDA with amazing potential. They possess God-given power to make a positive difference in their relationships and experiences. However, they are often unaware of the power they possess. NDA teachers share with students Top 20 concepts and strategies that enable our students to become aware of the power they have to make amazing things happen in their lives. Topics included in the are: understanding our thinking, managing stress, finding purpose and relevance in school, resolving conflict, learning strategies for how to listen, understanding why mistakes and confusion are so important, knowing we have the power of choice, developing Star Qualities, avoiding negativity in our thinking and communication and knowing how to function as a team.

## MAKERSPACE

At NDA, students in Kindergarten through 5th grade have the opportunity to create, explore, and learn in the Makerspace Labs. There are a variety of structured and unstructured STEM activities that they take part in each week. Some of these activities include learning to code programs for Dash robots and Beebots. They also complete challenges to build a variety of structures within certain parameters using Keva planks, Legos, K'nex, or simple household items. Osmo devices are used with the iPads to work on coding, increase spatial awareness with tangrams, run a business with Pizza Co., and do math and reading activities. Students explore how electricity works with Little Bits and Snap Circuit kits. In addition, many materials are available for free building and creating including Legos, K'nex, wooden blocks, pipe cleaners, straws and connectors, paper and more.





Our oldest daughter has absolutely flourished despite her reading struggles thanks to Groves Believe and Read program and to watch her use the phonics skills she learned while reading is amazing.

– **Current Parent**



# ALUMNI PERSPECTIVE

## TRISTAN KELLY



A graduate of Creighton University in 2022, Tristan recently moved back to the Twin Cities and decided to stop by the IHM Block Party to see what was happening at his elementary school alma mater. Tristan was a member of the first graduating class at NDA

and he recalls his experience fondly, in particular the friendships established with his classmates which he still maintains today.

A smile accompanied his recollection of the teachers such as Mr. Tesch, Mrs. Gross, and Mrs. Wukmir to name a few.

Tristan was glad to hear that the foundation for learning, faith, and character that was present during his time remains strong at NDA today. Expectations of kindness, accountability, and academic excellence complimented the fun he and his classmates had producing “I Will Divide” with Mrs. Dysart, winning multiple basketball trophies, and becoming an expert chess player.

Thanks for coming home to NDA, Tristan! We’re glad you’re back.



The character formation I received at NDA was a gift to me and set me on the path to be a successful adult. I want to return and give back to the school that gave me so much.

– **Tristan Kelly**

*Alumnus, class of 2014*



# NDA COMMUNITY AND FELLOWSHIP





NDA is a school known and loved for an exceptional community. Everything we do and believe goes back to how we can best serve our children. Parents take an active role in their children's academic and activity experiences and consistently rise to meet the volunteer and financial needs of our school. This involvement is why NDA accomplishes amazing things.

## VOLUNTEER

The NDA Home and School Committee is an organization led by current NDA parents for all NDA parents. They coordinate a wide variety of activities and events such as the Fall Marathon Family Fest, Trivia Night, Grand Beginnings, the Christmas Boutique, and an annual golf tournament. Our parents spend time volunteering in the lunchroom, at recess, as room parents, Good Shepherds, building sets and sewing costumes for the spring musical, and coaching athletic teams. These fellow parents realize everyone has different amounts of time to share and have created volunteer opportunities in all shapes and sizes so everyone can find a fit and participate in their child's NDA experience.

NDA volunteers are not only current parents. Parishioners, grandparents, and alumni give of their time. Long standing traditions such as the annual ICA Food Drive and the Christmas Boutique are not possible without volunteers who, by example, share their wisdom and faith with our students and encourage them to serve.

## PARTICIPATE

There is a strong culture of community at NDA because our families show up. They participate in many events where friendship begins and lasting bonds are formed. Parents and students gather at NDA athletic events, music concerts, and school events to show support and demonstrate school spirit. They share their faith at weekly school Mass. Parent gatherings at local restaurants and pubs promote fellowship and connection while supporting our local business community. Families are drawn to parish events such as the Lenten Fish Fry and Trunk-or-Treat. Students of different faiths attend their classmates' First Communion Mass. NDA events and activities give life to our community. Connections are established through faith and good fellowship. These connections - partnerships - are the very essence of who we are at Notre Dame Academy.



It's like my daughter has 20 moms, and we're all helping one another raise our kids. The whole place is one big giant family.

– Current Parent

## BOARD OF LIMITED JURISDICTION

**Jim Cron, Chair**

*Alumni Parent*

**Erin Duffy**

*Partner in Catholic Education*

**Joselynn Fynboh**

*Current Parent*

**Marcus Genzlinger**

*Partner in Catholic Education*

**Amy Kelly**

*Alumni Parent*

**Blake Nelson**

*Alumni Parent*

**Margaret Requet**

*Alumni Parent*

**Josh Rutz**

*Current Parent*

**Greg Schumacher**

*Current Parent*

**Kristin Stanley**

*Alumni Parent*

**DeeAnn Stinebaugh**

*Partner in Catholic Education*

**Melissa Streit**

*Alumni Parent*

# THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

When you walk the halls of Notre Dame Academy, you immediately sense something special. Classrooms are alive with learning and the air is filled with joy. A combination of opportunities creates an amazing NDA Student Experience, one that empowers our students to thrive.

## TRADITIONS

The beloved 8th Grade/Kindergarten Buddy program inspires our oldest students to have a sense of belonging. 3rd Grade students see the impact of gratitude and kindness when they recognize a special person during their Super Adult project. 4th and 5th Grade students turn traditional research projects into a State Float Parade and Invention Fashion Show Learning Expo.

## ACTIVITIES, FINE ARTS, & CLUBS

Team sports are offered in soccer, basketball, and volleyball. Ultimate frisbee, while not an organized sport team, is a favorite activity. The fine arts are experienced through our band and vocal music programs and the Minneapolis Institute of Art "Art Adventure" curriculum. Student Council plans school service opportunities including Week of Gratitude and the ICA Food Drive and recognition of Veteran's Day. Chess Club and Run Club offer even more opportunities for our students together outside of the school day.

## OUR COMMUNITY

People who have been a part of the NDA student experience share a special connection. NDA's outstanding team of faculty are present for our students. Not only do they teach students the skills needed to succeed, they love them along the way. Parents, alumni, parishioners, and peers share expectations of respect, kindness, and accountability. Every person matters.





## WHAT MAKES NDA SPECIAL

*Graduation 2023 Address – Nic Keating*

Ladies and gentlemen, friends, and family, today is a monumental occasion for the class of 2023, as we move on to the bigger and greater challenge of high school. Frankly, I wasn't sure whether to dread this day or embrace it because truth be told, I don't want to leave NDA. NDA is great. While writing this speech, I had to ask myself; what made NDA such a special place? There is only one answer for that; the people.

The people at NDA work together like Lego bricks. Everything snaps together in place and when it doesn't, we find a solution. That is, in my opinion, what makes NDA special. If there is a problem with academics for example, the teachers are more than happy to help with whatever you are struggling with. I remember when I was struggling in math back in December. Mrs. Murphy (the math teacher) offered to help me before school with my homework so I could get out of the hole I had dug for myself. This interaction isn't even strange at NDA. The culture at NDA is one where if you have a problem, the attitude is let's try to find a solution. This school, for me, is special because the teachers care about their students. If any student were to go up to any of the middle school teachers with a problem or issue, I would personally bet that the teachers would do everything they could to help resolve the issue and help in any way possible.

NDA is close to my heart because it's not only like this with the teachers but with the students as well. If one student has a problem, the other students will do everything they can to try and assist, whether it be something small like inviting someone to sit at lunch, or something big like talking out a serious problem.

Not only is NDA unique in this way but it is also unique in memories we created along the way with my classmates. This school will always hold a special place in my heart. The play was one of the most fun school activities I've ever participated in. To be fair, I was quiet most of the time, which for many of you, was surprising that I could actually be quiet, but nonetheless, the play experience was incredible, and I made so many memories that I will never forget, and that truly made me happy to be a part of the NDA community.

Famously said by cowboy Arthur Morgan: "We can't change what's done, we can only move on." We may have finished this journey but now start a new adventure into high school where we will flourish. Class of 2023, We made it!



“

The people at NDA work together like Lego bricks. Everything snaps together in place and when it doesn't, we find a solution.

– Nic

*Class of 2023*

# FAITH AND SERVICE



## THROUGH THE EYES OF THE PRINCIPAL

I just completed my 16th year as a Principal in Catholic education. Why am I an administrator in a Catholic school when there are so many other options? JOY!

I have the best job in the world. I witness God working in so many incredible ways. His grace is apparent throughout the walls of our building ALL. DAY. LONG. How?

## PRAYER

We start our mornings with all school prayer led by the Student Council. Classrooms pray for intercessions - many times those are for families and friends of students as well as alumni, St. Gabriels and IHM parishioners and friends of NDA. What a gift to pray for others. It warms hearts. We pray before and after meals. We pray for those who have died when IHM hosts a funeral being held just down the hall from our cafeteria. We pray that the Holy Spirit accompanies us on our journey of mistakes, confusion and learning!

## JESUS

We encounter Jesus in so many ways including weekly Mass where students lector, serve, offer gifts and cantor. And within Mass we encounter Jesus in the Eucharist - the source and summit of our faith. We witness the birth of Jesus when the elementary students present the Christmas Pageant during Advent, and we relive the last days of Jesus when the 8th grade students share the Living Stations during Lent. We gaze upon Jesus and he upon us as we create a personal relationship with him at Adoration each month.

## FAITH

This is woven into all we do. Our Religion curriculum includes topics such as the sacraments, saints, The Bible and church history. I had the wonderful opportunity to teach 8th grade religion and see first hand the beautiful faith our young people have grown by their last year at NDA. Faith is also integrated into

the rest of our curriculum as we see everything through the lens of followers of Christ. We also witnessed the great faith of the Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus when they came to visit and share their vocation with the students. They were quite an inspiration.

## MARY

We have a special connection to our lady because of our school name, Notre Dame Academy. We believe that Mary intercedes with her son for us. We pray a rosary together as a school each year to remember this special relationship.

## SAINTS

Our goal is to get to heaven. Period. And our connection with the saints brings us closer to that goal. We see how they, in their many and varied lives, have chosen God first. We celebrate St. Francis in the Blessing of the animals and remember his desire for peace. Last year our theme focused on St. Teresa of Calcutta's words "We all belong to one another" reminding us that the saints have given us hope that we, too, can live significant lives by doing "small things with great love" that lead to heaven.

## SERVICE

Serving others reminds us that we are a community who takes care of one another. We visit Feed My Starving Children each summer to pack meals for those experiencing food scarcity in foreign countries. We bring in food for ICA each fall to share our treasure with others in our own community. And we are mentors and buddies to one another serving our own community of students in this way.

## LOVE

We belong to one another. We encourage one another and build one another up. We are grateful for one another. We care for one another. We love one another.

This unique faith learning experience allows me to live out my purpose ~ to lead with Christ's joy to create and nurture relationships that support staff, students and families to best live their unique, God-given purpose ~ and I am so grateful.



# NDA'S CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

## 8TH GRADE PILGRIMAGE

Hello, my name is Claire Holton. I am an alum from the Notre Dame Academy Class of 2023 and currently a freshman at the Academy of Holy Angels. At the end of 8th grade year, I was fortunate enough to go on the annual 8th grade pilgrimage, a tradition at NDA for the past 10 years.

This was an amazing experience because I not only got to make deep connections with my classmates, but I also got to deepen my faith and grow closer to God. During the pilgrimage, we visited many different shrines and churches. We started out our journey with a visit to Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, WI. Then, we drove to Green Bay where we visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help.\* We took prayer intentions collected during the school year from students, teachers, and other people in the NDA community and left them at the Shrine where prayers will be offered over them for an entire year. We concluded our pilgrimage by visiting St. Norbert's Abbey and the National Shrine of St. Joseph in De Pere. All of the shrines and churches were breathtaking and each one was unique. I really felt the presence of God. It was very special that Father John was on the pilgrimage and led Mass for us.

Many of us students got to take home souvenirs from the gift shops that were blessed. I bought a necklace of the Crucifix

that I wear all the time. It's a reminder of the trip and the special memories with my classmates.

One highlight of my trip was getting to make connections with my classmates that were different than the connections we made at school. The trip led my entire class to become closer and make great memories together, and also think about things we did during all of our time at NDA. I cherish these moments and think that all of them helped me develop the friendships that I have now that will continue.

The pilgrimage was a special experience for me because my dad, Michael Holton, was one of the chaperones on the trip. I not only got to experience the pilgrimage with my classmates, but I was very blessed that he was able to be a part of this with me. He said, "It was a life changing experience. It really made me feel closer to God and the NDA community. I'm so glad I got to experience it with my daughter."

The Pilgrimage was one of the big highlights of my 8th Grade year. It is a very special opportunity that NDA gives students to grow in their relationship with God and one another, and is an amazing way to end our time at this special school.

*\* Now named Our Lady of Champion*



“

We love NDA. We love that our girls attend Mass weekly with their peers, the strong sense of community, and that our girls are receiving a high level of education with God's presence every day.

– Current Parent





# A CULTURE OF SERVICE

Service is simply a part of the culture of Notre Dame Academy. NDA students can be seen doing acts of service and kindness every day. Helping a teacher or student with full hands by opening the door, hanging out on the Buddy Bench with the classmate who is alone at recess, collecting food for those in need, and sending hand-written letters to brighten someone's day are just a few examples.

NDA students also witness service in action watching parents help in the lunchroom, teachers spending extra time with a struggling classmate, and parishioners knitting prayer shawls to name a few. Through service, our students learn empathy, kindness, respect for others and oneself, the ability to distinguish right from wrong, and how to practice values that help them lead good lives and become a positive force in the world.

Expressing gratitude goes hand-in-hand with service. For the past couple of years, NDA's Student Council has celebrated a "Week of Gratitude", reaching out to say thank you to those who make a difference for NDA. Five Days of Gratitude and One Day of Giving is a week filled with goodness and service to others in our school, parishes, local business community, and partners in Catholic education. Students collected 2000 pounds of food and \$1,500 for the ICA Food Shelf, assembled and delivered 30 Gratitude Bags filled with more than 400 homemade cookies and notes of gratitude, and decorated the lounge for their teachers with hand-written notes and special treats. Student speakers expressed their gratitude for supporting parishes at IHM and

St. Gabriel's Masses. More than \$157,000 was raised on our Day of Giving thanks to YOU, our generous donors who care deeply about our students and Catholic education.

This community is amazing. NDA students understand and model generosity because of you. They know the joy of giving, while expecting nothing in return.

## 2023 LEGACY AWARD RECOGNIZES MUNKEBYS

The Legacy Award is given annually at Grand Beginnings to recognize individuals who have made a significant impact on the Notre Dame Academy community. Alumni parents Eric and Lisa Munkeby were honored for their gifts of time, service, and dedication to NDA.

Eric and Lisa shared how volunteering at NDA is how they found "their people" and built their foundation within a community built on kindness, compassion, and generosity. The NDA community quickly became an extension of the Munkeby family following the loss of their youngest son, Dean, while their older children were students at NDA. Our school and parish communities stepped up and cared for them. Eric and Lisa humbly continue to take care of members of our NDA community today.



Scan the code to watch their story.



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2022-23



**\$9,000**

Cost to Educate a Student

**\$5775**

Cost of Tuition

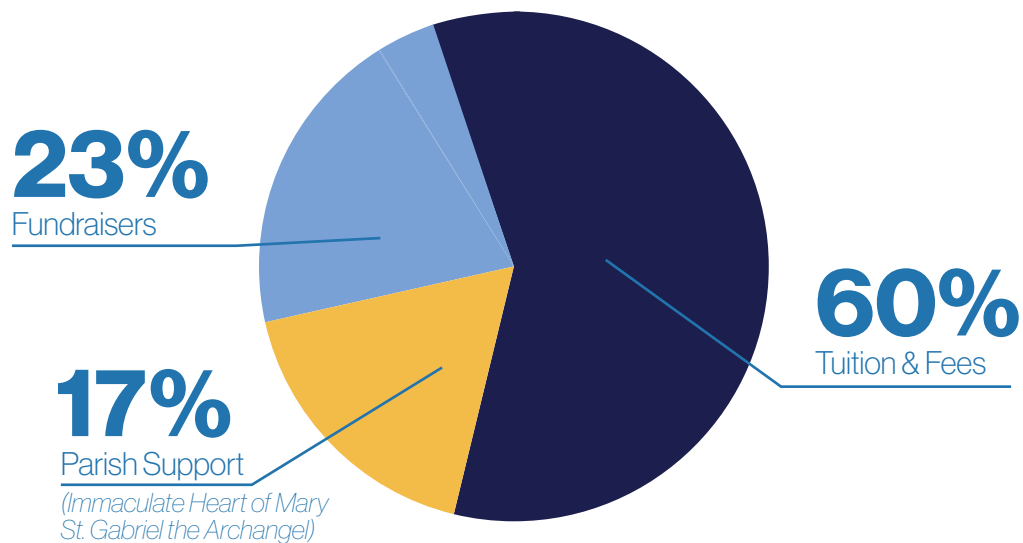


**\$391,000**

Fundraising Goal

## 2022-23 SCHOOL INCOME

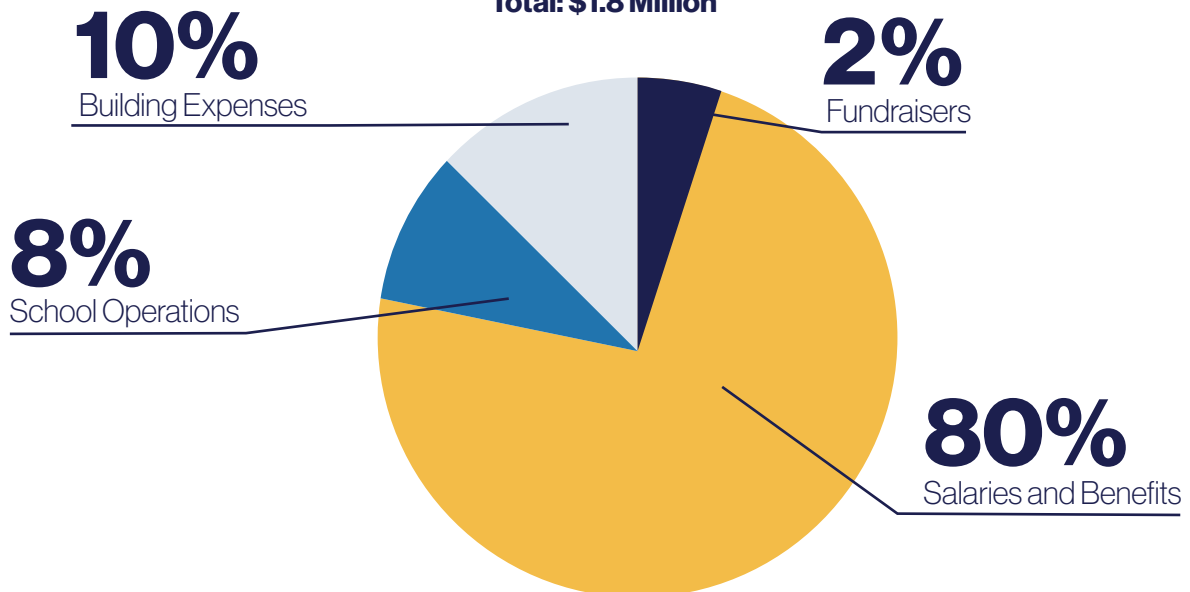
Total: \$1.8 Million



\*Excludes Restricted Income of \$124,853

## 2022-23 OPERATING EXPENSES

Total: \$1.8 Million





# A MESSAGE FROM VIVIAN PRITCHARD

*Development Director*



When I started as NDA's Development Director, I wondered what our teachers felt was the most important message to share with someone who may be unfamiliar with our school. Mrs. Janel Dysart, our 5th grade teacher and parent of an NDA graduate, shared, "We are not

a numbers-based school; rather, we work to meet students where they are at". At the time, I was uncertain what she meant; however, I've had the opportunity to witness this philosophy first-hand and I continue to watch in awe. Students thrive because their unique learning needs are recognized. Students flourish because of intentional partnerships created to enhance their educational journey.

Principal Dr. Bonita Jungels and our teachers build relationships with parents in support of their children, pursue solutions to meet students' unique needs, and create opportunities for all to achieve success. This is no small task and requires perseverance, patience, and strategy. These partnerships within our community are built on trust, expectations, and

accountability. The results? Students graduate from NDA confident and prepared for the next steps on their academic and life journey.

Partnerships do not exist exclusively within the walls of NDA. Organizations such as the Catholic Schools Center of Excellence and the Catholic Community Foundation advocate for Catholic education and create networks of support. The Aim Higher Foundation provides scholarships to families with economic barriers who seek Catholic education. Businesses such as Twin Cities Orthopedics, Lunds, Munkeby Kramer and 14 Foods/Dairy Queen are investing in Notre Dame Academy. Working together and having faith in all children, enormous possibilities and exciting potential are on the horizon.

A colleague recently referenced the proverbial quote "... a rising tide lifts all boats". This couldn't be more relevant today. Our vocation in Catholic education includes a collective responsibility to work in unity – I'll say in partnership – to lead our students to discover their unique purpose and calling to serve God. We invite you to be our partner on this amazing journey.

**DAY OF  
GIVING**  
NOVEMBER 15, 2023



**\$10,000**

2023-24 Cost to Educate a Student

**\$5995**

2023-24 Cost of Tuition



**\$405,000**

2023-24 Fundraising Amount

**24** HOURS | **\$150,000**

**Your gift is the difference**



Together, let's provide the financial foundation our Catholic school needs to succeed.

# DONOR HONOR ROLL

We are so grateful to those listed below – alumni, parents of alumni, current school parents, grandparents, parishioners, staff, businesses and foundations – for investing in the mission of Notre Dame Academy. Annual contributions made between **July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023** include cash gifts and sponsorships toward funding various opportunities including Day of Giving, Marathon, Grand Beginnings, Fund-A-Need, the Spring Musical, and the annual golf tournament.

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## MEMORIAL GIFTS

These gifts enable donors to offer condolences while making a financial contribution to NDA.

Gift in Memory of Cindy Aleknavicius  
*Rachel Aleknavicius*

Gifts in Memory of Randy "Papa Moo" Demulling  
*Justin and Kate Duerksen*

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## THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS

**Every gift makes a difference and while every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in this publication, we apologize for any errors.**

# MAKE AN IMPACT — GIVE TODAY

## CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF STOCKS AND SECURITIES

Gifts of appreciated assets such as stocks, bonds, and mutual funds are an excellent way to support NDA and maximize tax savings.

## PLANNED GIVING – LEGACY GIFTS

A planned gift to NDA ensures the continuation of excellence in Catholic education and creates your own legacy of support. You can do this by designating Notre Dame Academy in your will or making NDA the beneficiary of an existing life insurance policy.

## EMPLOYEE MATCHING GIFTS

Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will match charitable donations made by their employees, doubling the impact of your gift. To find out if your company has a matching gift program, reach out to your company's HR or Charitable Giving department.

## IN-KIND DONATIONS

In-kind donations, most commonly professional services and material goods, further our work and help us to maximize resources.

## MEMORIALS AND HONOR GIFTS

Making a gift to NDA is a powerful way to honor a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. Not only will your gift express your love—it also helps give the gift of Catholic education. These gifts can be made in memory of someone who has passed away, in gratitude for someone extraordinary in your life, or to acknowledge achievements or milestones.

### Questions?

Reach out to Vivian Pritchard, Development Director  
[vpritchard@nda-mn.org](mailto:vpritchard@nda-mn.org) or 952-388-6753

# THANK YOU



For generously donating the printing of this annual report



# FACULTY AND STAFF

## ADMINISTRATION

### Father John Bauer

Canonical Administrator Pastor, Immaculate Heart of Mary

### Father Paul Haverstock

Pastor, St. Gabriel the Archangel

### Dr. Bonnie Jungels

Principal

### Liz Flom

Business Administrator

### Joann Meyer

Marketing and Enrollment Manager

### Vivian Pritchard

Development Director

### Louise Wilson

Administrative Assistant

## ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

### Hallie Keenan

Kindergarten

### Katie Schneeman

First Grade

### Jamie Tschida

Second Grade

### Mary Ellen Gross

Third Grade

### Andrew Weeres

Fourth Grade

### Janel Dysart

Fifth Grade

### Kirsten Segar

5th Grade and Learning Specialist, Makerspace

## MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

### Jerry Dargis

Science

### Kelly Dopp

Social Studies, Religion, Math

### Aggie Mauer

Language Arts and Literature

### Pam Murphy

Math

## SPECIALISTS

### Adam Bestler

Band and Staging

### Brittnee Olson

Art

### Jesse Robertson

Technology

### Daren Tesch

Physical Education and Health

### Maggie Turner

Spanish

### Lori Wukmir

Music and Theatre

### Milton Stephens

Lions Lair and Summer Camp Lead, Accompanist, Substitute Teacher

## LEARNING SUPPORT

### Mindy Berkowitz, MSW

Phoenix Counselor

### Denise Bielke

Hopkins Title I/Reading Specialist

### Wendy Dellis

Hopkins Special Education Teacher

### Kris Nelson

Learning Specialist

### Prudence O'Connor

K-2 Learning Specialist and Makerspace

### Anne Palzkill

Learning Specialist and 8th Grade religion

## FOOD SERVICE

### Megan Miller

Food and Nutrition Manager

### Christy Mergen

Assistant Food Service Manager

### Susan Canis

Cafeteria Team

### Gina Ianonne

Cafeteria Team

## CUSTODIAL MAINTENANCE

### Ganysam Jagdeo

Custodian

### Brian Kofed

Custodian

### Ken Lindsay

Custodian

## PRESCHOOL TEACHERS, LADC

### Heather Discher

Site Director, Kinderstart Teacher

### Madison Williams

Kinderstart Teacher

### Madison Fuglseth

Discovery Teacher

### Taylor Russell

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### Richelle Hoen

Assistant Teacher

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 Notre Dame Academy

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PLEASE DELIVER TO:

# DAY OF GIVING

NOVEMBER 15, 2023

# 24 HOURS | \$150,000

Every Gift Impacts Every Student



Scan the code to donate or visit [nda-mn.org/giving](http://nda-mn.org/giving)

## ADDITIONAL UP COMING EVENTS

DECEMBER

# 1



### SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Families will gather for a festive evening with the chance to meet Santa

JANUARY

# 28- FEBRUARY 12



### CATHOLIC UNITED RAFFLE

Take your chance to win one of many great prizes

FEBRUARY

# 3



### TRIVIA NIGHT

Teams will battle it out to be crowned NDA Trivia Champions

MARCH

# 21- 24



### SCHOOL MUSICAL

Stay tuned for the announcement of this year's play

MAY

# 4



### GRAND BEGINNINGS

Our Annual Gala at Minnesota Valley Country Club in Bloomington

MAY

# 6



### NDA GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 3rd Annual NDA Golf Tournament at Deer Run golf course in Victoria