



**First Presbyterian Academy
Head of School Report**

2023

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The 2022-2023 school year has concluded, and the Lord has been faithful to guide and protect us through this year. I feel as if I have blinked, and the year is over. For me, this is a time of reflection and planning as we close one year and immediately start planning for the future. I pray that this “Head of School” message will give you a look into the work that has been done this past year for the Lord.

Our blessings are numerous, but I do want to mention a few. The biggest blessing is the student population that God has put into our care. They have given us great joy as we have taught them each day in this vineyard. Another blessing is the Christian faculty and staff that I have had the privilege to work with shoulder to shoulder. The hand of God has truly been at work in and through us daily.



This address is giving you an insight into one year in the life of this school. On numerous occasions I have recalled the song “Count Your Many Blessings.” I am thankful for the tiny moments of joy that have popped up daily.

In Christ,

Tom Roe

Head of School – First Presbyterian Academy

Spiritual Life

The spiritual life of the school is threaded through every event, lesson, and activity students encounter on a daily basis. “Christian Worldview” is more than a catch phrase. It is the lifeline in everything that we do. Our spiritual life also comes in activities that happen weekly, monthly, and yearly.

Chapel

During the school year, Upper School Students alternate between chapel and Discover Groups on Wednesdays. This year the focus for Upper School chapel was Romans 12:2 - “Do not be conformed to this world,[a] but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of



God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” We worship the Lord with song and His word. Reverend Charlie Buchanan from First Presbyterian Church asked a very poignant question in his message to the students. He wanted to know if they yearned for fellowship with the Lord. That question would make anyone pause to think about their walk with the Lord. This was an excellent send off for the year.

The Lower School has chapel each Wednesday. They focused on the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. To go along with the fruits of the spirit that were taught in chapel, our Lower School implemented a “Pop Star Award.” In each class, one student that best exemplified the fruit of the spirit for that month was given an award and got to celebrate with a “Pop Star Party!”

Windy Gap

Annually, 7th through 12th Grade students venture to the mountains of North Carolina to Windy Gap, a camp run and operated by Young Life. This spiritual retreat has been a mainstay of FPA as a keystone to spiritual life on campus. It has transformed lives, and it sets the tone for the entire year for the Upper School. Team building is a key element alongside the spiritual focus. It is filled with singing, fellowship, and a clear Biblical focus and message.

Discover Group

The Upper School student population is organized in single gender groups to study God’s Word and reflect upon issues facing each grade level group. Our world-class faculty leads the groups during this time of small group worship. It is a moving experience to witness students worshipping the Lord, talking about prayer requests, and praying for the needs of fellow classmates.



Service for the Lord

As a part of school life at FPA, we require students to fulfill service hour responsibilities on campus and in the community. This past year our students fulfilled 7,705 service hours in various projects. Our students become the “hands and feet” of Jesus as they support various community efforts. What a blessing they become to those they serve.

Upstate Parent Magazine’s “Students Who Make A Difference” Recipient

One of our 5th grade students, Alaya Homsher, was named one of Upstate Parent Magazine’s “Students Who Make A Difference.” Alaya was nominated by both 5th grade teachers for being a positive light in our school, purposefully spreading kindness and joy to those around her.

Fine Arts

Making History

The First Presbyterian Players made history on Friday, May 12, by performing “Elvis and the Twelve Bobbysoxers.” It is the first play that the Lower School performed at the Shannon Forest Campus in the 55 years of the school’s existence. The play was a spoof on the fairy tale of the *Twelve Dancing Princesses*. It was received with thunderous applause by a packed house.

Middle and High School Drama Productions

- "Fairy Tale Invasion"
- "Mysterious Case of the Mysterious Case"
- "The Actor Games"

Middle and High School Communications Program

YIG - Middle School and High School students participated in Youth in Government. Accolades included:

- The award of Premier Delegation
- 100% of the bills presented by students passed committee
- Anderson Mathias was named Outstanding Statesman
- John David Rollings and Anderson Mathias' bill was signed into law by the Youth Governor
- Nolan Paladugu and Aiden McConnell's bill was signed into law by the Youth Governor



Music Department

- USC Choral Leadership Conference (4 students attended)
- Gardner Webb University Fall Choral Clinic (7 students attended)
- Bob Jones University School of Music Visit
- Presbyterian College School of Music Visit and Clinic
- Fall Pops Concert at the home opener Basketball game
- Christmas Tour performances at Cascades Verdae and downtown Hyatt
- Christmas Concert at Aldersgate UMC
- Lower School Choir performance during the Lower School Christmas Program
- Homecoming Alumni Choir sang the National Anthem
- "Malevo" concert performance at the Peace Center
- SCISA State Music Festival- Concert Choir superior rating, Middle School Choir superior rating, Middle School Advanced Percussion Ensemble superior rating



- Disney Imagination Campus Vocal Soundtrack Workshop, combined choirs
- Harlem Globetrotters at the Bon Secours Arena, Lower, Middle, and High School combined choirs performed the National Anthem
- Lower School Chorus Ensemble was an audition only choir that was newly established
- Upper School Spring Concert, First Presbyterian Church
- Lower School Choir Tour at the Gardens at Eastside, Greenville Glen Assisted Living, and Perrin's Park.

Visual Art

The FPA Art Club decorated a Christmas Tree in the Hyatt during the month of December.

FPA submitted five pieces of art into the Upstate High School Art Show. Mrs. Maridel Shaw has created a phenomenal program in which waiting lists are developed each year by students who want to be in her classes.

As a part of this event, these pieces are the inaugural pieces of our permanent art collection for First Presbyterian Academy. The following students were honored:

- Avery Woods-"Mary was a little lamb" - Acrylic paint & Gold Leaf
- Chloe Nickles-"Byzantine Shiner" - Oil paint & Gold Leaf
- Chloe Nickles-"Just a lizard" - Mixed Media
- Jamie Juhnevicz-"Clowning Around" - Paper Collage



Students under the tutelage of Maridel Shaw created the art for the Crusader Station passenger car. It was an amazing site to see the art come to life for next year's Preschool students.

Lower School Art Show

Both of our campuses were proud to participate in their own Lower School Art Show. Families were able to enjoy fellowship together while they enjoyed viewing the art from their children and their peers. Downtown also hosted an auction and a dinner

for their families during their art show, which was a huge success.

Kidding Around Greenville KABoom Award

- FPA was named the First Place winner in the Private School category of the 2023 KABoom awards presented by Kidding Around Greenville.
- FPA was also named as a Finalist in the Childcare Center category.



South Carolina Independent Schools Association (SCISA) Teachers of the Year

- Abbie Meadows was named Lower School Teacher of the Year and became a finalist in the state competition.
- Maureen Soto was named Middle School Teacher of the Year.
- Stefanie Brandenburg was named High School Teacher of the Year.

CTC Program Service Project

Through the FPA Connections Through Christ (CTC) Leadership Program, students have been learning about Assistive Technology (AT) and worked on a service project making low tech AT books. Students used various tools to adapt children's books for students at the Meyer Center. The books have been delivered to the Meyer Center and will be used by therapists to engage with the students and work on their various goals!

Lower School Principal's Reading Challenge

To observe "Reading Across America Day," the Lower School celebrated with a Reading Pep Rally. Lower school students read over 23,904 minutes in the month of March. This amounted to 399 hours, 16.6 days or 2.4 weeks of straight reading!

Athletics

Historic Senior Signings

In an historic event for the school, five seniors signed to further their athletic careers at the college level this year.

Congratulations to:

- Lauren Clute - Montreat College - Basketball
- Katie Edney - Covenant College - Basketball
- Brandon Wilkins - Bob Jones University - Basketball
- Nolan Paladugu - USC Beaufort - Basketball
- Rickey Morris - USC Beaufort - Track and Field

Championship Titles

- 3 Carolina Middle School Conference (CMSC) All Conference Players
- 36 Athletes were named SCISA All Region
- Multiple Appearances in Conference, Region, and State Tournaments each season
- 16 Athletes were named SCISA All State



- 5 Region Championships - Men's and Women's Basketball, Women's Soccer, Men's and Women's Track & Field
- A State runner up in Women's Basketball
- 1 State Championship in Men's Track & Field

Lower School Triple Crown Award

The Triple Crown Award is given to student-athletes who participate in at least one sport for all three seasons of the school year. Students that earn the Triple Crown Award show a strong work ethic both in the classroom and in athletics. This year we were honored to present this award to a special 5th grader, Adrienne Godsey, who was a member of the Middle School Cross Country team in the Fall, the Junior Crusaders basketball team in the Winter, and the Middle School Soccer team in the Spring.



Graduation Statistics

Every year, FPA celebrates the accomplishments of our graduates. As we look at the graduation statistics in terms of college acceptance, the following are typical of every class in the past three years.



Congratulations to the Class of 2023!

Percentage of students accepted to college in Class of 2023: 100%

Number of students who are attending an in-state school: 26
 Number of students who are attending an out-of-state school: 2

Percentage of students accepted in Class of 2021
 100%

Number of students who attended an in-state school: 18
 Number of students who attended an out-of-state school: 3

Percentage of students accepted in Class of 2022
 100%

Number of students who are attending an in-state school: 19
 Number of students who attended an out-of-state school: 2

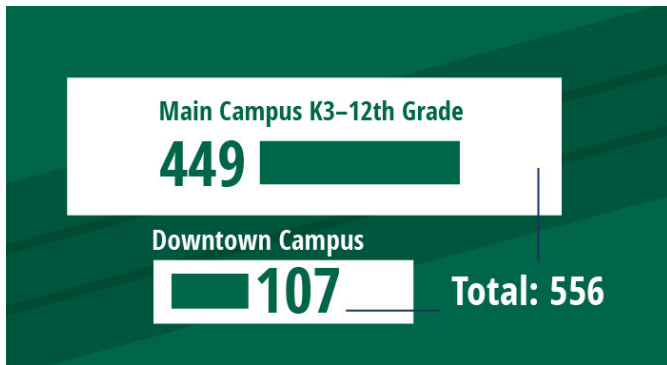
College Enrollment Breakdown Per High Volume Schools

| | Class of 2021 | Class of 2022 | Class of 2023 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Clemson | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| USC | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Anderson University | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| College of Charleston | 2 | 2 | 0 |

Various Other Schools Graduates Attend or Are Attending From The Past 3 Years:
 Covenant College, University of South Carolina Beaufort, and Coastal Carolina University

Every year our graduates return to various functions on campus, and it is great to hear about their progress and the direction that the Lord is leading them.

Enrollment for 2022-2023



Fundraising

2022-2023 Fundraising Efforts

Last year we reinvigorated fundraising efforts, in order to fund the additional projects. Thanks to the generosity of the families who love the school, under the direction of the development team, we had a successful fundraising year!



Armor Fund

This year, we began the process of rebranding our annual fund. We looked to scripture for a name that we felt would be fitting for our cause. We were led to Ephesians 6:11-13 which admonishes us to “put on the whole armor of God.” That verse was the inspiration for the name of our newly launched Armor Fund. Armor Fund opportunities are unrestricted and used for operational expenses, maintenance needs, faculty and staff needs, professional development, salaries, athletics, fine arts, and much more. The re-brand and focus of the Armor Fund, the student-led

Call-A-Thon, and the growth in individual giving has increased by \$110,000 bringing the 2022-2023 Armor Fund donations to \$123,364.

Campus Facilities Expansion

This year, FPA has expanded its facilities with the purchase of the 300 Building. The 300 Building houses the Lower School (K5 -5th Grade). It also houses the IGNITE (Gifted and Talented Program), Art, Music, STEM, Spanish, and the Learning Difference Program (LDP).

Student parking was moved onto the Upper School Campus, and a walkway was built from the parking lot to the school. This added an extra level of safety in that students no longer have to cross Garlington Road.

Preschool News

Crusader Station, the new Preschool facility, is finally becoming a reality through the diligent

work and oversight of Brad Edens and his team. The construction on Crusader Station began in early 2023. The committee that assisted with this project includes: Harry Ussery, Laurie Thrasher, Brandi Brady, Patti Wilusz, Corie Miller and myself.

This new campus for our K3 and K4 students came to fruition through three grants that were awarded to both Preschool campuses. The grants addressed three areas that helped make this new campus a reality. They include:

- New and upgraded facilities
- New technology
- New playground



Our Downtown Preschool used the grants in the same manner - playground refurbishment, classroom enhancements, and new technology for each classroom. Everyone is excited about these next steps for our Preschool program. ALL ABOARD!

Natural Disasters

During my tenure, the school has experienced two floods which had very different origins. The last flood occurred on Christmas Eve 2022. Extremely cold nights caused an attic pipe to burst, and three plus inches of water flooded the entire 200 Building.

Brad Edens, our Facilities Director, swung into action and organized the restoration of the 200 Building. The entire team worked relentlessly to get us back in the building. The entire campus was repurposed, and instructional time was not hampered.

The restoration included new paint, new carpeting, new tile flooring, new cabinetry, new furniture, new ceiling tiles, new technology, and more!

Fire Alarm System

The school's new Fire Alarm System has been completed, and the entire facility is up to code in this area. Many thanks to the local fire department and GenX for their perseverance through this process.

Heating and Air Conditioning

Air conditioning and heating in the Lower School, Preschool, and Upper School is in need of repairs and replacement. Hopefully, we have completed repairs to all systems on the campus.

At the end of every year, we stop and reflect on our progress, and as a next step, we set goals for the coming year. With this process comes a great deal of prayer in terms of wisdom and insight from the Lord. We covet your prayers as we prepare for the 2023 - 2024 school year.

Looking Ahead

As we close the chapter on the 2022-2023 school year, we look ahead to the plans for the

upcoming school year. We are pleased to announce the new additions for the 2023-2024 school year.

High School Academic Additions:

- AP Human Geography
- AP Precalculus
- AP Statistics
- CP Human Geography

Lower School Additions:

- Spanish will be added for the 2023-2024 school year through a Related Arts period
- The Downtown Campus is opening 1st Grade. A successful year with the 1st grade may open the door for the addition of 2nd grade in 2024-2025
- Crusader Station will be opening for K3 and K4 classes beginning in August of 2023

Endowment Fund

A generous anonymous donor has gifted our school with the opportunity to begin the First Presbyterian Academy Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund will allow donations to be matched, dollar for dollar. We will be announcing more information on the Endowment Fund early in the 2023-2024 school year.

