



# ROUND TABLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Charleston, SC

FALL 2017

## FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL



Leading up to a recent retreat involving our school's Board of Trustees, the Board of the Mason Prep Foundation, and senior leaders from the school staff, I was asked to deliver a "State of the School" presentation. Among other things, I prepared slides showing our

student demographics, our admissions statistics, our financial aid data, and information about our graduates' high school destinations. We capture and retain a great deal of data that we use to drive our decision-making processes, and that data was able to paint a fairly accurate picture of the state of our school. However, on the night before the retreat, I decided that data alone could not do justice to everything we do at Mason Prep.

Before leaving school on the day of the retreat, I took photos around our campus and added them to my presentation. I visited the Doughnuts with Dads event in our kindergarten classrooms, and I snapped images of some of the displays that our eighth graders had prepared for their Math and Science Symposium that day. I also knew that I couldn't leave out photos of our teachers in action with our students. Data can be incredibly informative and useful, but data can never accurately describe the relationships that lie at the heart of what we do at Mason Prep. The relationships among our students, between students and teachers, between parents and teachers, and among our faculty and staff members are the key to the feelings of family and community that have made our school so special and so successful.

We greatly appreciate the help provided by our parents who participated in our marketing survey this fall. Our most effective marketing tool is "word of mouth": recommendations

from satisfied parents. When asked during the survey to describe Mason Prep in one word, the most common response by far was "family". Nearly 40% of parents responded to this item with the answers "family", "nurturing", "caring", "community", or "home". One parent, when asked why he or she chose Mason Prep, wrote, "the perfect combination-- strong academics, emphasis on character, nurturing environment". The results of our parent marketing survey will help us in our efforts to recruit more students from families with values similar to those families who are already at Mason Prep and those who came before them. Our teachers and staff have worked hard for over a half-century to create a special atmosphere for learning at Mason Prep, and it is wonderful to see those efforts validated in these survey results. This data is powerful, but it represents only a part of what our school truly is.

Also this fall, we are using a new source of data to strengthen our school community. Our guidance director, Jamie Tuttle, administered a survey in which each teacher and staff member was asked to read through a list of all 303 students and identify each student with whom he or she has developed a deep personal connection. It was heartening to see that the survey results demonstrate what we have said at Mason Prep for years – that our students are known and loved. An important aspect of this survey is to identify the students, especially those newer to our school community, with whom a smaller number of our staff have developed deep connections. Our goal is to have certain teachers or staff members make concerted efforts to strengthen their bonds with specific students so that each of our students fully experiences the relationships that are at the heart of Mason Prep.

The data available at our fingertips paints a portrait of a vibrant and high-achieving school community, and we continue to gather and study more data in an effort to make Mason Prep the best school that it can be. However, we realize that the most important aspects of our school cannot be represented by numbers: the smiles on the faces of happy, engaged students; the pride in their hearts when they have achieved their goals; and the warm, genuine relationships between children and adults that make Mason Prep everything that we are. In this sense, the state of our school is stronger than ever.

## GRANDPARENTS' DAY IS APRIL 27

Save the Date!

Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day is Friday, April 27, 2018. This bi-annual event is always a highlight of the year and we can't wait to welcome our grandparents and special friends to our school.



1st Quarter

## STUDENT HONORS

### HEADMASTER'S LIST

Students with no subject grade below 93 for that reporting period.

5th grade:  
Hannah Finley, Meredith Finley, James Iannotti, Sarah Oswald, Blynn Roumillat, Brooks Wetmore

6th grade:  
Jay Bearden, Benjamin Brock, Manny Gottlieb, Max Opoulos, Celia Powers, Isabella Ragucci, Sophia Ragucci, Tawes Wenz

7th grade:  
Emily Benasutti, Mateu Bordas, Georgia Dempsey, Gannon Gottlieb, Jack Houseal, Anna Hope Jordan, Peyton Maney, Daniel McFee, Elizabeth Mood, Andrew Nichols, Martha Noble, Hannah Roark, Darden Shuman, Susanna Snider, Holden Teufel

8th grade:  
Claudia Baicu, Caleb Cayouette, Sophia Colby, Bowen Enright, Anna Graves, William Jones, Alma Lutas, Zoe Mintz, Cathryn Shippee, Ella Small, Hope-Elaine Stowell, Claire Vaughan, Evie Wells, Leah Zimlich

### Nice Knights

Mary-Reilly Mills, Ava Ott, Jacob Hochman, Will Maney, Saniya Thomas, Noah Bryant, Lizzy Mood, Alex Koster, Tristan Ward, Emma Grace Pflug, Hope-Elaine Stowell, James Jefferies, Isla Farthing, Gracie Philp, Alex Locklair, Addie Ash, Clyde Mauldin, Georgia Caroline England, Ella Small, Campbell Fennell, Jack Perry, Hewitt McKenzie, Gabby Kakalev, Marie Adele England, Alex Young, Megyn Palmer, Amelia McMarlin, Oliver Smith, Owen Johnson, Robert Barrineau, Susanna Snider, Penelope Snider, Maddie Waldeck, Ryn Bunch, Cole Prochazka, Rhys Leigh-Jones, Ellie Plunkett, Casper Ragnestall

### Creative Writing Awards

Wallace Bates, Bennett Bruner, Rutledge Bryant, Leyla Bulutcu, Olivia DiCampli, Ansley Dickerson, Hopkins Rembert, Vito Scarafile, Noah Anderson, Madeline Bryan, Ellen Michael Rowell, Lucas Shortreed, Rory Peterson, Helms Sander, Eli Sherman, Iris Steele, Kathryn Brisson, James Iannotti, Meredith Finley, Brooks Wetmore, Jay Bearden, Benjamin Brock, Amelia McMarlin, Max Opoulos, Daniel McFee, Lizzy Mood, Jonathan Savage, William Jones, Jett McGrath, Ella Small

### FACULTY LIST

Students who maintain an overall average of 93 or higher with no subject grade lower than an 85.

5th grade:  
Madelyn Barth, Kathryn Brisson, Campbell Fennell, Alexia Garman, James Jefferies, Finn Marenakos, Andrew Palmer, Brennan Teufel, Harper Warrick

6th grade:  
Trip Calloway, Will Craig, Simmons Dority, Wesley Klump, Amelia McMarlin, Mary Gail Riley, Rutledge Sander, Jane McCrae Sanders

7th grade:  
Harris Ayers, Neil Brown, Caroline Cochran, Chet Connolly, Kelly Enright, Jonah Haller, Laura Hamilton, Jessica Klump, Jake Koster, Alexis Manos, Will Meany, Gracie Philp, Jonathan Savage, Alec Skipper

8th grade:  
Raegen Badger, Lilly Bridges, Nicholas Brown, Callie Costa, Ansley Gianoukos, Sam Laro, Robert Mallard, Colin Philp, Ella Schar, Zachary Skipper

### HONOR ROLL

Students who maintain an overall average of 90-92 with no subject grade lower than an 85.

5th grade:  
Legare Edwards, Talula Enright, Felix Hagar, Ada Hester, Benjamin Marhefka, Gray Murphy, Preston Wells

6th grade:  
Analeise Gustafson, Jake Hester, Clyde Mauldin

7th grade:  
Niko Fokas, Owen Kreutner, Will Popelka, Gabriel Runza, Molly Stafford, Jackson Turrentine

8th grade:  
Robert Barrineau, Kaitlyn Hamilton, Jett McGrath, Wallace Pettus



## THE IMPORTANCE OF ADMINISTRATORS CONNECTING WITH STUDENTS

One of the things that makes Mason Prep unique is that each and every student is known. That does not mean that teachers and administrators simply know each child's name – it means that teachers and administrators know the child's siblings, what sports he or she plays, and the name of the family dog. It gives Mason Prep a family atmosphere where each student can be comfortable and thrive.

This dedication to knowing each student as an individual starts at the top with the Head of School and Assistant Head of School. While layers of administration at many schools widen the gap between administrators and students, Mr. Erik Kreutner (Head of School) and Mrs. Roseann Jordan (Assistant Head of School) interact with students on a daily basis.

Each day at Mason Prep begins with Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan opening car doors as students arrive. Mr. Kreutner says this is a favorite part of his day. "Greeting students with a smile and having a quick chat with parents sets a positive tone for the student's day, which carries into the classroom."

During the school day, Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan make opportunities to connect with students in all grades. For example, they read to students in grades K-4 once a month. Says Mrs. Jordan, "We read stories which are related to character building and follow the story with a class discussion. We ask students what they thought of the solutions given in the story and how they might have handled the same situation. These lessons of citizenship and respectfulness reinforce what students hear from their teachers, in guidance lessons, and at home."

To spend time with students in grades five and six, Mr. Kreutner likes to eat lunch with students in the lunchroom at least once a week. "It's a great way to have conversations with students in a relaxed setting and really get to know them," he says. Mrs. Jordan enjoys seeing students during recess time adding, "I love seeing the children on the playground. You learn so much about their personalities by watching them interact with their peers."

Older students get attention too! Mr. Kreutner sponsors the Mason Prep Quiz Bowl team for grades seven and eight, and the team practices once a week during the second and third quarters. Mrs. Jordan teaches exploratory classes such as "Girl Power," a class focused on giving our girls the information and tools they need to become powerful young women.

"Making these connections with students is why we come to school every day. Each connection increases our ability to make a real difference in a student's life."

– Erik Kreutner

"Knowing each and every student is crucial to achieving our mission of developing well-rounded children. This benefits not only Mason Prep, but our larger community as our students move to high school and beyond."

– Roseann Jordan



Opening Doors at Carpool • Reading to Grades K-4 • Eating Lunch with Students • Chaperoning Field Trips  
Attending Games and Matches • Teaching 7th & 8th Grade Exploratory Classes • Supervising Study Halls  
Holding Morning Meetings • Writing Comments (by hand!) on Every Progress Report and Report Card



## INTRODUCING STUDENT VOICE

Student Voice is a new program focused on ensuring that all students' voices are heard. The program will provide opportunities for students to gather in a casual setting and talk about issues, challenges, and ideas. The group is committed to maintaining a positive school atmosphere by being solution-focused.

Headed by Director of Guidance Jamie Tuttle, the group will meet over lunch once every two weeks, and all students in grades six through eight are invited to attend. The meetings will be an open forum where students can bring ideas and concerns for the group to discuss. Says Mr. Tuttle, "Sometimes, we may be able to solve an issue right there in the meeting. Other times we may go to teachers, administrators or other students to help with a solution."

One of the first items the group will discuss is how to include students from all grades. There will be suggestion boxes in each homeroom where students can drop a suggestion or concern for the group to tackle. This is one way the group will hear from younger students and any students who may not feel comfortable attending a meeting.

Mr. Tuttle says that one of the most important things is to make the Student Voice meetings a safe space for ideas and discussion. "We want to make sure that all students, including those who may not be the most extroverted, feel that they have a forum to be heard," he explains. "Additionally, this forum is a great way for students to develop leadership skills and learn how to challenge and ask questions appropriately."

A group of students met recently in what was supposed to be a planning meeting but turned into a brainstorming session – to Mr. Tuttle's delight. He says, "The students came with some interesting ideas – from transition workshops between grades, to painting a mural, to reviewing the Student and Family Handbook. It was exciting to see how enthusiastic the students were in sharing their opinions, and I can't wait to see the positive additions to our school coming out of this group."



### STUDENT VOICE IS...

*A student-led group focused on creating a positive school environment by ensuring that all student voices are heard.*

*Student Voice will ensure that conversations about maintaining and sustaining a positive community are part of the daily life at Mason Prep.*

*Topics such as bullying, social media, relationships, stress/time management, peer mediation/conflict resolution, and general advice-giving will be central to this group.*

"It's important for students to know that they have a say in what's going on at school. That power and freedom means more good vibes around our school."

– Darden Shuman, 7th Grade

"It is important for students to be able to bring ideas and questions straight to the source rather than going through parents or teachers."

– Callie Costa, 8th Grade



## MME ROYALL NAMED SCISA MASTER TEACHER

The South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) has named Mme Julia Royall a Master Teacher. The Master Teacher program recognizes teachers who exhibit best practices in the classroom and a willingness to share and collaborate with other educators. Master Teachers must inspire excellence in the classroom, among colleagues and, especially, among students.

Mme. Royall teaches French to grades K-8. She also offers the very popular French Club as an afterschool activity. In addition to being a star in the classroom, Mme Royall collaborates with teachers throughout the school to expose our students to different languages and cultures. This year she will bring back the mock World Cup tournament, an event she introduced in 2014. Working with Senora Collazo (our Spanish teacher for grades 5-8), 5th – 8th grade teachers, and the Charleston Battery, Mme Royall hosts a "World Cup" soccer tournament at school. Leading up to the event, students learn about countries that are playing in the World Cup and practice their French and Spanish by speaking about sports. Charleston Battery players have joined the students on tournament day, serving as coaches and making the day all the more impactful for our students as the players may hail from different countries.

Mme Royall has also worked with World Wide Schools, an organization that matches schools with Peace Corps volunteers in countries throughout the world. In 2016, her fifth grade French class was matched with a volunteer in the African country of Togo. After hearing about Togo, her students asked if they could work with our 5th grade Spanish students to hold a fundraiser. Out of this student interest was born the 5th grade Service Learning Project to learn about, engage with, and raise funds to help students in Togo.

A bit closer to home, Mme Royall works with the Bishop England High School French Club to bring high school students to Mason Prep. The Bishop England students spend time with Mason Prep second graders, doing French activities which change from year to year based on the needs of our students. The Bishop England students are also treated to a performance of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* put on by their new friends.



In his letter of recommendation for Mme Royall, Mr. Kreutner wrote, "***Mme Royall has spearheaded a renaissance in French at Mason Prep, with nearly half of our third through eighth grade students registered in that language each year. Mme Royall is a dedicated, innovative, life-long learner who inspires her students to do their best and to perform at a very high level.***"

Students echoed Mr. Kreutner's words in recommendations submitted on Mme Royall's behalf. "***Madame Royall has sparked a passion for French in me that I hope will last my entire life and encourage me to travel to France and continue speaking this beautiful language. By constantly encouraging and requiring French to be spoken, incorporating fun French activities, and sharing and teaching us with her complete knowledge of French, Madame Royall has prepared and excited me very much for higher level French,***" wrote Mills Jordan, Class of 2017.

Mme Royall joins seven current Mason Prep teachers who have received this honor.



Debbie Bandy, Erin Huhn, Roseann Jordan, Katie Kreutner, Mary Jo Stemple, Meghan James, Hal Huser



## PTO OFF TO A FABULOUS START

The Mason Prep PTO is off to a fabulous start to the 2017-2018 school year! We kicked off the year with our wrapping paper fundraiser which raised over \$10,000 for our school. Thank you to all of our students and parents who helped make this fundraiser a huge success. Also, thank you to Jessie Rodwell and Brooke Ash for organizing all of our fundraising efforts. These funds go directly to support our students and teachers.

So far this year, the PTO has provided teacher enhancement checks to each grade. Also, the PTO has helped sponsor the following field trips:

*Kindergarten: North Charleston Fire Museum and James Island County Park*  
*7th Grade: 4-night field trip to Camp Tekoa; Dock Street Theater to see To Kill a Mockingbird*  
*8th grade: Dock Street Theater to see To Kill a Mockingbird*

In addition to our fundraising efforts, membership dues go directly to support field trips and student services/activities. If you have already sent in your dues, THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! If you haven't joined or renewed your membership yet, it's not too late. Annual dues are only \$25. Every student benefits from the PTO.

Mason Prep is fortunate to have a very active and dedicated group of parents who make up our PTO Board. These volunteer parents have been hard at work since school started, and even over the summer, to provide services to Mason Prep families.

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**Our School Supplies Committee** worked diligently to provide convenient ordering and delivery of school supplies. Thank you, Jackie Schar and Jenn Moxley!

**Our Lunch Committee** worked with vendors to provide online lunch ordering, prepared the lunch room, and continues to manage our lunch ordering system. Thank you, Laura Bates and Laura Rembert!

**Our New Families Committee** organized a beautiful Sip & Sob event and New Families Reception to welcome all of our new families. Thank you, Tammy Bryan and Jodie Cochran!

**Our Volunteer Packet Committee** prepared and sent out all of our volunteer packets to families. Thank you, Katrina Dempsey and Denise Runza!

**Our Hospitality Committee** prepared a wonderful back to school luncheon for our teachers and provided refreshments for Open House, High School Fair, and parent meetings. Thank you, Ann Brown and Caroline Stafford!

**Our Beautification Committee** takes great pride in preparing the beautiful plants at our entry ways and always perfectly decorating for every holiday. Thank you, Laura Gianoukos!

**Our Neighborhood Relations Committee** has greeted our neighbors with back to school and Halloween goodies. Thank you, Kathleen Duffy!

**Our Ice Cream Truck Committee** makes it possible for our students to enjoy monthly ice cream treats. Thank you, Jordana Snider!

**Our Knightly News Committee** organizes all of our news to keep you informed. Thank you, Jeff Popper!

**Our Used Uniforms Committee** has cleaned, organized, and set up sales for all of our used uniforms. Thank you, Clarissa McKenzie!

**Our Student Directory Committee** has diligently collected all of our families' contact information and put together our school directory. Thank you, Julie Scarafie!

**Our Family Fun Night Committee** organized a wonderful Family Movie Night outing for all to enjoy. Thank you, Amie Waldeck and Traci Finley!

Look for more events after the holidays, such as Restaurant Nights, Grandparents' Day, Family Bingo Night, the Father/Daughter Dance, Knights KNOW Week, Teacher Appreciation Week, and the Talent Show. If you'd like to volunteer, we'd love to have you. Please contact Amy Skipper (amy.skipper@hotmail.com) or Martha Graves (mngaves@comcast.net).

The PTO is happily working hard to support our students, teachers, and staff. Thank you for your continued support in all of our efforts and helping make Mason Prep the best school in town!



## TECHNOLOGY'S KEY ROLE IN OUR CURRICULUM

From keyboarding to coding, Mason Prep students experience developmentally appropriate lessons which build on knowledge gained the previous year. By the time our students graduate, they have a strong foundation in both Windows and iOS devices, ensuring they are prepared for whichever platform(s) they encounter in high school.

300      100      16      40

Apple iPads  
(for grades K - 6)

Microsoft Surface  
Tablets  
(for grades 7 & 8)

Touch Panel TV  
Displays

ThinkPads &  
Dell Laptops

### AREAS OF FOCUS INCLUDE:

Grades K-4  
become familiar with the equipment, begin to learn coding, use PowerPoint, Keynote, Publisher, Word, Excel, keyboarding, coding

Grades 5 & 6  
Cloud computing, efficient use of the Internet and reliable sources, coding, video, photo editing

Grades 7 & 8  
Microsoft Office 365, coding, Internet safety, app development



### DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM

Beginning in first grade, students participate in Mason Prep's Digital Citizenship program which teaches students responsible use of technology. The goal of the program is for Mason Prep students to safely, responsibly, and creatively:

- Embrace technology in support of their academic pursuits at Mason Prep
- 
- Create a positive digital footprint while at Mason Prep and beyond
- 
- Use technology conscientiously with respect to our digital and physical resources
- 
- Be a part of a variety of levels of collaborative communities
- 
- Be prepared to contribute to, and thrive in their future endeavors as members of a global society

# MASON

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

56 HALSEY BLVD. CHARLESTON, SC 29401

Return Service Requested  
or Current Resident

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US POSTAGE  
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CHARLESTON SC  
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## STAY CONNECTED



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## MASON PREP, *in one word*

Our parents were recently asked to describe Mason Prep in one word.

