

Commencement 2008 A Day to Rejoice

On Sunday, June 1, 2008, Hillsdale Academy celebrated the graduation of 20 Upper School students, the largest class in Academy history to date. The Class of 2008 included two National Merit Finalists and another who earned National Merit Commended Status, nine seniors who are members of the National Honor Society, and seven students who graduated with honors, a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 or higher. It was a day to rejoice in past learning experiences, academic accomplishments, athletic accolades and meaningful friendships that have developed at Hillsdale Academy.

Mary Somerville had the distinction of being the class valedictorian. In her speech, she reminded her fellow students of their studies and struggles at the Academy and how these efforts have prepared them for the future. Sarah Blackstock, Patricia Craig and Clara Leutheuser, who shared extremely close grade points, spoke about different Academy experiences in their salutatory addresses.

Tim Walberg, U.S. Congressman from the Seventh District of Michigan, was the key speaker for Commencement. After spending time with several of the seniors earlier in the day, he commented on the good character that has been instilled by their families and the school, and he encouraged them to keep those principles for a bright future. In his excellent address, Congressman Walberg stated that true success only comes when one is doing something of significance. He defined significance as the impact

on others as well as the individual. For greater significance in life, he said to develop leadership and service.

First, the example of a "V" formation was given for effective and essential leadership: Be a person of values, consider what is worth living and dying for. Be a person of virtue, virtuous characters, such as integrity, loyalty, responsibility and character, give true significance. Be a person of *veritas* (truth), tell the truth and live by the truth; people respect a truthful person. Be a person with vision, look to Scripture to find the principles for life, because they work when applied.

Second, service goes to the heart and soul of people because it has eternal significance. Congressman Walberg said the graduates should aggressively fill the gap where God places them because they may never know how significant their service can be. In closing, the Congressman said to the seniors, "May you be blessed with years and years of significance."

Deanna Ducher, Upper School teacher and senior class advisor, reported the class submitted 21 percent more college applications than any previous group, and 24 new colleges and universities were added to the already impressive cumulative college acceptance list. Five of the graduates will continue their education at Hillsdale College in the fall. Headmaster Ken Calvert reassured the class that they will be truly missed for all they have contributed as students at Hillsdale Academy.



Congressman Tim Walberg



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French and Latin Flourish at the Academy

In this issue, Academy Lane offers a glimpse of the faculty in the area of foreign language—Christina Pongracic, Jennifer Collins and Andrew Holm. French is studied by all Lower School students, many of whom elect to continue their studies in the Upper School through dual enrollment at Hillsdale College. Latin is required of all students in the Upper School.

Primary French instructor Christina Pongracic holds a B.A. in French from Saint Joseph's College in Philadelphia and an M.A. in French literature and pedagogy from the University of Delaware. Assisting with the French program is Jennifer Collins, who received her B.A. in French and economics from Eastern Michigan University. Andrew Holm earned a B.A. degree at Cornell College and teaches Latin.

What drew you to Hillsdale Academy?

Christina Pongracic: I am impressed with its philosophy of education, in addition to the fact that it's a small, private school. Children who go to this type of school are historically more conscientious students. This is extremely helpful to an educator, because it means that there will be less time spent on classroom management and more time on the subject matter.

Jennifer Collins: ...an overheard conversation in French in a coffee shop. [On a more serious note,] my wish to share my love of the French language with my students.

Andrew Holm: I came to Hillsdale Academy having previously taught Latin at two private schools. The Academy's mission, curriculum and quality of its students brought me to the school. The school emphasis on classical training is an excellent fit for me.

Are there any things that you would like to share regarding your philosophy of teaching a foreign or classical language?

Christina Pongracic: I think that the most important aspect of my philosophy of education is my belief that all children can learn a foreign language; however, it is essential to recognize that each child learns at different rates and in different ways.

Jennifer Collins: Students can more easily grasp a foreign language if it is presented with structure, repetition and fun.

Andrew Holm: I believe that students should confront difficult subjects without having those subjects watered down by their teachers. Furthermore, students generally rise to the level of the challenges presented to them. As a teacher, it is my job to determine the most appropriate and effective manner of presenting those challenges to students.

Why is your area of study important to the Academy curriculum?

Christina Pongracic: French is part of a classical curriculum as it's closely related to Latin in origin. The classical curriculum influenced greatly our country's Founding Fathers, two of whom spoke French: Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. It was, and is, the language of diplomacy. Don't forget that France played a very important role in the founding of our country, it is our oldest ally. Many of the most important writings in the humanities and social sciences have come from France, and those who know French will have access to these materials for several years before they are translated into English. Some of these works, however, are never translated into English. In addition, France has the greatest number of Nobel Prize winners for literature in the world. French remains one of the most important languages in research and is preferred by graduate schools. This is just the tip of the iceberg!

Andrew Holm: Latin is a good opportunity for students to explore languages. By studying a difficult language, they learn about grammar, syntax and vocabulary in such a way that they deepen their grasp of English, they gain a great facility in learning foreign languages, and they develop the tools to tackle other difficult subjects.

What parts of your job do you most enjoy?

Christina Pongracic: I love interacting with the kids. They're a joy to work with, and they make me laugh! Through working with them, I get to learn about them as they learn French. This is very advantageous in that it

helps me to decide what activities to use and what topics to focus on because when they're interested in the subject matter they learn more rapidly and more enthusiastically. Lessons can't always be done in this way, but I do the best I can with what little time I have with them.

Jennifer Collins: The point at which understanding dawns on the students, and you can see it reflected in their faces.

Andrew Holm: I enjoy getting to know my students and sharing a good laugh with them. It's a bit scary that Dr. Calvert and I have a similar sense of humor. The Upper School students say that we're the same person! I enjoy teaching Academy students because of their willingness to work hard as well as their positive attitude toward learning.

How does the Hillsdale Academy curriculum compare to other schools with regard to your field?

Jennifer Collins: The Academy's French program is exceptional because it is a requirement from first through eighth grades. Many other schools do not offer French until middle or high school, if it is offered at all.

Andrew Holm: We do not screen our students based on academic ability, and we require four years of Latin. The four-year requirement, on its own, is extremely rare. I have had to re-evaluate the common method of teaching Latin 1 and 2, and came to the conclusion four years ago that I needed to write my own curriculum. That project is nearing completion, and I am very pleased with the results so far. One-third of the senior class took the AP Latin exam and scored very well, and Katy Bachelder (Grade 11), one of the Latin 2 students, spent the summer studying Latin at Cambridge University in England.

Hillsdale Academy Receives Generous Gifts

The Saul N. Silbert Charitable Trust of Sun City, Arizona, has awarded the Academy \$150,000 for endowed scholarships. The benefactor, Mr. Silbert, was a self-made man. He was born into a poor family in New York City, worked his way through City College of New York and founded his own tax firm. Mr. Silbert was passionate about music, art, poetry and history, and he was an avid supporter of the teaching of English, both oral and written.

Near the end of his life, Mr. Silbert desired to help others reach their potential. He was familiar with Hillsdale College and the Academy. His trustee, Mrs. Shirley M. Converse, whose daughter is a Hillsdale College graduate, granted several additional bequests to the College.

The arts, music in particular, have received significant support this year from the Charles M. Bauervic Foundation, Inc., of Suttons Bay, Michigan. Due to the foundation's generosity, the music program has acquired a number of instruments for student use.

Further, the music instructor's position, held by Gail Nelson Mowry, has been upgraded to full time, increasing the Academy's ability to provide fine vocal and instrumental instruction for all students. Mrs. Mowry has improved substantially the music offerings at the Academy during her three-year tenure. She started a band program, brought a national music honorary to the school and initiated a drama program, which produced the first Upper School play last spring.

Mrs. Mowry graduated from Hillsdale College with a major in music and earned her master of fine arts degree in music education from the Boston Conservatory. Mrs. Mowry's hope is that "our music program grows beyond our walls to reach the community.,

Hillsdale Academy Model Schools Awarded

Three Hillsdale Academy model schools, D'Evelyn Senior High School (Colorado), James Irwin Charter High School (Colorado) and Temecula Preparatory School (California), have reached award status in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2008 Best High Schools Search. These schools use the *Hillsdale Academy Reference Guide* for their curricula. D'Evelyn Senior High School placed 62 of only 100 schools nationwide that were awarded a gold medal. James Irwin Charter School was one of eight schools in Colorado to be awarded the silver medal, and Temecula was awarded a bronze medal. The study was undertaken in cooperation with School Evaluation Services, host of the parent school data Web site schoolmatters.com. Over 18,000 public high schools were assessed in terms of academic and enrollment-based criteria. Hillsdale Academy congratulates these three fine schools on their recent achievements.

The gold-medal schools were required to be ranked on the College Readiness Index, which is managed by the College Board. Silver medals were awarded to all other schools obtaining a college readiness index of 20 or greater. Bronze-medal schools include those that might not provide Advanced Placement classes or do not meet the college readiness standard, but achieved the standards required by additional performance indicators.

Alumni News

Class of 2004

Nicholas Hayes graduated summa cum laude in June 2008 from Harvard University with a B.A. in social studies, an interdisciplinary major with a focus in philosophy. From a graduating class of 1,600, Nick received one of the 50 Hoopes honor prizes.

He was invited to join Phi Beta Kappa in the fall of 2007, an honor extended only to those students in the top three percent of their graduating class, while most students are asked to join in the spring of their senior year. Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest academic honor society in the United States, and its mission includes "fostering and recognizing excellence, in liberal arts and sciences at the undergraduate level.

After traveling to Argentina and taking one year off from his studies, Nick will resume his academic pursuits in political philosophy, religious studies or law.

Class of 2007

Alice Arnn received semi-finalist status from Taylor Publishing's competition, Yearbook Yearbook, for her work with the Hillsdale Academy yearbook, the *Hoofprint*. Yearbook Yearbook compiles and honors annually the best yearbooks published. Alice has completed her freshman year at the University of Notre Dame.

Academy Test Scores Remain High

In June, Hillsdale Academy received good news as the annual results for the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills continue to prove the quality of instruction in our classrooms. The tests are given to students in Grades K-8 and evaluate skills in reading, language, mathematics, math computation, social studies and science. For 2007-2008, in comparative standing with schools across the nation, the Academy ranked in the 99th percentile in all categories for the second consecutive year.

This year's results continue the strong performance of our students in the past. Evaluating school composite scores over the past five years, the Academy is also ranked in the 99th percentile.

The *Hillsdale Academy Reference Guide* makes educational resources available for individuals and schools that seek to follow Hillsdale Academy's time-tested K-12 curriculum. The *Guides* are available for K-8 and 9-12 programs. Both *Guides* are available for free download at hillsdale.edu/academy/academics/curriculum.asp. The *Guides* may also be purchased for \$100 each (\$25 discount applied to orders for both volumes) by telephoning (800) 989-7323.

Accolades

Spelling Bee

Sabeek Pradhan (Grade 8) took first place in the regional competition and advanced to the state competition.

Geography Bee

The annual Geography Bee, sponsored by the National Geographic Society, was won by Anders Kiledal (Grade 8). The competition was open to fifth-through-eighth-grade students at the Academy. This marked the second time that Anders won the competition at the Academy level. He also passed regional competition, which allowed him to take the qualifying test for the state competition. The top 100 scoring students competed at the state level.



Anders Kiledal at the Geography Bee

Hillsdale Academy Quiz Bowl Teams Dominate the County

Over the course of multiple winter weekends, Academy students, coaches and parents rose early and headed out for tough competition of the brainy kind, Quiz Bowl. Headmaster Calvert tells his athletes that they are “athletic nerds,” but in this case, these Academy competitors represent the school as “cool brains.” At all levels of competition, these students served their school well as they pitted their knowledge against that of their peers.

The Upper School Quiz Bowl teams, coached by Latin instructor Andrew Holm, finished first in the buzzer category with a 4-0 record, and second in the arena competition at the Hillsdale County tournament. The buzzer team was comprised of Anthony Alvarez (Grade 11), Colleen Burns (Grade 11), Patsy Craig (Grade 12), Alex Payne (Grade 9) and Gaby Ruchames (Grade 11). The arena team consisted of Andrew Alvarez (Grade 9), Bitsy Brady (Grade 10), James Ogilvie (Grade 11) and Tera Woods (Grade 12). At the Rube Invitational at Michigan State University (where many of the top teams in the state and even a couple of the best in the nation competed), Hillsdale Academy was by far the smallest school represented. The varsity team of Anthony Alvarez, Colleen Burns, Alex Payne and Gaby Ruchames finished with an excellent 5-2 record in pool play, and their tenth-place finish (out of 28 teams) very nearly advanced them to the championship bracket. The JV team of Andrew Alvarez (Grade 9), Paul Burns (Grade 9), Joe Craig (Grade 10) and Daniel Karlovich (Grade 9) finished a respectable 2-5. The State Quiz Bowl tournament for buzzer competitors was held in April at the University of Michigan, and the Academy team took fourth place.

The eighth grade also sent two teams to a county competition, coached by support staff member Mrs. Laura Leutheuser. The teams placed first and second, finding their toughest competition to be each other. Sabeek Pradhan, Antonia Busch, Andrea Rodriguez-Lugo, Michael Healy and Meg Ryan formed the first-place team, while Anders Kiledal, Joel Calvert, Emily Päwä, Katherine Vaillancourt and Melinda Lee earned second-place honors.



Alex Payne

The seventh grade fielded three successful teams under the guidance of teacher Mrs. Mary Wolfram. She stated: “The results of the seventh- and eighth-grade Quiz Bowl competition just couldn’t get any better. The three seventh-grade teams came in first, second and third place in the area competition; the two eighth-grade buzzer teams ended the day facing each other for a first- and second-place finish in the county. It just doesn’t get any better than that., First place for the seventh-grade arena competition was awarded to Andrew Ruchames, Hunter Murray, Hannah Smith and Shaley Albaugh. Second place was earned by Christina Craig, Logan Evans, Adam Krutsch and Sigrid Kiledal, and third-prize honors went to Dillon Murray, Elyse Lisznyai, Chip Blood and Alexandra Vann.

Eagle Scout Recipients

Alex Payne (Grade 9) had his Eagle Board of Review meeting in March. This was the last step that Alex took prior to receiving the Eagle, the highest award given by the Boy Scouts of America. Alex earned numerous required and elected merit badges, served in many leadership roles and completed a service project that he both conceived and directed. Alex built bluebird houses and installed them in a nearby park.

Jordan Benzing (Grade 12) also received the award of Eagle Scout this past spring. Jordan led a team of boys in the construction of a garden shed for Perennial Park, a senior center in Hillsdale County.

Alex and Jordan join several U.S. Presidents and numerous astronauts, among others, by obtaining this rank. Only two percent of all Boy Scouts achieve this award.

Declamations Presented to College Guests

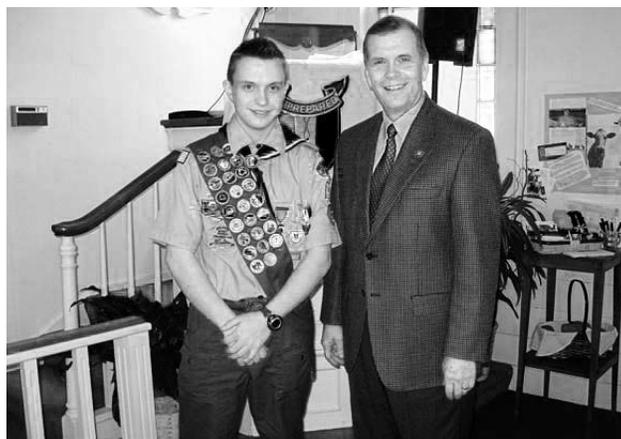
Eighth graders Katherine Vaillancourt, Sabeek Pradhan, Michael Healy and Joel Calvert presented their declamations from American historical speeches and documents to an audience at the Hillsdale College Center for Constructive Alternatives lecture series in February 2008.

Young Publishers

Megan Wilcox (Grade 5) and Sigrid Kiledal (Grade 7) published an article titled "The Perfect American Snack, in *The Towers* newsletter of the Irish Hills Council of Girl Scouts of America.



Clara Leutheuser



Jordan Benzing and U.S. Congressman Tim Walberg

Musical Prowess Pays Off in County Competition

Hillsdale Academy was well represented at the Second Annual ArtWorks Music Scholarship Competition at Hillsdale College. Prizewinners receive monetary compensation for lessons or instruments during the following year. Elizabeth Brady (Grade 10) won first place in the vocal category, while first prize in the instrumental category was earned by harpist Elizabeth Thomas (Grade 9). Christina Craig (Grade 7) was awarded first prize in strings, followed by Meg Ryan (Grade 8) in second place. Grace Leutheuser (Grade 10) earned the third-place prize in piano.

Scholar-Athlete Award

Senior Clara Leutheuser received a Michigan High School Athletic Association scholarship of \$1,000 from its Scholar-Athlete Award fund. She was honored at the halftime ceremony during the Class C basketball finals in March at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing. In her competitive essay, Leutheuser wrote, "Sportsmanship [is] when the athlete can see his or her efforts reflected in the competition and values, it makes the game worth playing and completes the satisfaction of winning.,

Science Fair Answers Many Questions: How, Why, What?

The Sixth Annual Academy Science Fair was held during the third trimester in Mrs. Karen Somerville's fifth- and sixth-grade class. Students came up with a topic for their projects, applied the scientific method to design their experiments, tested their hypotheses and explained their results.

Larkyn Dasch won the grand prize for fifth grade with her project, "Which Marble, Plastic, Glass or Steel Will Navigate My Skyrail Marble Roller Fastest?, Liam Wolfram was awarded the grand prize for sixth grade with "Do You Conduct or Resist?, Mrs. Joan Lagassee, librarian/special events, again coordinated this year's science fair.

Blue ribbons were awarded to the projects of three other fifth graders: Hannah Stechschulte, "How Does Temperature Affect the Rate of Crystal Growth?; Liam Wolfram, "Which Drink Has the Most Vitamin C?; and Courtney Wollet, "The Burning Question: What Antacid Works Best?, The six other sixth graders winning a blue ribbon for their projects were: Sigrid Kiledal, "How Does Salinity

Affect Algae Growth?; Chip Blood, "How Does Running Distances at the Same Speed Affect Your Heart Rate?; Hunter Murray, "Which Commercial Ant Trap Attracts the Most Ants?; Christina Craig, "Which Solution Cleans Pennies Best?; Andrew Ruchames, "Which Brand of Battery Lasts the Longest?; and Elyse Lisznyai, "What is the Probability of Rolling Snake Eyes with 2 Die?,

Judging this year's competition were Dr. Chris Hamilton, Hillsdale College chemistry professor; Mrs. Katy Caspar, former Academy Upper School science teacher; and Dr. Dan Hawley and Ms. Carrie Burdzinski, Academy Upper School science teachers. Assisting the judges were two Hillsdale College chemistry majors.

"The students put a lot of thought and creativity into deciding on their topics and conducting the experiments,, Mrs. Lagassee said. "The science fair is a great way to get kids excited about science, and it encourages them to explore their interests and test their abilities.,

Academy Students Enjoy Writing to Pen Pals

When Hillsdale Academy graduate Chris Blackstock (2003) accepted a position teaching English to teenagers in Japan, he thought his former school might work into his curriculum. What better way to master a language than to put it into practice in writing?

Always looking for ways to “cross-train, academically, eighth-grade geography teacher Mrs. Laura Leutheuser saw a perfect fit in Chris’s e-mail appeal for pen pals. Studying East and Southeast Asia comes about the halfway point of the school year, and spanning 6,400 miles in geography is significantly easier through the common ground of one’s peers. The students in both countries were surprised to see

how much they have in common with each other in communities that are so distant in place and culture.

Music, sports, friends, family, video games, fashion and faith brought two divergent cultures together. Chris teaches in Shimizu, a small farming town on Japan’s northernmost island of Hokkaido that shares Hillsdale’s rural, small-town emphasis on family, work and education. While the Academy students did not learn Japanese, at least one student translated his letter to Japanese, “just to see what it would look like. Unfortunately, when he used the online translation service to translate it back to English, he discovered just how difficult it is to translate between languages. Large portions of the letter were incomprehensible.

An important lesson for the Academy students was the realization that some students work even harder than they do. It is common practice in Japan to go to school all day, and then attend additional classes in language, the arts and rigorous college entrance test instruction before dinner and homework. “Personally, Blackstock noted, “it has been great fun that this relationship has grown with Hillsdale Academy. Having been an ‘Academite’ myself for eight years, it is bringing back all sorts of fond memories of the place.,

Chris’s students range in age from 14 to 16 years, and are in the midst of determining the future of their education, which was also valuable and illuminating for the Academy students. Many have exchanged e-mail addresses and hope to continue their friendship for some time. Vidur Solanki (Grade 8) said that this experience gave him better knowledge of another culture and of the things that kids share all over the world.



Hillsdale Academy alumnus Chris Blackstock and his English class in Japan

Colts Homecoming Week Spurs Spirit Despite Delays

Academy attire was a little different during the first week of February as students participated in the annual Homecoming Week festivities. Students could be seen dressed as twins, triplets or even quadruplets, sporting diapers and donning the blue and white, all in the name of Colt spirit. Even some of the teachers joined the fun and competitive spirit; Mrs. Mary Wolfram was spotted teaching class with an ice pack attached to her forehead.

The week started off well, with the Upper and Lower School classes each attempting to earn points toward spirit sticks. Unfortunately, the

pep rally, planned to culminate the week, was delayed when a snow day was called, forcing a delay of the Homecoming basketball game as well.

The pep rally was well received by all, however, and spirit honors for the week went to Mrs. Wolfram’s seventh-grade class and to the senior class.

Clara Leutheuser was crowned 2008 Homecoming Queen, and Jon Weigle shared the spotlight as King. The basketball team played Rudolf Steiner, a private school in Ann Arbor.

Colts Spring Round-Up

Undefeated Regular Season for the Lady Colts' Varsity Basketball Team

The girls' varsity basketball team pulled off one of the most difficult tasks in high school sports by going undefeated at 19-0 during the regular season. The Colts defeated schools in Class B, C and D along the way to their perfect season, and they won the Mid-South Conference Championship for the third consecutive year.

The postseason went well again for the Colts as they captured their third consecutive district title, defeating Waldron, Pittsford and North Adams high schools. After 22 wins and no losses, the season came to an end in the regional semi-finals against Class D powerhouse Portland Saint Patrick. Seniors Sarah Blackstock, Amanda Cole, Caitlyn Hubbard and Clara Leutheuser received All-Conference honors, along with junior floor leader Connaught Blood and freshman Heather Lantis. Blood was also named Honorable Mention All-State, which marks the first such award for Hillsdale Academy girls' basketball.

Fifth-year Head Coach Jeff Hubbard led the team with help from first-year Assistant Coach Kevin Reed. Both are parents of Academy students. In just five seasons, Coach Hubbard's teams have won four conference and three district titles, and the program has established itself as one of the top in Class D.



The girls' basketball team celebrates after winning a third straight district championship.

Boys' Varsity Basketball Wins Share of Conference Title

The boys' varsity basketball team won a share of the Mid-South Conference title for the third time in five years. The Colts finished conference play with an 8-2 record, closing out the season with a thrilling overtime win over Calhoun Christian. Juniors Patrick Sullivan, Ethan Smith and Zach Lefere, along with freshman Peter Sullivan, earned All-Conference honors.

The team faced its toughest schedule in school history, posted a 10-11 overall record and gave Head Coach Max Miller his 410th career win. The Colts' season came to an end with a loss to Pittsford High School in the district tournament. The team's assistant coaches were Jono Smith (2002) and parent Rick Milligan. The senior players were Kevin Potts, Josh Snell and Brian Thomas.

Next year, Hillsdale Academy will move into the South Central Athletic Association, marking an end to the Colts' participation in the Mid-South Conference. The entire starting lineup will return for a much-anticipated 2008-2009 season.

Colts Set Records in Track

The 2008 spring track season was also record-setting for the Academy athletes. The Lady Colts had a 7-0 conference season and were named South Central Athletic Association (SCAA) Conference Champions for the fourth consecutive year. Remarkably, the nine senior girls, who had participated together since their freshman year, never lost a dual meet. The team excelled in state competition as well and placed sixth in the state for Division 4. The boys' track team also earned several medals for their accomplishments. The team placed third in the SCAA Conference and 12th in the state for Division 4. Mike Roberts, assistant headmaster and athletic director at Hillsdale Academy, is pleased to report ten student-athletes from the track teams gained All-State honors.

2008-2009 School Year

Thursday, August 21	Faculty Meeting/Orientation
Monday, August 25.....	First Day of Class
Friday, August 29 - Monday, September 1	No School for Labor Day Weekend
Tuesday, September 2.....	Classes Resume
Monday, September 22.....	No School for Fair Day
Saturday, October 4.....	SAT Exams
Wednesday, October 15	PSAT Exams (Grades 9-11)
Thursday, October 16.....	Noon Dismissal/Mid-Term/ Parent-Teacher Conferences
Friday, October 17	No School for Mid-Term Break
Wednesday, November 12 - Friday, November 14.....	Upper School Exams
Friday, November 14.....	Fall Trimester Ends
Monday, November 17.....	Winter Trimester Begins
Tuesday, November 25.....	Noon Dismissal for Thanksgiving Break
Monday, December 1	Classes Resume
Thursday, December 11	Christmas Program
Friday, December 19	Noon Dismissal for Christmas Break
Monday, January 5.....	Classes Resume

Academy Lane

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