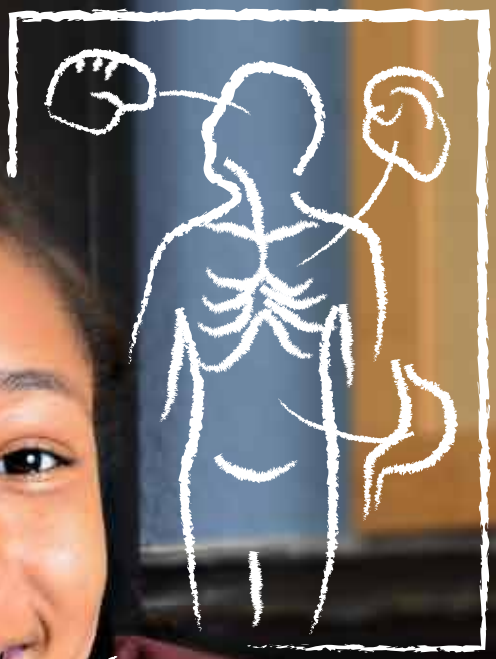
I HAVE

SELF-ESTEEM

St. James School is building students' self-esteem so they know they can and will succeed at excellent high schools. We are building confidence now in order to open doors later.

SKILLS

DOCTOR
Ainyae



OPENING DOORS
High School & Beyond

ST. JAMES SCHOOL

2012-2013
ANNUAL REPORT

INSIDE:

Students dream of a future beyond high school

Our new high school placement and graduate support program and a look at SKILLS
(Self-Esteem, Knowledge, Independence, Leadership, Learning and Success)

THE STAFF & FACULTY OF ST. JAMES SCHOOL

EDUCATING *the* WHOLE CHILD.

Middle school is a critical time: students are forming the attitudes, values, and habits of mind that will largely direct their behavior as adults. They deserve schools that support them fully during this key phase of life. In following the NativityMiguel model of education (which includes over 64 faith-based schools nationwide) St. James School strives for great results through the following:

- ✓ Common Core Standards
- ✓ Faith-Based Learning in the Episcopal Tradition
- ✓ Small Class Size (Max 16 Students Per Grade)
- ✓ 21st Century Learning and Instruction
- ✓ Extended Day, Week and Year
- ✓ 5:1 Student/ Instructor Ratio
- ✓ Character Strengths Building
- ✓ High School Placement and Graduate Support Program
- ✓ Faculty & Administrators Hold Advanced Degrees
- ✓ Ongoing Assessment & Inquiry Process
- ✓ Enrichment Classes & Field Trips
- ✓ Partnering with Families
- ✓ Community Service
- ✓ Park-Like Campus

I HAVE **SKILLS** **KNOWLEDGE**

Our teachers work tirelessly to instill in our students the knowledge to fulfill their daily student pledge...

"I will excel in high school and my career."

St. James School's first Director of High School Placement and Graduate Support Kevin Todd stays connected with students in order to keep them interested in preparing for their future in high school.

DREAM HIGH SCHOOLS WITHIN REACH:
St. James 7th Graders Glimpse the Future

By Alaina Mabaso

Sometimes, the toughest moment for education professionals is the moment they have to hold back: when it's up to the child to try his or her skills for the first time.

St. James School's new Director of High School Placement and Graduate Support Kevin Todd may know the feeling better than anyone. He remembers taking one of the 6th graders for a high school visit.

"She was just terrified, shaking before we went in," Mr. Todd says. "It was scary for a 6th grader to spend her day at a huge school with hundreds of kids, following around a girl she had never met before." But as the school welcomes its first 7th graders, facing that fear is crucial to its theme this year: successful high school transitions. Mr. Todd explains of letting grade schoolers rise to the challenge, "For many of our students, if we succeed in getting them into elite schools, they're going to feel out of their comfort zone a lot." Visits are just one part of a comprehensive effort to prepare students for the region's best high schools.

36%
Philadelphia public school students who don't graduate high school

Diplomas for Success

In Philadelphia, when it comes to high school graduation rates, there's good news and bad news. **The good news** is that according to The Public School Notebook (an independent publication for parents, educators, students and friends of the Philadelphia school system) the city's high school graduation rate has risen by 20 percentage points in the last 10 years. **The bad news** is that the city-wide graduation rate was just 44% in 2002. That means that only 64% of teenagers in The School District of Philadelphia (who began as freshmen in 2008) received their diplomas in 2012.

Compare this to an 83% graduation rate in the state of Pennsylvania (71% for "economically disadvantaged" children), according to the US Department of Education's 2010-2011 assessment. And nationwide, that number is close to 75%, as gains in minority graduation rates boosted the US score to its highest point since 1973.

For people who fail to graduate high school, the economic impact is severe. Last year, WHYY's NewsWorks reported that just 55% of Philadelphia's 20 to 24 year olds have a job. But for young adults without a high school diploma, that number plummets to 35%.

A High Stakes School Year

With such grim statistics, 7th grade takes on a special urgency at St. James School, with teachers and administrators calling it the most important school year yet for the students.

As Mr. Todd and St. James Principal Laura Hoffman Dimery point out, once the children begin eighth grade they will have already completed most of the high school application process. That means a lot is riding on the students' 7th grade achievement.

Ask Kanyana — who has been with St. James School since its inaugural 5th grade year in 2010 — what is hard about this process, and she will tell you "everything."

"It's scary if I have one bad grade on a test or a homework assignment," she says. She worries how it will affect her GPA. She's already dreaming of Harvard Law, and confides that she'd like to be a doctor, a lawyer, or maybe a journalist, because "I like to write about stories that have happened in my or somebody else's life."

SKILLS — Classroom Preparation

Mr. Todd says his job has three main parts. He's a liaison to the high schools that students and staff are eyeing, while guiding parents through the extensive academic, practical and financial process of applications. "These first two months, I'm meeting with every family one-on-one," to learn what parents' high school hopes and concerns are.

His third focus area is teaching, with a Friday class at every grade devoted to life after St. James School. It is called SKILLS (Self-Esteem, Knowledge, Independence, Leadership, Learning and Success). SKILLS begins in 5th grade with lessons on handshakes, dress code and etiquette. Throughout the year, activities will feature career choices (including local guest speakers from lawyers to electricians), college, and the high school application process.

For 7th graders, high school takes precedence in Mr. Todd's curriculum, including research projects on different schools and interview workshops.

"They sit up straight, they start listening," he says of 7th grade's burgeoning focus. "They really do understand that we're talking about their futures."

HOMICIDE 2011
Allegheny West highest homicide rate in the city
(per capita)

From the Head of School

Dear Friends,

St. James School began as a dream more than five years ago. The Rev. Sean E. Mullen envisioned the Episcopal Church taking the lead in providing middle school students (most facing tumultuous life circumstances) an unparalleled education.

When we opened St. James School three years ago, not everything looked exactly the way we planned. Our faith carried us through some challenges and uncertainties. This year we find our school becoming the place we always hoped and dreamed it would be. Now more than ever we are fulfilling Father Mullen's vision to open the doors of opportunity to our students. This vision is fulfilled through a dedicated faculty and staff who bring their knowledge, zeal and compassion inside our schoolhouse doors each and every day.

As our students prepare to apply to high school, no year is more important than 7th grade. Academic and character building successes are what matter in 7th grade. This year, we are proud to launch a comprehensive **high school placement and graduate support program** to help students and their families throughout every aspect of their high school journeys. In guiding students through the application process, the team will identify the student's strengths and goals in order to help them find the best-fit high school. The process is exciting and demands much of both students and families.

This annual report celebrates a successful second school year . . . a year of which we can all be proud. Because of you, our model — an educational community of love that provides a healthy dose of compassion and academic rigor — is working.

Thank you for having the vision to recognize the promise and potential in our remarkable children. Your care and compassion inspired the creation of St. James School and continues to sustain our school. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Blessings,

David J. Kasievich, *Head of School*

With the help of strong teachers, 7th grader Kanyana works hard to get her grades up.

St. James parent Deborah McLeod — a minister and former nurse — appreciates the program's impact on Ezekiel, her 7th grade grandson who is also her adopted son.

"They're like family," Ms. McLeod says of St. James School's in-depth program and support. "I feel like I'm working with family. It's just great that there's a group of people that cares enough for our children to pour into them as much as they do."

Self-Advocacy

Part of what sets St. James apart is the understanding that strong academics and help with high school applications don't complete the toolbox alums will need at partner schools like William Penn Charter School, Episcopal Academy, Charter High School for Architecture & Design, and Church Farm School, to name a few. The real key to accomplishment is standing up for oneself.

"Our students are going to have struggles: financial, academic, emotional, social," Ms. Dimery explains. No amount of preparation will change that. But there is one thing St. James School can do to equip its graduates to succeed in any situation.

"They have to be able to be that student who says to their teacher, 'I have to meet with you after class,'" Ms. Dimery says. Whether it's to explain that they need a tutor, or that they don't have a computer at home, youngsters must identify the help they need, and voice that to their teachers and counselors.

Less than $15,000/year
Average income for St. James families

She emphasizes that not every St. James child will have the same goals: a 4.0 at a four year university may suit some, while an associate's degree or occupational school may help others succeed. But every student should be able to say, "I know what I need, and I know what steps to take to get there."

"Kids can't just knock on my door to ask me something," Mr. Todd says of his role. Students have to fill out a request to schedule a chat, and then sit down with him in his office. This introduces the communication skills they'll need at bigger schools.

"I realize it's a huge amount of work we're asking the kids to take on," Ms. Dimery adds, "but I think it's part of our high expectations. We want to set that bar very, very high for the kids." That means not just academic rigor, but helping students become savvy consumers of educational options.

Sources: http://thenotebook.org/blog/135772/time-graduation-rate-has-climbed-20-points-decade • http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/local//the-latest/33523-for-philly-dropouts-the-math-is-simple-but-brutal-no-diploma-zero-jobs • http://www.governing.com/gov-data/high-school-graduation-rates-by-state.html • http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/06/06/u-s-high-school-graduation-rate-sees-big-minority-gains-analysis/

16
Maximum number of students per grade

The Balancing Act

Everyone at St. James recognizes the tightrope of high school preparation. One aspect of this is making sure students are invested in test results without over-doing the pressure.

"It's this idea of 'take it seriously, but don't get too stressed out over it.' It's a really tough balance," Ms. Dimery says.

Acute sensitivity is also required as students anticipate paths that may look different from their family members.

"There are people very close to them in their lives that may not have gone down the paths we're encouraging them to pursue, and we want to make sure we're respectful of that, too, not saying, 'that was the wrong way, this is the right way'," she explains.

Mr. Todd adds that the balancing act will also include a shift in messaging as the children go from pursuing high schools to preparing for their 9th grade destinations. Right now, the theme is working your hardest to get into a good school. Later, when students know where they're headed, the message will evolve into something like, "You can do well wherever you go if you work hard and advocate for yourself."

Deborah McLeod (right) with her family at the 2nd Annual Thanksgiving Feast. She stays connected to ensure Ezekiel can find a brighter future, starting at St. James School.

Between St. James School classrooms and the high schools students visit (despite their fears), the school makes that proactive foundation the first step to a high school diploma, for that brave 6th grade girl and every other St. James student.

The Family Connection

55
Hours students spend at school per week

Kanyana knows that a good work-life balance is also important.

"Sometimes when I'm in my room studying [for a long time], my mom will tell me to come downstairs," she says. "We have movie night or we just talk and laugh. I like spending time with my family. It takes my mind off school."

Ezekiel and his grandmother also understand the connection between school and home life. With a family prayer every morning before Ezekiel heads to school, and an equal measure of hard work and good faith, Ms. McLeod believes that despite her child's many challenges, St. James is the right road.

"I know he has great things in his future," she says. "I think he'll do very well wherever he is going."

Alaina Mabaso is a Philadelphia-area freelance writer whose work appears in WHYY's NewsWorks and many other venues.

2012-2013 highlights

Find these stories & more at StJamesPhila.org

SEPTEMBER Celebrating new students and new classroom at year 2 opening day

OCTOBER DiBruno Brothers becomes a valuable food partner

OCTOBER Families attend their first ever St. David's Country Fair

NOVEMBER Second Annual Thanksgiving Feast brings families together

JANUARY Our 2nd Annual MLK Day of Service draws over 200 volunteers

MARCH CBS3 films a special about our co-founder, Dr. Audrey Evans

APRIL Episcopal Academy barbecue celebrates our volunteer partnership

APRIL 6th graders visit Perkiomen School and other partner high schools

MAY St. James visits the new KidsZoo U at Philadelphia Zoo

JUNE Students paint mural at new neighborhood Brown's ShopRite

ENGINEER
Keenan

I HAVE
SKILLS

INDEPENDENCE

Whether it is workplace etiquette, scholarship applications, or interview workshops, students are equipped with the tools to become self-advocates. They recognize only truly independent students will succeed outside the gates of St. James School.

I HAVE
SKILLS

LEADERSHIP

St. James School students are becoming leaders at school, home and in their community. By leading service projects, participating in Urban Blazers, or mediating a conflict with underclassmen, our students learn what leadership looks like in all its forms.

MILITARY OFFICER
Zaire

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2012 – JUNE 30, 2013

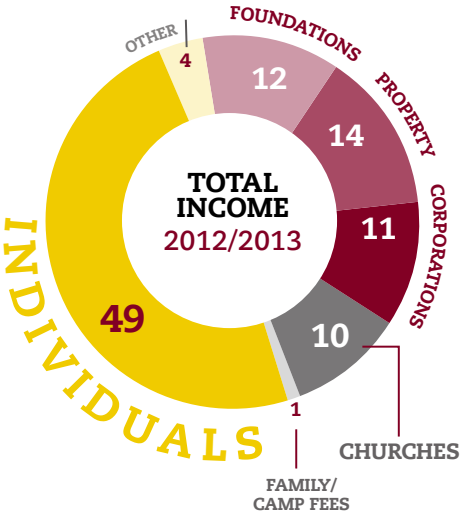
Unaudited statement of revenue and expenses for the year

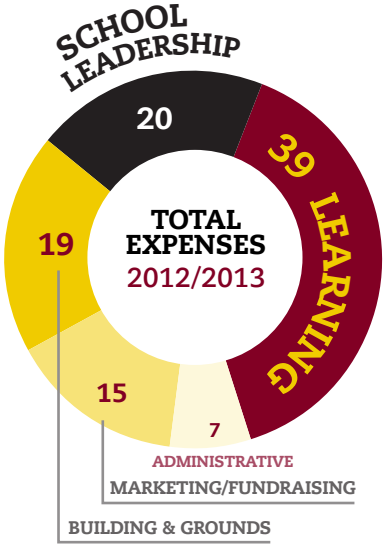
INCOME

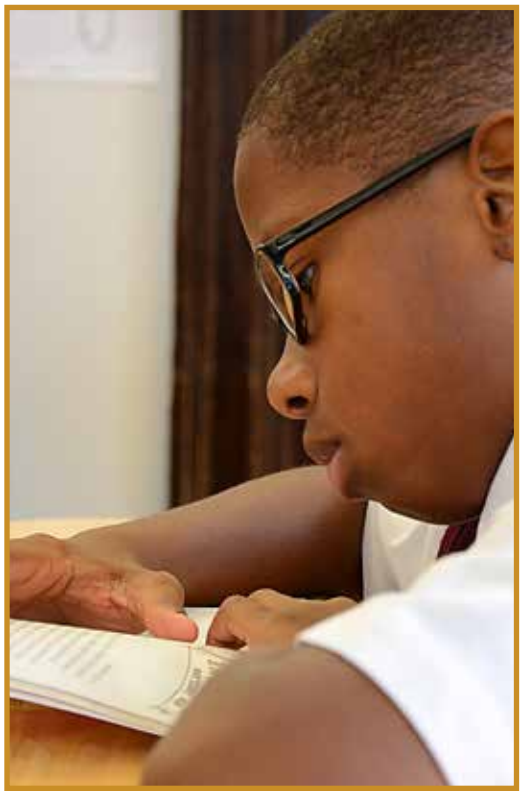
Individuals	**$412,764**	**49%**
Property Expense Reimbursement	**$115,547**	**14%**
Church of St. James the Less Endowment		
Foundations	**$105,875**	**12%**
Corporations	**$96,850**	**11%**
Churches	**$80,733**	**10%**
Other Income	**$30,415**	**4%**
Family and Summer Camp Fees	**$6,561**	**1%**
TOTAL	**$848,746**	

EXPENSES

Instructional + Student Programs	**$297,050**	**39%**
Teacher and instructional assistant salaries, academic supplies, classroom technology		
School Leadership	**$157,435**	**20%**
Head of School and Principal, health care, pensions		
Building and Grounds	**$146,620**	**19%**
Utilities, Property Insurance, Maintenance		
Marketing and Fundraising	**$112,431**	**15%**
Advancement staff, publications, events		
Administrative	**$56,874**	**7%**
Liability insurance, office supplies, postage		
TOTAL	**$770,410**	







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Tyamiyah

I HAVE
SKILLS

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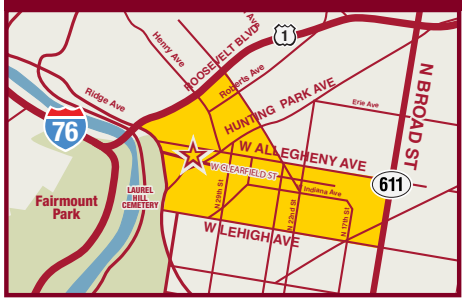

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