



CONNECTIONS



- The State of STEM
- Tools for the Future
- Inspiring Learning

- Excitement for the Smith Center
- A Day in the Life

Nurturing Minds.
Building Character.

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**JACKSONVILLE
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL**

Nurturing Minds. Building Character.

JCDS Connections is published twice yearly and is sent to alumni, parents, grandparents, and friends of the school who wish to receive it.

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Human Resources*

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Director of Auxiliary Services

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Louise Morrow
*Associate Head of School / Head of
Elementary*

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Director of Curriculum

Pat Walker
Director of Admissions & Marketing

Gayle Wilson
Director of Preprimary Education

Matt Wilson
Director of Technology

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Jacksonville Country Day School is to empower students for a healthy and productive lifetime of intellectual exploration, character development, and social responsibility.

IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS PLEASE NOTIFY:

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10063 Baymeadows Road
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JCDS admits students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.



dear jcds families, faculty and friends,

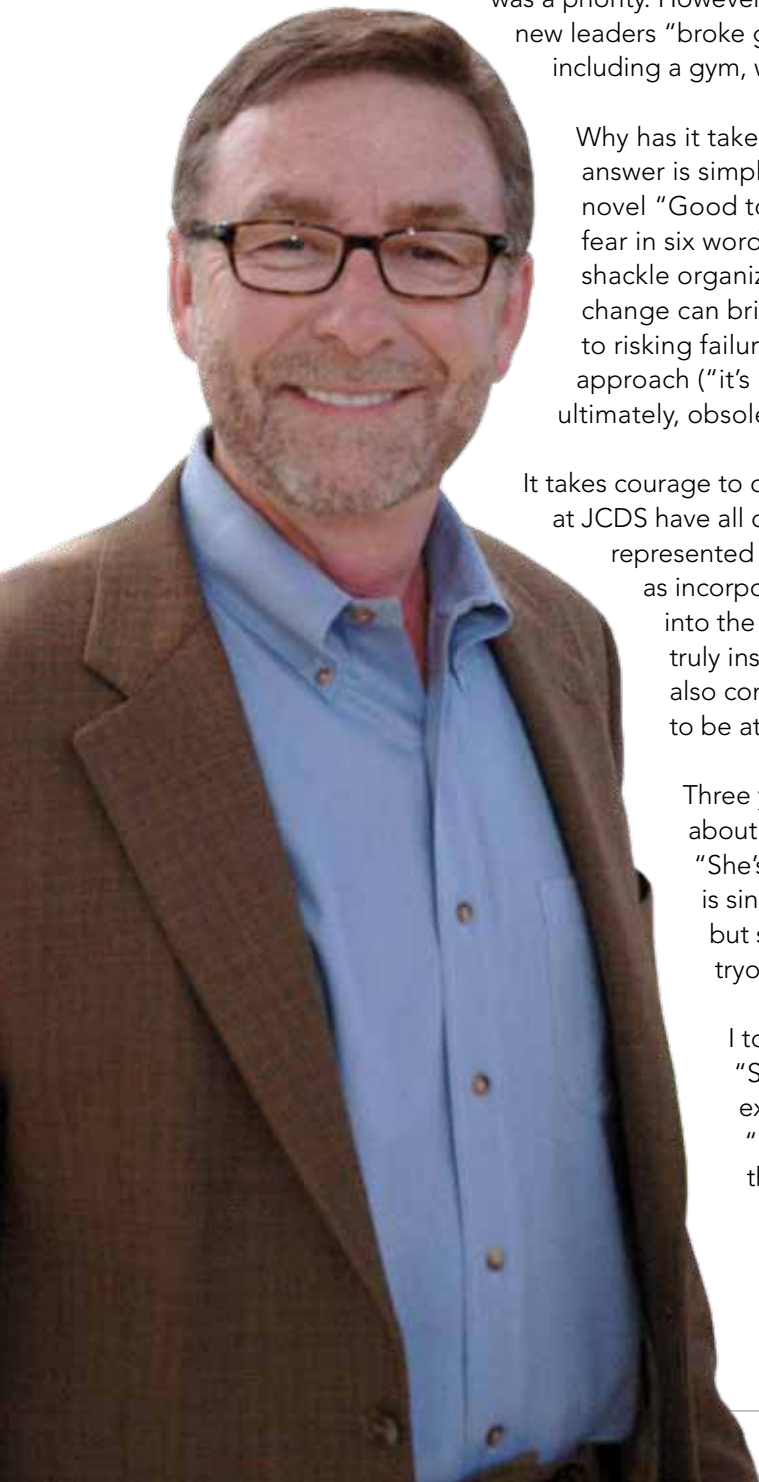
In the 1990s, when gasoline prices climbed to more than a dollar per gallon and the Jaguars, Jacksonville's new NFL franchise, came to town, Jacksonville Country Day School's leadership agreed that constructing a new gymnasium was a priority. However, it was only a couple of months ago that a group of new leaders "broke ground" for the Smith Center, a multi-purpose facility including a gym, which is scheduled to open next August.

Why has it taken so long to transform that dream into a reality? The answer is simple: FEAR! Jim Collins, author of the classic, best selling novel "Good to Great" summarizes the underlying source of that fear in six words: "Good is the enemy of great." Fear of change can shackle organizations to "status quo thinking" because, although change can bring greatness, it also exposes the organization to risking failure. Ironically, as Collins pointed out, a status quo approach ("it's good enough") is the surest route to mediocrity and, ultimately, obsolescence.

It takes courage to commit to change. The leadership, faculty, and staff at JCDS have all committed to the vision of the school's future as represented by the Smith Center, as well as other innovations such as incorporating Singapore Math and Spanish language classes into the curriculum and focusing on STEM education. What is truly inspiring, however, is to see the larger JCDS community also committed to this change so that the school can continue to be at the forefront of elementary education.

Three years ago, a former parent approached me with news about his daughter's experience at her new middle school. "She's doing great in all her classes," he told me. "And she is singing in the chorus and performing with a dance team, but she didn't even make it past the first round of volleyball tryouts." He then asked, "Why?"

I took a deep breath and gave my honest opinion: "She's excelling in those other areas because she had excellent instruction in excellent facilities," I answered. "Unfortunately, we lack the athletic facilities to provide the same sort of excellent instruction in volleyball."





I believe he must have taken those words to heart, because his generous gift allowed us to name the new multi-purpose building the Smith Center in his family's honor. At the ground breaking, Dr. Dennis M. Smith, Jr. reminded us that tuition doesn't fund the construction of buildings; it supports programs and operations. He considered his daughter's use of JCDS facilities to have been "rent-free," because it took place in buildings others had paid for. Then he made a gift based on gratitude, to benefit other people's children in the years ahead. Dr. Smith also recognized that the school needed this change in the form of a new building to realize its mission.

The JCDS goal is to complete the construction of the Smith Center by August 2012, so children may begin using the facility on the first day of school. It is important that funding of building is also complete by then so the school can devote its resources to further innovations. For the Capital Campaign, we are seeking pledges, which are payable over five years, from each JCDS family, past and present. Those signed promises of support will provide confidence and financial peace of mind as we strive for greatness in education.

As each member of our community generously embraces this goal, we will certainly be successful in building the Smith Center, but will also attain a new level of greatness in educating children to be tomorrow's leaders.

Terry Bartow

TERRY BARTOW, HEAD OF SCHOOL

mrs. morrow elected president of florida kindergarten council

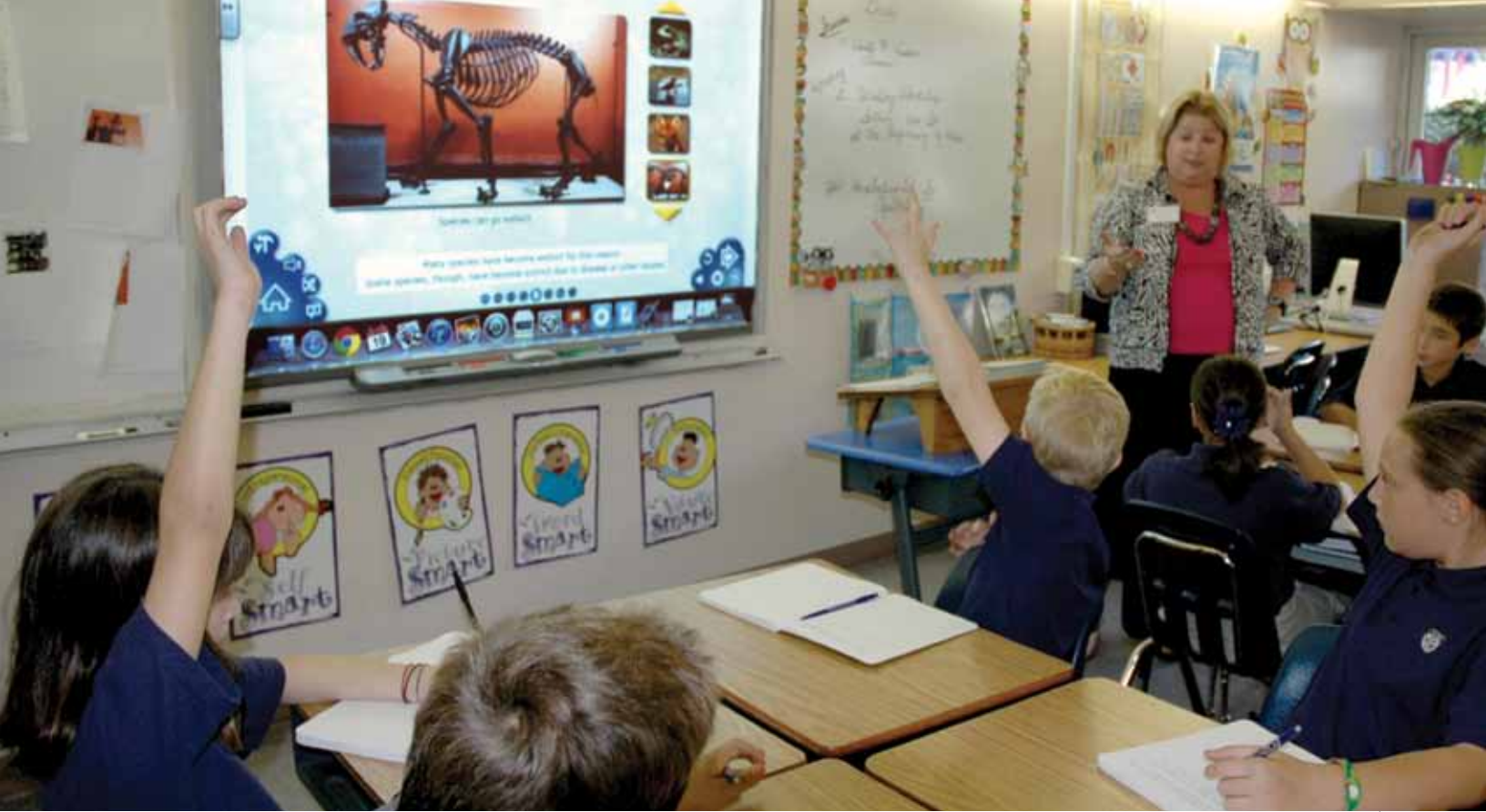
Louise Morrow has been elected the president of the Florida Kindergarten Council's (FKC) board of directors. Mrs. Morrow, the associate head of school at Jacksonville Country Day School, was previously vice president of the council. Morrow ensures that JCDS provides the best possible learning environment for its students, which complements her evaluating and accreditation duties with the FKC.

The FKC is an official evaluating and accreditation organization for private preprimary schools in Florida. Established in 1968, the FKC is comprised of 162 independent schools "dedicated to maintaining high standards in early childhood programs," its website states.

Mrs. Morrow has been at JCDS for 36 years, initially as a 1st grade assistant and then as the girls' physical education teacher. She has been an administrator at the school for over 24 years. Morrow is a graduate of Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama, where she earned her BS in Education. She also attended the University of North Florida, graduating with a Masters of Education.

The administration, faculty, and staff of JCDS are extremely proud of Mrs. Morrow's new position. Terry Bartow, the head of school at JCDS, said, "I know she will bring the same high level of service and dedication to the council as she has to the school."





the state of **STEM**

Jacksonville County Day School embraces a future-driven and research-based curriculum to make sure all of its students are academically prepared to compete in the 21st century. This is why the school is committed to fully integrating science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education at all grade levels. STEM education is essential for staying “competitive in this new global society,” as a recent article at eSchoolNews stated.

The leadership and faculty are continually evolving the curriculum so that the education at the school is second to none, both locally and nationally. At JCDS, integrating the skills that the future demands is no exception. “We are developing cutting edge STEM programs,” Terry Bartow, JCDS head of school and former science teacher, said.

“STEM is not a set program,” Ruthanne Stabler, director of curriculum, explained, “but a way of thinking that is inquiry-based and interdisciplinary. In the 21st century with the information avalanche, we need to teach our kids to think, to ask questions, to wonder, and to discover. This new paradigm aligns with the brain-based studies our school has adopted in the last decade.”

Just take a stroll around campus and the integration of STEM is readily apparent. Robotics laboratories, which practice all four of the STEM disciplines, are ongoing. ScienceFusion is taught in grades five and six. There are also new engineering units for kindergarten and grades three through five. In the science lab, STEM and inquiry learning lessons are taught at all grade levels.

“Instead of separating science, technology, engineering, and math into individual curriculum silos, STEM can provide our students with the integrative tools of investigation and analysis.”

– RUTHANNE STABLER
DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM



The STEM focused curriculum at the school has included a larger shift from traditional learning, which emphasizes content, to a guided inquiry model. Inquiry learning is driven by the students' questions about a given topic, instead of the students answering questions pulled from a textbook.

Science:

Inquiry learning fuels the science program at JCDS. As an example, one 6th grade class recently made a prediction about the survival rates of plover bird nests based on their locations. Next, they used a data table on the class's SmartBoard to plot the location of the nests and the survival rates of hatchlings.

The students then made a two-dimensional model of the coastline where the nests were located and a grid for measuring distance. The students asked whether the distance of a plover nest from the ocean affected the number of hatchlings birthed. Although distance from the ocean did not affect birth rates, the exercises provided students with the opportunity to use scientific methodology in an engaging manner. This is also an example of a lesson that incorporated all four of the STEM disciplines.

Technology:

In addition to the technology that is widely available in all JCDS classrooms, including SmartBoards, Nooks, and iMacs, computer skills, including keyboarding and Internet safety, are also taught in the computer lab.

Digital projects with inquiry exercises are prevalent around campus. This project-based learning approach is more typical of what students will encounter in higher-level classes and as professionals. Some lessons are also conducted digitally and electronic workbooks are available for some subjects as well.

Engineering:

JCDS was one of the first elementary schools in the southeast to have a school-wide elementary engineering program. Although engineering has been taught at JCDS for over six years, the curriculum has evolved from a focus on the end product, such as making a building out of common household materials, to concentrating on the process, such as programming a robot to complete a task or even play tug of war.

In addition to robotics, engineering lessons are part of the curriculum at all grade levels. For example, JCDS kindergartners are building a windmill. The 3rd grade is working on a "maglev" train. The 4th grade is designing a parachute, and 5th graders are developing an alarm system.

Engineering lessons at JCDS offer multiple problems from which students may choose to investigate. Students respond by designing, modeling, and testing solutions. They analyze the data and then report their findings.

Math:

Singapore Math, lauded by educational experts around the world, is in its second year at JCDS. The math program has helped improve "the level of rigor grade by grade," Mrs. Stabler said. This summer the school hosted new student and new parent Singapore Math sessions for the first time.

Singapore Math helps students develop conceptual understanding of math principles through a hands-on and highly visual approach. According to the Florida Council of Independent Schools, JCDS's



tools for the future

The JCDS robotics program “is allowing our students to use STEM and inquiry skills, such as building a working model, programming, thinking critically, and problem solving.”

– SHANNON JOHNSON,
SCIENCE SPECIALIST

Being at the leading edge of education requires faculty that is open to change. This is clearly true at JCDS. Auditors from the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) said that the JCDS “faculty has a growth mindset regarding their willingness to try new and innovative instructional methods within the curriculum.” In a school that is more than 50 years old, this level of innovation is quite an accomplishment. This innovation also requires leadership that is willing to commit the necessary resources for success. According to the FCIS, these resources include professional development of the faculty and staff, as well as the necessary educational tools, and cultivation of the right mindset.

As the school and its students advance into the 21st century, the leadership, faculty, and staff of JCDS remain dedicated to near constant innovation of the curriculum. This will ensure that the school’s students are equipped with the right tools to thrive in the colleges and workplaces of the future.

“commitment to academic excellence and progress continues to look forward with the adoption of innovative programs such as Singapore Math.”

With Singapore Math, students are treated like “future adults who will need technical mathematics and the ability to do serious mathematical thinking in their careers,” Scott Baldrige, a mathematician at Louisiana State University, said recently.

Another international program, Math Olympiad, enables 35 JCDS students to compete and learn problem solving strategies every Monday.



alumni notes



Aaron Abel and Parker Kuldau

JCDS Class of 2010

TEAM SPIRIT



JCDS ties run deep! Despite their rivalry on the field, these JCDS Class of 2010 alums rally around each other for fun and friendship after the game. Pictured are eighth graders Aaron Abel (left), center for Bolles, and Parker Kuldau, wide receiver for Episcopal High School.

Logan Walker Balskus

JCDS Class of 1997

ADVENTURING IN THE MIDEAST



Logan Balskus, JCDS Class of 1997, and her husband, Capt. Brandon Balskus, ride in style in Cappadocia, Turkey.

It's no surprise that Logan Walker Balskus, JCDS Class of 1997, and her twin brother Wes would attend JCDS – what with their mom serving as director of admissions and marketing. But even Balskus couldn't have imagined that years later she would find herself living in the land of camels and kilims.

Balskus and her husband, Capt. Brandon Balskus, a civil engineer in the Air Force, are embracing every minute while stationed at Incirlik Air Base. They're traveling, absorbing the culture, and making lifelong friends. Balskus has a criminology degree from the University of Florida and a master's degree in criminal justice from Minot State University.

Tyrone Gayle

JCDS Class of 2000

UP CLOSE AND 'PERSONAL' ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL



Tyrone Gayle, JCDS Class of 2000, plans to learn "lessons in humility, patience, and politics" serving as the Personal Aide for a U.S. Senate candidate in the 2012 election.

Living out of a suitcase may not appeal to everyone, but Tyrone Gayle, JCDS class of 2000, jumped at the chance to serve as Personal Aide for Gov. Tim Kaine of Richmond, Va., as he seeks a bid for a U.S. Senate seat in 2012. Gayle will ensure that everything — photo ops, handshakes, speeches, interviews, and fundraisers — goes smoothly.

After graduating from Clemson University in 2010, Gayle worked in for the Center for American Progress and more recently at Media Matters for America in Washington, D.C.

Bennita Weston Young

JCDS Class of 1973

THE UNSTOPPABLE BENNITA YOUNG



Alumni Notes: With a son playing basketball at UF, Bennita Young, JCDS Class of 1973, and family are avid Gator fans. From L to R: husband Robert, Bennita, son Patric, and daughter Sara wearing their orange and blue.

To say that Bennita Weston Young, JCDS Class of 1973, is an overachiever might be an understatement. With a chemistry degree from Davidson College and a nursing degree from the former Florida Community College of Jacksonville, Young has worked as a chemist, taught in public schools, and managed a pediatric intensive care unit.

Young loves her job as an advanced ECMO/apheresis R.N. at Baptist Health, but is already contemplating her next move – getting a doctorate in pharmacy or going to law school.

what's your story?

We want to hear from our JCDS alumni – where you are and what you're doing. Click on Alumni at www.jcdis.com or join us on Facebook.

get to know our new board members



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BOARD COMMITTEE:
Building and Grounds

BUSINESS:
Vice President, General
Counsel, and Secretary,
Interline Brands, Inc.

COLLEGE:
JD, University of Florida
College of Law
Undergraduate, Florida State
University

**CHILDREN CURRENTLY
ATTENDING JCDS:**
Luke (K)
Lauren (PJK)

SPECIAL INTERESTS:
Travel, golf, historical reading, and community service



SEAN C. ORR, MD

BOARD COMMITTEE:
Development

COLLEGE:
MD, University of South Florida
BS, Florida International University

BUSINESS:
Chief of Neurology, Baptist
Medical Center Downtown
Medical Director, Stroke Centers
at Baptist Health
Team Neurologist, Jacksonville
Jaguars

SPECIAL INTERESTS:
Family, neuroscience, glassblowing, and
trombone playing



The Board of Trustees is composed of seven committees: Executive, Development, Finance, Building and Grounds, Compensation and Benefits, Marketing, and the Committee on Trustees. Each member of the Board serves on at least one committee during the school year.

meet our new faculty & staff

OLGA BAYER

POSITION: Development Assistant
COLLEGE: Florida State University
DEGREE: BS in Communications
MARITAL STATUS: Married to Tom
CHILDREN: Three children
ACTIVITIES: Enjoys spending time with family and new kitty. 'Noles fan.



GAIL GEORGE

POSITION: Assistant Teacher, First Grade
DEGREE: Bachelors in Public Administration, Florida International University
MS in Elementary Education, Barry University
ACTIVITIES: Special interests include foreign languages, drawing, and architecture.



LEE JOHNS

POSITION: Assistant Teacher, Kindergarten
DEGREE: BS in Advertising, University of Florida
MS in Education, University of North Florida
CHILDREN: Nicholas is in the 4th grade and Chloe is a 2nd grader
ACTIVITIES: Loves spending time in the Abacos with her family and SEC college football.



KRISTI MARINATOS

POSITION: Assistant Teacher, PJK
COLLEGE: University of North Florida
DEGREE: BS in Early Education
MARITAL STATUS: Married to John
CHILDREN: Her youngest, Laney (aka LuLu), is in PJK and the older one, John, is a kindergartner.



IAN NYQUIST

POSITION: Communications Specialist

DEGREE: BLA, University of Missouri-Kansas City

MS in Journalism, University of Kansas

ACTIVITIES: Enjoys sports, reading, running, and surfing.



AFTAN SPARKMAN

POSITION: Assistant Teacher, 2nd Grade / Dance Teacher

COLLEGE: University of North Florida

DEGREE: BA in Elementary Education

ACTIVITIES: Loves to teach, dance, and cheer and is a huge football fan.



ANNA ST. AMAND

POSITION: Teacher, 2nd Grade

DEGREE: BA in Elementary Education and German, Wake Forest University
ME in Early Childhood and Developmental Risk, University of Virginia

MARITAL STATUS: Married to Scott

ACTIVITIES: Reading, exercising, yoga, travel, singing, musicals, and Wake Forest sports.



a fond and funny farewell



Amid a sea of University of Alabama-themed gifts, honoree Mike Morrow holds up pieces from a new chess set he received at his retirement celebration at JCDS on Oct. 28.

It was all in good fun as JCDS students, administration, and faculty came together with skits, songs, special guests, and presents to celebrate the retirement of Mike Morrow. Asked what he would miss the most after serving 24 years as director of finance and operations, Morrow said, "the kids."

Students loved Morrow for his engaging personality and looked forward to his constant high-fives, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer costume, juggling activities, pancakes, and chess club. The faculty has depended on Morrow for just about everything, and he was the go-to guy for the Parents' Association.

Morrow was honored by the humorous tribute. He said he's loved JCDS ever since 1975 when his better half, Louise, started working at the school. With more time now, he plans to play golf, cook, travel, and "piddle around the house."

together, we inspire the future of learning

If we were to borrow an idea from a well-known song and “Imagine” for a moment that there were no Annual Fund at JCDS, we would discover that JCDS wouldn’t be the school it is today.

The reality is, it would not be easy to imagine JCDS without its aquatics center, security and technology features, library, science lab, robotics program, school-wide integrated software, updated bathrooms, and new play areas – all projects brought to fruition through the Annual Fund.

Thanks to our dedicated Board, parents and grandparents, staff, and faculty at JCDS, each year the Annual Fund is met with inspired giving. For this reason, we are aiming for 100 percent participation again. When you receive your Annual Fund packet, please consider how you can help support JCDS’ plans for your student, grandchild or former school.

This year’s 2011-2012 Annual Fund will build and expand on our popular and highly successful science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) program. We will also make necessary improvements around campus. The Annual Fund will include the following:

- Engineering supplies, magnets, laptop computer batteries, longwave UV lantern, NXT
- Video Trainer, garden math, PD books, and videos for the STEM program
- Science tools such as calipers and solar cells for STEM
- STEM program supplies such as Legos Creative Building Sets and Duplo Tubes Experiment Sets, Playdough, and clay
- Starfish dissection kits, water testing kit, and penguin models
- Lab stools
- Resources to provide professional development for faculty
- New SmartBoard presentation projectors
- An electronic curtain room divider to divide the Smith Center into multiple classrooms



Kindergarten teacher Diane Bajalia uses a short throw projector connected to a SmartBoard

The Annual Fund, our yearly campaign to raise financial support for programs and initiatives, helps keep JCDS at the forefront of private schools. Gifts to the campaign provide essential support for our faculty to receive continuing education dollars. Contributions offer the financial means to enhance curriculum and update facilities.



the smith center: the excitement is building



Offering our students innovative programs led by top-notch faculty is only the first step in providing them with a world-class education. The environment where learning takes place also matters – a lot.

Our goal to give students the tools they need to develop holistically – mentally, socially, and academically to live a healthier lifestyle – has become front and center as we embark on a \$5.3 million capital campaign to build the Smith Center.

Exercise, sports, and movement are not only good for the body, but also good for the brain. The new facility will be a hub of activity. It will get kids moving – playing basketball, dancing, and learning karate.

The two-story, 22,000 square-foot Smith Center will house a basketball court/gymnasium, dance studio, aerobics studio, locker rooms, pool storage, and snack bar. What's more – it will have a language lab, storage, bathrooms, showers, and multipurpose rooms.

Now you know why we're so excited about the Smith Center. We're not just building a building; we're building healthier minds and bodies. Won't you be part of our capital campaign? To find out more about the Smith Center, take a look at the floor plans, and offer your support, go to www.jcds.com and click on Capital Campaign in the left column.

phase by phase



As everyone knows, this year will be an exciting and evolving one. From bulldozers and dump trucks to graduation, Jacksonville Country Day School will realize its own potential and create a foundation for future success one phase at a time.

Phase one saw the launch of the JCDS Parents' Association's annual volunteer effort and school wide projects. Eye screenings, the Family Picnic, school pictures, family nights, and other events have been successfully

checked off the list. These events have been fun and a great time to get to know families at JCDS.

Phase two will take us through the holidays to the beginning of 2012. We will have the remaining grade-specific family nights, school performances, and other events. Get out to see our dance or basketball teams and one of our JCDS Chorus or Jazzy J's performances.

Phase three will finish up with our Gala and Auction in March, teacher appreciation, and the Book Fair. Yearbooks will be finished up and ready with plenty of memories to share. The phase will conclude with the graduation of our 6th grade and their steps toward the future.

I know that it will be an ever-changing year filled with lots of traffic switches, jackhammers, smiles, and laughter, so don't forget your checklist for the project's completion:

1. Come to a Parents' Association meeting to learn about our work
2. Attend the Family Night for your child's class
3. Attend the Gala and Auction in March, 2012
4. Read the Thursday Reminder for news and notes about the Parents' Association
5. Volunteer on one of our many projects or jobs

I would like to thank all of my architects, builders, and engineers: my board members and committee chairs. They have worked tirelessly and diligently to plan our project's success, orchestrate each task, and fulfill our commitment to ensure that our job is done on schedule, within budget, and to make sure that JCDS children have a productive year. Thank you for rolling up your sleeves, putting on your hardhats, and getting to work.

Parents, I hope that you and your children have a great year. If you want to be part of our crew, just give us a shout or whistle. See you on campus!

Kristen S. Seay

Kristen Schmidt Seay
President, Parents' Association

THE 2011-2012 PARENTS' ASSOCIATION BOARD

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Book Fair: Carmina Aldana, Melanie Boree, Dea Sims

Corporate Fundraising: Lori Pyle

Eye Screening: Darsi Edwards, Heather Fouts

Family Nights: Mariah Cheek, Grace Yu

Family Picnic: Caroline Ramsay, Rebecca Witt

Fun Run: Yogita Badarinath, Claudia Baptista, Tammy Shumer

Homeroom Parents: Kim Mansur, Shannon Bisher

Hospitality: Kim Skinner, Ritika Fedewa, Jennifer Brumback

Library: Charrell Thomas, Rebekah Selevan

Lunchroom: Charrell Thomas

Parent Ambassadors: Jan Cheek, Katie Kight, Mary Beth Hedberg

PEP: Mary Beth Hedberg, Kathy Ramsey

School Pictures: Cindy Chamberlain, Cindy Skigen

Teacher/Staff Appreciation: Jennifer Brown, Pernille Lenger

Uniform Consignment: Garrett Hiday, Kimberly Keene

Yearbook: Mandy Gildersleeve, Kim Watkins

a day in the life



The 3rd grade Veteran's Day Program opens with the Pledge of Allegiance.



A 6th grade student gives his speech for the Student Council election.



A PJK student works on math skills by measuring sand.



1st graders met with their 5th grade buddies to make placemats for the Sulzbacher Center as part of their service learning.



A kindergarten student talks with her 4th grade buddy.



Two 2nd graders work on the robotics unit in the science lab.



Board member Bill Steitz watches 2nd grade students at work in the computer lab on the Board's visiting day.



JACKSONVILLE COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Nurturing Minds. Building Character.

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FL Kindergarten Council, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

dates to remember



DECEMBER

16 Holiday Break Starts, 3:00 p.m.
Dismissal



JANUARY

4 Classes Resume
16 No School (Martin Luther King Day)



FEBRUARY

6-7 Preprimary Conferences
8-10 Elementary Conferences
10 Noon Dismissal
20 No School (President's Day)



MARCH

9 Spring Break, 3:00 p.m. Dismissal
19 Classes Resume
31 Annual Gala



APRIL

4-5 Grandparents' Day
6 No School (Good Friday)
9 No School (Professional
Development)
10 Classes Resume



MAY

11 4th Grade Trip to Camp
Montgomery
18 5th Grade Trip to Camp
Montgomery
20-23 6th Grade Trip to MarineLab
24 6th Grade Dinner and Dance
25 6th Grade Graduation, 8:30 a.m.
28 No School (Memorial Day)
31 Awards Ceremony, Grades 1-5



MAY

1 Last Day of School/Noon
Dismissal

For the latest updates and information, please visit our website at: <http://new.jcids.com/>