



EPISCOPAL
SCHOOL OF BATON ROUGE
HEAD of SCHOOL

October 19, 2020

Annual Report for the Episcopal School of Baton Rouge

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Diocese of Louisiana,

It has been a start to the school year like no other for us here at the Episcopal School of Baton Rouge. With COVID-19 leaving us all wondering what school would look like, we began in-person classes as scheduled. With masks, social-distancing, enhanced cleaning, ionization systems in the HVAC units, outdoor classroom spaces, and many other measures we have gotten off to what can only be described as a successful start to the 2020-2021 school year.

Last year we completed a successful search process and named Dr. Carrie Steakley, from St. Mary's Episcopal School in Memphis, TN as our 5th Head of School. Dr. Steakley took over in a summer filled with uncertainty. From a global pandemic, to multiple hurricanes, to racial tensions that affected every one of us. In addition to dealing with opening school in the midst of the pandemic, Dr. Steakley has created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force as well as hiring Dr. Katrice Albert as a consultant to help Episcopal explore how it is serving our black families as well as all people of color in our community. We have begun and will continue to do extensive work with our faculty and staff, our students, our parents, and our alumni to understand where we have fallen short, done well, and how we might strive to live more fully into our Episcopal Identity and our Baptismal Covenant.

Our enrollment is 950 students Pre-K3 through 12th grades. This is up considerably from last year due somewhat to the unexpected and unfortunate closure of Runnels here in Baton Rouge at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. In addition, the Episcopal Admission team continues to work on strengthening partnerships with area Episcopal day schools with another year of enrollment of graduates from all three Episcopal schools-Trinity, St. James and St. Luke's. With COVID restrictions we have only recently been able to start private tours for Lower, Middle and Upper Schools and have temporarily suspended large gathering open house events and student shadow days. Despite the COVID restrictions, our inquiry and application rates are still similar to previous years. Our enrollment is certainly something we are paying attention to, but Episcopal continues to experience less attrition than the national average while simultaneously managing to attract a diverse group of mission appropriate students from in and around the Baton Rouge area. The Gaudet Scholarships through the diocese are very important in these efforts, helping 50 students this year with tuition. In addition, we are leveraging our Tuition Assistance program and supporting a larger number of students than in previous years with about 33% of our total enrollment on financial assistance (or 35% of students in eligible grades K through 12th).

We are certainly grateful to all who have supported us in our *Spirit, Mind, Body* capital campaign. The chapel renovation was a complete success. We have been in the Academic

Commons-our new innovative learning center for Upper School-for three years, and we broke ground on our new field house last spring. Thanks to the generosity of so many, our facilities are truly second to none.

In addition to the three phases of our original capital campaign, we have completed the renovation of Foster Hall into the Quest Center, an innovative learning center for our Lower and Middle Schools to complement the Academic Commons.

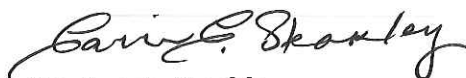
Last year, Episcopal had an outstanding graduating class of 100 students who matriculated on to highly selective schools such as the US Air Force Academy, Harvard, Sewanee, and Duke as well as other prestigious schools around the country and here in our own state of Louisiana. We have had and continue to have a close relationship with LSU that we value greatly. The Class of 2021 has 12 National Merit Semifinalists and 3 Commended Scholars continuing the success of the previous graduating classes.

We continue to hold our place and part in the Diocese as one that is at the core of our identity. The Episcopal School of Baton Rouge strives to live into our role as a place where all are welcome and come to know God's love and grace, and where all are taught to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." This is lived out in many ways which include, but are not limited to our Student Vestry groups in Middle and Upper School, the Center for Service Learning, and our affiliation with the Anti-Defamation League who recognizes us as a No Place for Hate school. We are grateful for the interest of the Bishop and the Diocese in our "Mission and Ministry" and look forward to another great year.

In God's Peace,



The Rev. Kirkland "Skully" Knight
Chaplain



Dr. Carrie Steakley
Head of School