



JACKSONVILLE  
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

## Head of School July 1, 2023



Jacksonville Country Day School (JCDS) is an independent Pre-K-3 through 6th grade day school in Jacksonville, Florida with a current enrollment of just under 400 students. JCDS seeks an educational leader who will build upon the challenging and engaging academic program and welcoming environment that has been developed over the past 60 years. Previous heads have had long tenures at the school. Together with a strong board and a talented faculty and staff they have developed model academic and character development programs for the students. In addition, school leadership has maintained a strong financial position for JCDS.

Jacksonville Country Day School is consistently ranked as one of the top workplaces in the region. The beautiful 19-acre campus and facilities provide teachers and students with resources for learning, play, creative expression and community engagement. JCDS is committed to and successful in designing programs that educate the mind, body and heart of each student. In addition to reviewing this introductory opportunity profile, candidates will want to fully explore the JCDS website at [www.jcds.com](http://www.jcds.com)

## **Mission**

Jacksonville Country Day School prepares students for a healthy and productive lifetime of intellectual exploration, character development, and social responsibility.

## **Core Values and Beliefs**

- We are Honest**
- We are Respectful**
- We are Nurturing**
- We are Innovative**
- We are Inclusive**

## **Distinction**

Jacksonville Country Day School is the only accredited, independent, secular school in Jacksonville dedicated exclusively to elementary education.

## **Portrait of a Graduate**

The Jacksonville Country Day School graduate:

- is prepared for academic success
- approaches challenges with confidence
- communicates thoughtfully and effectively
- acts with compassion and respects others
- leads by example

## **Statement of Philosophy**

Jacksonville Country Day School is an independent and multicultural school dedicated to motivating and guiding students towards fully achieving their unique potential.

JCDS educates children so that they develop academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. JCDS provides a challenging yet positive and safe environment for young minds to shine. With small class sizes and differentiated instruction, JCDS teaches children how to think through project-based and hands-on learning experiences.

Through character education, self-discipline, a love for learning, and a commitment to social responsibility, students become successful teens and adults in an ever-changing and interconnected world.



## 2021-2022 Enrollment

379 students	
African-American	14
Asian	65
Hispanic	17
Multiracial	43
White/non-Hispanic	240

## 2021-2022 Financial

Total Revenues	\$8, 549,950
Total Expenses	\$7,747,943
Annual Fund Revenue	\$265,000

## 2022-23 Tuition

PK-3 until 11am	\$9,700
PK-3 until 1:30pm	\$13,300
PK-4	\$15,900
K	\$17,700
Grades 1-3	\$18,700
Grades 4-5	\$20,500
Grade 6	\$21,200

## School History and Sense of Place

In 1960, a group of families looking for an alternative to the unaccredited (at the time) public schools in Duval County joined forces to found Jacksonville Country Day School. Nineteen acres of land were donated, and the founders established an independent, secular school with strong academics. For 60 years Jacksonville Country Day School has been dedicated to the vision of the founders and the mission to provide strong academics and character-rich foundations to children from Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. The school emphasizes intellectual exploration involving project-based and hands on learning experiences that prepare students for success at the next academic level and beyond.

The 19-acre campus and facilities are beautiful and well maintained. Eight buildings house 27 classrooms, 2 art studios, a music room, a dance studio, gym, 2 pools, innovative library, technology studio, production studio, auditorium, offices, playing fields and 3 playgrounds. The campus exudes a sense of happiness. Children of all ages demonstrate the core values and the 7 Mindsets that are an integral component of the day-to-day life of the school.

The current Head of School, Pat Walker, will retire at the end of the 2022-23 school year. Mrs. Walker is beloved and respected by the community. Next year will be her 29th year at the school and her 9th year as Head of School. She has created an environment where students, teachers and families feel loved, trusted and respected. The faculty and staff demonstrate a high level of loyalty and dedication to the school. Mrs. Walker and her faculty have helped make Jacksonville Country Day School a wonderful place for children and their families.

## Jacksonville, Florida

Jacksonville is located on the Atlantic coast in the northeast section of Florida. It is the most populous city in Florida and the largest city by area in the contiguous United States. Yet, residents and visitors do not experience gridlock like you will find in other large metropolitan areas.

Jacksonville is experiencing a time of growth. Significant factors driving the local economy include banking, healthcare, insurance and logistics. Jacksonville is a major seaport for both civilian and military operations. Tourism is also important to the area.

A number of universities including Jacksonville University, University of North Florida, Florida State College, Edward Waters University, Trinity Baptist College and the University of Florida Health Sciences Center make their homes in Jacksonville.

Beyond its wonderful beaches and waterways, Jacksonville provides a multitude of outdoor recreational opportunities. The Jacksonville

Arboretum, Tillie Fowler State Park, the Julington-Durbin Preserve, Talbot Island State Park and the University of North Florida Eco Trail are a few of the popular nearby recreational sites.

For sports fans Jacksonville is home of the NFL Jaguars, the Jumbo Shrimp Triple A baseball team, the ECHL Icemen hockey team and the Arena Football Sharks. Many of the universities host athletic competition throughout the year and of course, Jacksonville is host of the annual Georgia-Florida football game. Jacksonville is also a popular destination for competitive and casual runners and cyclists.

Jacksonville is a golfer's dream, touting some of the most beautiful golf courses in the US. Each year The Players Championship is held at the PGA Tour home course, TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Art lovers can fill their calendars with the wide variety of theatre, musical, dance, museum, and gallery opportunities.

### **Academic Program**

Jacksonville Country Day School is committed to providing a nurturing yet academically challenging environment and curriculum to children in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. Imbedded throughout the program is an emphasis on character development. The school uses the 7 Mindsets program for a foundation, but teachers have the latitude to enhance the character development experiences in age-appropriate ways. Classroom instructional strategies incorporate brain friendly, multi-sensory and research-based methods. Teachers focus on the cognitive and social-emotional development of their students. JCDS is a leader in academic innovation. Recently, the school implemented a team lead concept at each grade level to further enhance the academic experience. In addition to the language arts, math, and social/global studies programs, students have daily PE, which includes swimming in the fall and spring. Art, music, Spanish, library, technology and science are offered on a regular basis. Collaboration between classroom teachers results in a variety of interdisciplinary studies throughout the year.

### **Pre-K-3 and Pre-K-4**

The [Pre-K-3](#) and [Pre-K-4](#) programs meet children where they are when they arrive at school. Teachers focus on the intellectual and physical developmental needs of the children as well as their social-emotional learning stages. The program is Reggio Emilia inspired. Instruction is interdisciplinary and project based. Teachers differentiate instruction to provide for successful experiences and continuous growth. The teachers provide opportunities for family involvement in school and classroom activities. Children have beautiful play areas to support physical and social development. Play is an important component of learning at JCDS. Pre-K-3 classes have 16 children with 2 teachers. Pre-K-4 classes have 18 children with 2 teachers.





## **Kindergarten**

Kindergarten classes have 2 teachers in each classroom with 18 students. Teachers promote exploration and social engagement through a multi-sensory instructional approach as children develop the foundational skills and mindset required for success in elementary school and beyond.

Classrooms promote exploration and social engagement through a multi-sensory instructional approach as children develop the foundational skills and mindset required for success in elementary school and beyond. The character education program along with engaging, interdisciplinary, project-based experiences are central to the kindergarten experience. The Reading-Writing Workshop, Foundations phonics program and Singapore math program are used. Teachers offer hands-on experiences and introduce the children to service-learning projects and outdoor educational investigations. The school community looks forward to the annual Kindergarten spring performance.

## **Grades 1, 2 and 3**

First, Second and Third grade students engage in activities that foster creativity and excitement for learning. Teachers provide increasing levels of responsibility for students as they develop.

Reading-Writing Workshop, Foundations phonics and Singapore math are fundamental at all grades. The music, arts, science, Spanish and PE teachers coordinate with classroom teachers to develop interdisciplinary learning experiences. The Morning Meetings, which are a daily activity for all students, is a time when the 7 Mindsets and other community building activities are initiated. The teachers in Grades 1-3 are supported by a Team Lead who works with small groups or individual students on skill development and enrichment.

## **Grades 4, 5 and 6**

Beginning in Grade 4, JCDS students meet a variety of teachers who are subject area specialists for instruction. Each student's academic, social-emotional and physical growth is enhanced through flexible grouping and differentiated instruction. Each student in grades 4, 5 and 6 is issued an iPad to use at school and at home. The curriculum promotes higher order thinking skills and lays the foundation for students to excel in the middle school of their choice and beyond.

Fourth and Fifth graders have increased exposure in the STEM Science and Technology Lab, engage in ecological service learning and may participate in story telling competition, spelling and geography bees, and The STEM exposition. Field trips are a popular part of the program and are linked to curricular studies.

Sixth Graders take on a variety of leadership roles at JCDS. Like other grade levels they enjoy field trips, grade level performances and community competitions. In addition, sixth grade students are offered elective classes to support special interests and talents. Leadership as Shark News Anchors, Student Council members, Leadership Corps, JCDS Ambassadors and the freedom of “Senior privileges” add to their school experience. In addition, sixth graders participate in a number of interdisciplinary projects and field trips that enrich and round out their school experience.

### **Curriculum Enrichment**

Jacksonville Country Day School provides experienced teachers and beautiful facilities to deliver outstanding fine arts, physical education, library, Spanish, science and technology experiences. While great efforts are made to develop interdisciplinary programs with classroom teachers, all of these subject areas stand on their own and provide children of all ages with rich experiences.

### **Art**

Spacious and well-equipped art studios allow teachers to inspire students to explore different artistic techniques and methods. Personal expression and creativity is encouraged as children develop artistic skills. Drawing, painting and sculpting with a variety of materials leads to the production of beautiful works of art.

### **Music**

The Pre-K-3 through 6th grade music program includes singing, speaking, movement, drama and instruments. Students play and create music on Orff instruments, guitars, drums, ukuleles, and piano keyboards. The program also includes ear training and reading music beginning in kindergarten. Individual lessons are available in piano, violin, guitar, voice, brass and woodwinds.

All grade levels present a musical production during the year. Students grow in their awareness of the importance of the fine arts through visiting artists, school performances, curriculum related field trips and service projects. There are also three performance ensembles. Many JCDS students continue to perform when they move onto Middle Schools, Upper Schools, community bands and orchestras.



## **2021-2022 Personnel & Physical Plant**

### **Employees**

Total Teachers—48  
Total Administration & Staff—21  
MA Degrees—35  
8:1 student to teacher ratio

### **Physical Plant and Campus**

19 Beautiful acres  
8 Buildings  
27 Classrooms  
1 Science Laboratory  
2 Art rooms/studios  
2 Music rooms/studios  
1 Dance studio  
1 Gymnasium  
2 Pools  
1 Library  
1 Technology studio  
3 Playgrounds & 1 Playing Field  
1 Dining room & Food service area  
1 School clinic  
Ample offices & meeting spaces

### **Memberships**

FCIS  
NAIS  
ERB  
NBOA  
ISM

## **Library**

The newly renovated Library contains over 14,000 books, ranging from pre-readers to upper grade novels. The comprehensive collection includes classic and modern fiction, picture books and a nonfiction collection. JCDS students are given opportunities during the daily Reading Workshop classes to visit the library and work on skills in small groups with the librarian. The library is a busy and happy environment.

## **Physical Education**

Three full time Physical Education teachers meet with every grade daily. The school community takes great pride and is supportive of the daily PE schedule and program. The physical education program focuses on fitness, skill acquisition, team building, social development, and character education. During the fall and spring, the PE teachers provide swimming lessons to all students. In addition, the PE teachers are involved in many of the after school athletic programs offered at JCDS.

## **Science Lab**

In addition to basic scientific concepts, students learn about specific disciplines, including earth, life, marine, and physical sciences. In science lab, students are encouraged to seek scientific explanations about the natural world using the inquiry method. Students are guided in developing and strengthening their powers of observation and learn to communicate scientific ideas.

## **STEM**

The STEM Shark Lab and Tech Studio is a multi-purpose learning environment that provides not only science and technology instruction but also a makerspace where students can inquire, create, and solve problems. In the STEM Shark Lab and Tech Studio, students are encouraged to seek scientific explanations about the natural world using the inquiry method. Learning takes place in a hands-on laboratory and makerspace environment where students acquire the scientific skills required for future study. Throughout their STEM experiences, students are provided with the strategies, methods, and materials necessary for scientific investigation.

The Jacksonville Country Day School STEM Shark Lab and Tech Studio is equipped with computers, projectors, a Smartboard, and 12 3D printers. Children in kindergarten through 6th grade attend regularly scheduled classes.

## Spanish

JCDS students receive a continuous and developing sequence of Spanish language instruction from Pre-K 3 through 6th grade. In addition to building Spanish vocabulary, the program encourages student awareness and appreciation for different cultures. The program helps students internalize Spanish through physical movement and actively responding to verbal cues. A focus on stories helps to build fluency in speaking and writing Spanish.

## Buddy Program

The faculty and staff at JCDS have developed programs to enhance community connections. The Buddy Program connects the Pre-K-3 and 4 with 3rd graders, the Kindergarten with 4th graders, 1st grade with 5th graders and 2nd grade with 6th graders. The children maintain their buddies for the full year and attempt to engage in at least one activity each month.

## After School Enrichment and Summer Camp

JCDS offers a robust after school, on campus, [enrichment program](#). Many activities have won awards statewide, including the elementary school band program and the dance team. Annually, 3 out of every 4 students participate in at least one of the After School Enrichment programs. The Enrichment programs provide students with introductory exploration and continuing development of character, the arts, academics, and athletics for the enhancement of their JCDS education at many different interest and skill levels. A sample of the offerings include Lego League, Junior Scientists, Karate, Basketball, Flag Football, Soccer, Running, Volleyball, Music lessons, Drumline, Chorus and Acting and Improv.

Jacksonville Country Day School provides students with a high quality and enriching [Summer Day Camp program](#). For over 50 years, JCDS has provided campers a safe, and fun experience in a wide range of activities including arts and crafts, daily pool time, music, games, sports, field trips, and more!

## Governance

The Board of Trustees at Jacksonville Country Day School follow the NAIS Principles of Good Practice for boards. The Board is currently comprised of 22 trustees and 4 additional Ex-Officio members. Board members serve up to three 3-year terms. The four officers; President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer serve 2-year terms. There are seven standing committees including Executive, Governance, Finance, Advancement, Buildings-Grounds & Technology, Audit and Head of School Evaluation & Compensation. The Head of School is a non-voting Ex-Officio member of the board.







## **DEI Council**

Jacksonville Country Day School has formed a DEI Council with the purpose of cultivating a community free from prejudice and to instill a sense of respect for all ethnicities, abilities and identities. The Council is comprised of faculty & staff, board members, parents and past parents. They have developed a philosophy of diversity and have identified four areas of focus: 1) expand and diversify classroom libraries, 2) rethink how to teach inclusion to students, 3) raise cultural awareness with adults in the community and 4) recruit staff, teachers and leadership of diverse backgrounds. Progress has been made in all four focus areas.

## **Administration**

The Head of School has the authority to employ and organize the administrative team. The Senior Leadership Team is comprised of the Head of School, Director of Business, Director of Advancement and Director of Education. They meet regularly and provide support to faculty, staff and the board of trustees. The organizational chart shows clear lines for reports. The Head and her Senior Leadership Team are collaborative and have created a strong sense of trust within their own team and the teams that report to them. This trust has resulted in a strong sense of pride and autonomy at all levels.





## **Opportunities at Jacksonville Country Day School**

Current school leadership and faculty at Jacksonville Country Day School have developed an ideal program and setting for their Pre-K-3 through 6th Grade students. Like many Lower Schools, JCDS experienced enrollment declines during the 2008 Great Recession and additional declines during the first two years of the Covid 19 pandemic. Enrollment has increased but competition for middle school aged students has impacted enrollment, especially in the sixth grade.

Fortunately, Jacksonville is seeing positive trends in population growth and the development of new housing communities near the school. The planned retirement of the current beloved head of school has created the opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past leaders and to safeguard the future of the school. Some of the key opportunities ahead for the Jacksonville Country Day School community and the Head of School include:

*Embrace school culture by demonstrating a love and respect for children, teachers and their families*

*Engage with the community to develop a shared vision consistent with the JCDS mission and culture that will advance the school for the next decade*

*Commitment to the diversity of the faculty and staff that reflects the diversity of the student body and school community*

*Internal and external communication and marketing plan that ensures the strengths and opportunities at JCDS are known by all in the community*

*Ensure the excellence of the academic program while supporting mission appropriate students with different learning styles*

*Enrollment management with a particular focus on mission appropriate waitlists and retention at all levels*

*Build the capacity of the faculty and administration for career advancement and succession planning*

## **Candidate Attributes and Experiences**

Jacksonville Country Day School with the support of its community, seeks a Head of School who will embrace and advance the unique mission, culture and philosophy of the School.

*Candidates must demonstrate most, if not all of the following critical competencies:*

- Master's Degree or above
- Track record of successful administrative leadership
- Early Childhood and Elementary experience
- Teaching experience
- Financial acumen
- Knowledge and enthusiasm for admissions processes
- Commitment to Character Education & DEI

*Candidates should demonstrate the following executive leadership and personal qualities:*

- Effective communicator
- Community builder
- Student focused
- Authenticity
- Visionary with executive leadership skills
- Business minded
- High emotional intelligence
- Advocate for teachers
- Good listener
- High standards for self & others
- Lifelong learner/proponent for professional development
- Sense of humor

## Information On The Search Process and Calendar

A search is underway to identify the new Head of School for Jacksonville Country Day School in Jacksonville, Florida. The new Head of School will assume the role on or about July 1, 2023. Jacksonville Country Day School is accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools. The Board of Trustees has appointed a Search Committee to conduct the search and has engaged the national executive search firm, Educational Directions, to assist the Search Committee.

Candidates are asked to express their interest in the Jacksonville Country Day School Head of School position as soon as possible, but no later than August 1, 2022. Please direct all inquiries, applications and nominations in confidence to:

Mike Murphy, Partner  
[mmurphy@edu-directions.com](mailto:mmurphy@edu-directions.com)  
727-409-2330

Sam Richards, Partner  
[srichards@edu-directions.com](mailto:srichards@edu-directions.com)  
401-230-7595

### Each candidate should submit in PDF or Word format:

- A letter addressed to the Search Committee explaining his or her specific interest in Jacksonville Country Day School
- A resume
- A personal statement or philosophy of education and leadership path
- The names, email addresses and telephone numbers of five professional references. (Finalists will be expected to provide seven additional references)
- Reference letters sent directly to the search consultants are optional
- Submission of SparkHire questions provided on August 1
- Semifinalists will be asked to complete a background check
- Finalists may be asked to complete a skills profile
- Electronic submission of credentials is expected

### Search Calendar:

All application materials due	August 1, 2022
Semifinalist Selection	August 22, 2022
Semifinalist Interviews	September 10-11, 2022
Finalist Interviews	September 18-October 11, 2022

***The compensation package will be within the expected norms of comparable schools***

Jacksonville Country Day School provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

