

St. Anne's-Belfield School

ENDURING VALUES & INSPIRED LEARNING

For more than 100 years, St. Anne's-Belfield School has fostered an educational community that nurtures the development of advanced skills, abilities, and knowledge, supports high personal aspirations, and develops exemplary, ethical, and engaged citizens who positively impact the world. As stated in the 2017 – 2022 Strategic Plan, the School's core purpose is to inspire and prepare the next generation of exemplary citizens and visionary leaders. To this end, the School maintains a low student-teacher ratio and fosters a community in which every child is known and known well. As it ever has, the School seeks to provide a well-rounded experience, challenging students in the classroom, on the athletic field, on the stage, and in a variety of extracurricular activities and programs with the goal of producing well-rounded adults who succeed and serve.

It is important to recognize that every educational institution in the world, including St. Anne's-Belfield, faces two significant challenges. First, the cost of an independent and/or collegiate education has increased dramatically, causing many families to assume these avenues are not available to them. Second, the rapid rise in technology is creating an even greater array of jobs our students will consider as they graduate from college. Madeline Levine, education expert and author, spoke to the School in 2016 about trends in education. One of her more surprising findings is that *65% of the students now in elementary school will graduate from college and take jobs that haven't been invented yet*. How can schools, including St. Anne's-Belfield, best prepare its students, when none of us knows what knowledge students will require years from now?

The good news is that St. Anne's-Belfield has been working for several years on programs and practices not only to make an education available to qualified students, but to help students develop the life-long skills to succeed in virtually any career path.

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TRADITION & INNOVATION

St. Anne's-Belfield School Goals & Programs

As detailed in the St. Anne's-Belfield School Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022, the School holds as its core values:

- INTEGRITY - Cultivating responsible, honorable, ethical behavior
- CURIOSITY - Fulfilling our desire to question, to know, and to learn for a lifetime
- DIVERSITY - Seeking to know, learn from, and value one another
- CREATIVITY - Expecting imaginative, critical, and divergent thinking
- AGENCY - Empowering students to own their learning
- IMPACT - Accomplishing meaningful, significant work for the greater good.

These goals are reflected in a variety of innovative programs, briefly described below.

- **Academic Programs** - St. Anne's-Belfield School has a strong tradition academic excellence, which permeates the purposeful Pre-School through Grade 12 curriculum today. Many alumni will reflect that the School taught students to write well, and that tradition is very much alive today, helping students think critically, develop arguments and communicate effectively. Interdisciplinary courses like Humanities in the Learning Village (Grades K – 8) and Upper School provide students with the opportunity to study English, history, art, philosophy and religion in combination. In 2015, the School became one of the first in the state to implement a computer science program that infused technology throughout the grades and curricula. Our faculty, and students, have had great success in learning together regarding technology, education, and the modern world.
- **Student-Teacher Relationships** - A continuation of a long tradition, the School's faculty cultivates enriching relationships with students both inside and outside of the classroom in order to appreciate each individually. The School's focus is on creating an environment in which "every child is known and known well." Small class sizes help ensure each student successfully masters course material, and students and teachers have more informal interactions in daily homeroom and advisory meetings, during Community Lunch, in Upper School Opportunity Block classes, while planning Chapels, and after school when many faculty also coach Grades 7 - 12 athletic teams, direct theatre productions, coach robotics teams, and more. Finally, each of the School's college counselors work with students to provide advice on the next step of a student's education based on his or her own interests and goals.

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- **Personal Responsibility for Learning** - Teachers have moved from being “the sage on the stage” delivering lectures to “the guide by the side” who helps students in their process of discovery and problem-solving. From FabLab in the Grades K - 4 to Quests in Grades 7 & 8 to Upper School Intensives, students take “deep dives” into subjects of interest to them and shape the questions and answers they find. Through project-based learning, students also practice cooperation, collaboration, and more. As appropriate, Grades 5 – 8 and Upper School meetings may be student-led, helping reinforce the idea of students taking personal responsibility for their learning.
- **Athletics** - St. Anne's-Belfield offers more than 50 athletic teams in 15 sports for students in the Grades 7 - 12. Boys' and girls' teams include the “more traditional” sports such as football, field hockey, basketball and lacrosse, as well as newer teams for squash and swimming and diving. This variety of offerings helps encourage students to pursue their personal athletic goals. The School believes strongly that regular physical activity, development of skills, and interscholastic athletic competition play critical roles in each student's growth. Our sports program does much to contribute to the development of our students' good character and morals, in addition to enhancing our overall School spirit.
- **Arts** - The growth in the School's arts programs over the past two decades has been nothing less than extraordinary. Music, drama, and dance instruction begins in Pre-School, and students participate in no less than ten instrumental and vocal ensembles. Visual arts instruction begins in Pre-School and continues through the Upper School, as students explore a variety of visual media to discover their artistic voice. At every grade level, students can participate in theater arts classes and Students in Grades 5 – 12 can participate in extracurricular productions, with the goal of becoming creative thinkers, confident and communicative speakers, and knowledgeable, compassionate, and tolerant individuals.
- **Community Service** - Students at every grade level help support the Charlottesville area, and in some cases the world, through community service projects. Whether students work at a community garden or donate to a food bank, each student has myriad opportunities to help others. In addition, the freshman class spends a full week in an area of the country in need of assistance, where our students' energy and empathy have a genuine impact.
- **Spiritual Growth** - Since the origins of the school in 1910, weekly Chapel services have been a central pillar of the St. Anne's-Belfield experience and express the School's commitment to nurturing students in the spiritual dimension of life. Three guideposts shape Chapel across the School. First, the century-old tradition of our service reflects the Judeo-Christian heritage and the original founding of the school by the Episcopal Church. While the School is no longer affiliated with

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any church, Chapel provides roots and rituals which cultivate the spiritual life and link generations of alumni. Second, the heartfelt community of our sermons, prayers, and music highlights the vitality of student and faculty life. The experience of delivering a sermon, performing music, or sharing a prayer for a loved one embodies Headmistress Mary Hyde Duval's wish for our "students to become strong in body, broad of mind, tender of heart, and responsive in soul." Third, a warm openness to religious diversity communicates cultural empathy in the 21st century. Chapel embraces inclusivity and welcomes students and faculty from all faiths and all backgrounds whether religious or secular.

- **Diversity & Inclusivity** - Students from 19 countries now attend St. Anne's-Belfield School, including 11 countries represented by our 83 boarding students. In addition, the School has distributed approximately seven million dollars in financial aid in the 2017 – 2018 school year to more than 40% of students with an average award of more than \$17,000. These efforts have created a community of qualified students, regardless of ability to pay. The School also recently adopted an official statement on Diversity & Inclusivity, reiterating its commitment to both as a moral imperative and essential part of our education promise.

Alumni support is essential for continuing the School's progress in these important areas. To learn more about how your philanthropy can be directed to address your desires and the School's needs, please visit [Ways You Can Give to the School](#).

If you have further questions, please contact Director of Leadership Giving [Bruce Cauthen '74](#) or Director of Alumni Relations [John Blake](#) or (434) 296-5106.