



# NOTRE DAME ACADEMY

*Educating Women to Make a Difference*



All-Girls  
Grades 9-12  
Founded 1874

## President

For July 2022



## Mission

Notre Dame Academy, a Catholic high school dedicated to Mary and committed to academic excellence, exists to educate young women to make a difference in the world.

## Our Vision

Transformative women leaders embracing God's goodness in the world.

## Our Values

We believe in

- the centrality of God in Catholic education
- academic excellence for lifelong learners
- a holistic education including creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- an inclusive atmosphere which respects the dignity of every individual and builds unity
- equitable participation for women in our society
- the unique positive influence women must have in society
- the benefits of single-gender secondary education
- a strong commitment to service and leadership in learning and life
- global understanding as a key component of a well-rounded education
- learning from the authentic experience of others
- building a just and peaceful community
- the use of effective technology to support best practice in instruction

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Notre Dame Academy Board of Directors is conducting a national search for a new president, to assume the position on July 1, 2022. The school seeks a student-centered, experienced individual who is a practicing Catholic and an inspirational leader who will ensure an excellent academic program and promote the mission and values of the school. These values are grounded in the spirituality and mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame.

Notre Dame Academy (NDA) is the only Catholic college-preparatory school in the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky that provides single gender education to young women in grades 9-12. Because of the school's 115-year history of challenging young women to pursue academic excellence and to find joy in learning, NDA educates and mentors students to become women who transform the world around them. Notre Dame Academy values its girls' school advantage. Every student is empowered with knowledge, creativity and self-awareness to become her best self within the classroom and beyond, to reach her highest potential. Notre Dame Academy is accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI).. The most recent accreditation is through the school year 2023.



## Overview of the School

Notre Dame Academy is sponsored by the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame, founded by two young teachers in Coesfeld, Germany in 1850. Christian education of youth has always been the Congregation's principal apostolic activity. Since its founding, the Congregation has grown to its present membership of 1800 sisters ministering worldwide in 19 countries, 520 of whom serve in the United States.

Notre Dame Academy was founded in 1874 in Covington, Kentucky, as a Catholic grade school with an initial class of seven students. The school expanded to include a high school program in 1906. In 1937, the elementary school program was discontinued due to growing enrollment in the high school. By the 1950s, the school had outgrown its downtown Covington location and Notre Dame Academy moved to nearby Park Hills, on a newly built campus, in October 1963. In the mid-1990's, the school renovated and expanded its facilities, adding a gymnasium, upgrading science labs and adding a front office complex. In 2008, NDA added athletic fields and a state-of-the-art theater. Notre Dame Academy recently completed a \$7 million capital campaign to transform its 20th century building into a 21st century environment where students can fully utilize technology and support a holistic education. In support of NDA's tradition of excellence in education, the campaign supported four funding priorities: Chapel renovation; a 21st century Collaborative Learning Center; a new food court and student commons; and elevator and ADA compliance. NDA's new *Mary, Mother of the World* Chapel is a special place where students can go for quiet reflection or to pray and honor God, which is increasingly important in this technological age. The new collaborative learning space supports new and innovative ways that our students utilize a library to access online resources and collaborate with others to problem solve and create.

The mission, vision and values of Notre Dame Academy are derived from the [Educational Vision and Principles of the Sisters of Notre Dame \(SND\)](#). The school community clearly embraces the mission and values of the Sisters; the school's commitment to its Catholic identity and to the charism of the Sisters is integral and vital to the school's future. It is this foundation that provides the unique, rich and diverse atmosphere pervasive in the school and lived out in the world by their alumnae.



### **Principles of a Notre Dame Education:**

- The centrality of a good and provident God
- The human dignity of each person as an image of God
- The Notre Dame educator as Gospel witness
- An integrated education for transformation

Notre Dame Academy is rigorous but not rigid. There is a joyful spirit with a seriousness of purpose, exemplified by the students, that permeates throughout the campus. Students, parents, faculty, staff and alumnae all speak to the welcoming environment for the young women and their families. There is a community feel that, for the young women, allows them to “be who you want to be, grow in ways you didn’t think possible.” They enjoy close relationships with faculty and with each other. They like the sisterhood aspect of the school as well as the incorporation of faith and “learning what it is like being a woman of faith.” Feeling comfortable about using their voice in self-expression, gaining confidence in who they are and openly celebrating school spirit are important aspects of their life at NDA. They feel that the school develops girls into confident young women, with a strong moral compass.

The faculty is deeply committed and dedicated to NDA as evidenced by its many years of service to the school. The culture and ethos of the faculty is one of a strong sense of family, with many alumnae returning to teach at the school. Teachers are guided by a tradition of high expectations at the school and of empowering the young women to become leaders. Care, compassion, and concern for students ensure their success in all aspects of school life. Faculty members receive a number of opportunities for professional development illustrating the importance of lifelong learning and the pursuit of excellence and growth for all at NDA.

The goal of NDA’s academic program is to educate young women to make a difference in our world and to prepare them for the many challenges they will face in college and life. To that end, the school offers an approach that integrates academics, service, the arts, and athletics to mold students to have a vibrant faith life and a passion for learning. In addition to college preparatory and honors level classes, students also have access to 13 advanced placement courses as well as seven dual credit courses with Thomas More University and the University of Cincinnati. NDA has historically been strong in the STEM disciplines, providing students with a





comprehensive curriculum that emphasizes creativity, critical thinking, innovation and real-world problem-solving. That tradition continues in striving to be innovative and current in the school's educational efforts, being relevant to today's learners, with the 1:1 iPad initiative, integration of instructional technology and Accelerated Learning Opportunities. One example of this is NDA's Science Research class. At Notre Dame Academy, Science Research is an elective course that focuses on individual science research projects in the areas of mathematics, natural science, engineering, computer science and behavioral science. NDA's Science Research students prepare a formal research proposal and complete and present original research. Through NDA's Science Research Program, students learn principles of logic, hypothesis testing and other methods of reasoning leading to strong critical thinking and problem solving skills. [NDA Academics](#)

The Notre Dame life includes opportunities for spiritual growth and reflection for students, faculty and staff, parents and the entire school community. Together with the religion department, campus ministry works to assist the NDA community to continue to grow in their Catholic faith through liturgy, religious education, Christian service and retreat experiences, gathering together many times to celebrate the liturgy as a whole school community. All NDA students attend an annual retreat with their grade level exploring their roles in their faith communities and the world. Students will experience many different types of prayers and liturgies.

Notre Dame Academy has a rich tradition of success and excellence in its athletic programs, with a commitment to developing student athletes and preparing them to make a positive difference in the world. At NDA, faith permeates beyond the school day and into athletics and extra curriculars with a commitment to developing students to take ownership, become resilient and see God in all they do. The majority of NDA students participate in one or more of 14 sports. The school is a member of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) and has won 30 state team championships, 72 individual state titles and has 39 state runner-up titles. Success at the high school level has enabled an average of nine student-athletes per year to continue their sport at the collegiate level. [NDA Athletics](#)

The arts are an important aspect of NDA life, seeking to instill the wonder and beauty of creative expression in all of the young women. Whether it is vocal or instrumental music, studio art and design, hand sewn quilts or theater productions, the arts enrich human life and explore the potential inside each person. Students have various opportunities to become involved in a selection of performing arts, including the renowned theatre and drama programs, dance team, choral club, the select choral ensemble and concert and marching band. The visual arts program offers a variety of courses designed to develop



the creativity of the student through training in basic skills and experiencing the use of a variety of art media. [NDA Arts](#)

## [School Governance](#)

Notre Dame Academy is a Catholic school, sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame within the Diocese of Covington. As sponsors, the Sisters hold specific reserve powers. Most recently the Sisters of Notre Dame combined their four provinces in the United States into the new [SND USA](#). The Board of Directors governs, assumes fiduciary responsibility and plans the strategic direction of the school in accordance with its mission. The president is appointed by the board with approval by the SND National Ministry Corporation Board.

The Board of Directors consists of 15 members--past parents, alumnae, community members and representatives from the Sisters of Notre Dame. Board committees include the following:

- Executive
- Mission Integration
- Advancement & Marketing
- Finance
- Educational Programs & Technology
- Facilities and Grounds

The board is committed to serving the school and is focused on long-term strategic objectives. The new president will find a board with a great deal of expertise, one with which the president can form a strong partnership. The culture is seen as committed, intelligent and hardworking.

## [Northern Kentucky](#)

Park Hills, KY, is located in Northern Kentucky, approximately 2.5 miles away from Cincinnati, OH. Nearby Covington, which is the largest urban city in Northern Kentucky, is a community overflowing with restaurants, shopping opportunities and the popular MainStrasse Village mixed-use neighborhood. There is abundant recreational greenspace, including more than 20 parks. Nearby Cincinnati has a vibrant community offering plenty of culture and recreation to satisfy just about any interest.

Northern Kentucky is a fast-growing region and enjoys a diverse economy with strong sectors in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, automotive, financial services and food production



## [NDA By The Numbers:](#)

Enrollment 2020-2021: 545

85% of students are Catholic  
7.4% of students are diversity students

25% of students receive financial aid

Administration: 4

Faculty: 41 Full Time/  
8 Part Time

Staff: 15 Full time/  
6 Part Time

Average class size: 23

Tuition 2020-21: \$8,250  
(Catholics Registered in a parish within the Diocese)/  
\$9,055 (out of Diocese or non-Catholic)



industries. Major domestic and international companies such as Amazon, Kroger, DHL and Citi have established hubs in the area. The cost of living in the Cincinnati region is 12% below national average and Northern Kentucky offers an even more affordable alternative. Approximately 25% of the area's population of 450,994 people is made up of 18-35 year-olds. A robust economy, affordable housing and friendly residents are a few reasons that young professionals are drawn to Northern Kentucky.



## The Future

The students and faculty are at the heart of the Notre Dame Academy experience, and as such should be central to every decision made by the new president. The next president will move quickly to embrace the community, culture and purpose of the Academy and to establish a shared vision for the future. The president will continue to advance efforts in enrollment and fundraising, financial sustainability, faculty excellence, program excellence, and diversity and inclusion.





### Sisters of Notre Dame/Catholic Identity

The next president will be entrusted to promote the SND/Catholic identity and to carry on the mission, tradition, and charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Specifically, the president must ensure that these foundational elements ground all that is done at Notre Dame Academy.

### Strategic Vision for Excellence

As a school committed to the education of young women, it will be essential that the new president be able to articulate a vision for excellence for the education of young women within the context of NDA's mission and core values. Specifically, this vision must take into consideration the current realities and challenges of today's world (including the impact of the pandemic) and be able to articulate "what is next" to ensure that NDA continues to be a leader in a competitive market and stays cutting edge with creative programming. To support this vision of excellence, the president will be expected to collaborate with the administrative team in attracting, hiring, developing, and retaining outstanding faculty and staff at NDA. Faculty diversity, competitive compensation and professional development opportunities will be important considerations. The president must recognize their contributions and support the wellbeing of every NDA employee.

To ensure a vision for excellence, the new president will have the opportunity to engage with the board and the NDA community in the development of the next strategic plan.

### Institutional Advancement

The Board of Directors and the Notre Dame Academy community recognize the intrinsic benefits to all students of a diverse student body and are committed to broadening access to Notre Dame Academy to all those girls who desire to attend. NDA has been successful in its fundraising and is able to



provide appropriate financial assistance. While NDA has been in a relatively strong position with its enrollment, there is the reality of shifting demographics which needs to be addressed.

To ensure the long term viability of NDA, it must have the resources to fulfill its mission and continue its legacy. Given this, the president, building upon the success of its current president, will take a leading role in a comprehensive institutional advancement program, which includes fundraising as well as marketing and outreach that takes into account an understanding of NDA's position in the market and the competitive landscape. The president must articulate the distinctive value of NDA, its SND heritage and Catholic identity, the outstanding academic and extra-curricular programs, and the wonderful community, all of which are the hallmarks of the school. In addition, the ability to convey the value of all-girls' education is essential and the new president must actively involve all NDA constituents (administration, faculty, staff, parents, directors) in this effort.

NDA also has a wonderful legacy of alumnae. The school has done good work to keep alumnae engaged and supportive but looks to grow and expand upon this work. To that end, the new president will work to continue to enhance the alumnae relations program recognizing that there is no "one size fits all" and that the alumnae program must be adapted to best serve the needs of the different generations of alumnae.

Finally, the current president has been working on a campaign that is an integral part of the strategic plan—*Building Leaders Through Transformative Education*. A component of this plan is securing resources that ensure the integrity of the 60-year-old building and continue to enhance campus facilities to support 21<sup>st</sup> century learning well into the future. To that end the Sister Mary Paul Ann Hanneken and Sister Mary Rachel Nerone Fund has been established. This fund, with a goal of \$3 million, will address areas such as learning environments, safety and security, facility structure and mechanicals, athletic facility upgrades and building endowment. The new president will need to continue the efforts that have been started.

### [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

Consistent with its core principles, the Educational Vision and Principles of the Sisters of Notre Dame, and the Catholic faith, Notre Dame Academy is committed to its work in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion. While NDA has engaged in a variety of efforts, this is an area of focus. The new president must not only embrace diversity and inclusivity but also actively work to ensure that NDA is a warm, welcoming diverse community where all feel welcomed.



## Professional Qualifications Sought

The board and the Notre Dame Academy community are interested in all candidates who will embrace, articulate and promote the school's vision of educating young women. In addition to being a strategic and visionary leader, a creative thinker and a relationship-builder, successful candidates will have background, skills and qualities that include most or all of the following. The next president will:

- Articulate the school's educational and spiritual mission and vision, in alignment with the Sisters of Notre Dame, to inspire and motivate all constituencies. The next president will maintain the school's connection with the Sisters and be mindful of their long legacy at the school
- Have a passion for educating young women and the willingness to continue a culture of learning and high expectations
- Have a knowledge of Catholic teaching as well as a current understanding of directions and issues in the Catholic Church, including pastoral, social and moral dimensions of church life and the role of Catholic education within the Church
- Be an experienced educator with a strong academic background and who is knowledgeable of best educational practices. This includes a deep understanding of best practices in pedagogy, faculty professional development, technology integration, program design and curriculum development. Have knowledge of organizational dynamics and possess the managerial leadership to ensure the cohesive functioning of the school so that it can continue providing an excellent education
- Have an understanding and knowledge of effective external affairs programs, which includes all aspects of advancement, fundraising and broader community involvement. Be comfortable asking for financial support and have a commitment to developing a culture of philanthropy. Have knowledge of the fundamentals of business and the economics of independent schools
- Work closely and comfortably with the Board of Directors in building a true partnership in governance and leadership as well as in fundraising efforts
- Be a proactive, effective and clear communicator with all NDA constituents, so that these groups are appropriately informed
- Bring a commitment to diversity in its various manifestations and be skilled in building inclusive communities, with the ability to navigate diverse cultural and social situations with ease
- Be committed to being visible and to making connections with the greater Southern Ohio/Northern Kentucky community to enhance the school's image and reputation
- Have an understanding of or experience with schools sponsored by a religious order





### Personal Qualities Sought

Notre Dame Academy's new president's actions and decisions will need to maintain and model both the school's Catholic mission and the charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame. To that end, the school is seeking a practicing Catholic who is deeply spiritual and is willing to immerse her/himself in the life of the school, and who is committed to the Sisters of Notre Dame identity.

The successful candidate will be an approachable, open and reflective person with strong emotional intelligence, whose presence will invite and respect the views of others. The ideal candidate will be a collaborative leader, a relationship- and trust-builder, who is willing to draw from the collective experience and knowledge of the administration and faculty. The next president will look for strengths in people and "grow" them through mentorship and guidance.

The successful leader will be able to connect with individual members of the community, to invest in the community to ensure that NDA continues to provide the best for its students. Finally, Notre Dame Academy will be best served with a servant- and transformative leader who can comfortably engage with both the internal and external communities and lead with vision and grace.

### Search Process

Notre Dame Academy has engaged the national executive search firm Educational Directions to assist with the search. The search committee plans to complete the search by late fall 2021. Candidates should submit all information as soon as possible, **but not before first speaking with one of the search professionals:**

Mathew Heersche, Ed.D.                      mheersche@edu-directions.com

and

Risa Oganessoff Heersche                      rheersche@edu-directions.com

Electronic submission of materials is required. **Please send materials in a consolidated pdf format.**



Candidates should submit:

- Cover letter explaining why they are interested in and qualified for the president position at Notre Dame Academy
- Brief personal statement that includes the candidate's thoughts on leading NDA and an all-girls institution
- Current resume
- Names, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of five references



















