

SOAR

SPRING 2024



THE PRENTICE DIFFERENCE

AN INSIDE LOOK AT STUDENT LIFE AND BEYOND



A Day in the Life at The Prentice School

WELCOME MESSAGE

More than 37 years ago, a small group of parents banded together with one goal: to create an educational institution that would give their children with dyslexia the education they deserved. They formed what is now The Prentice School.

Today, that small school is a 6.6-acre campus with more than 25 classrooms serving 150 students in 1st through 8th grades.

At The Prentice School, our mission remains steadfast – to empower students with language-based learning differences and co-occurring conditions, such as ADHD, to recognize their unlimited potential. We inspire them to tap into their creativity, intelligence, and leadership skills, and help them achieve success beyond their wildest dreams.

I am excited to share the 2024 Spring Issue of our SOAR Magazine and give you an inside look into our very special school!



Devon Green, Head of School

A 4th Grader's Day

Let me take you through a typical day filled with excitement, learning, moving and fun!



After morning announcements in my homeroom class, I go to my small Orton-Gillingham group for a 60-minute lesson. It's the best way to start the day, learning with three other friends in my class who read at my same level. My OG teacher uses creative activities and games to help me understand why words are spelled the way they are. It's cool to finally be taught reading and spelling in a way my brain understands. My teacher understands that I have a hard time sitting still for long periods, so she allows me to move, use a different seat and a fidget when I need to.

Then, I join five of my classmates at my writing level for a 50-minute Writing period where I get to let my imagination soar! We write stories, poems, and persuasive and informational essays using graphic organizers and special writing strategies! I'm also learning how to type and use speech to text to get my thoughts on paper.



After writing, I have a 15-minute recess break. Today, I'll either play soccer or play on the large structure.



Then it's off to Science. I love Science at Prentice! The classroom is set up to look like a lab with lab tables, microscopes,



circuit boards, robots, and so much other cool stuff! We get to make predictions, experiment, observe reactions, write down what we saw, and talk about the science behind it all. I like how hands-on it is, not just reading from a book and filling out worksheets.



Then it's time for math, which is surprisingly fun! For 50 minutes, I work in a small group on different ways to solve math problems, and I get to use the strategy that I like best. If I need to, I can use my multiplication chart or calculator. It's easier for me to understand math here because it moves at my pace, and we're always reviewing what we've already learned.

Next, we head to lunch and recess. This is the time where I get to hang out with friends, chat, and have some fun outside.

After lunch, we dive into our 50-minute Amplify Language Arts class, where we explore science, social studies, and the arts. What's awesome about this class is that it's super accessible, especially for kids like me who might face challenges with reading. Our teacher breaks down the content into smaller, easier-to-understand chunks, and I always come out feeling like I've learned something new!



Then it's time for either SEL, Art, or PE. In SEL (Social Emotional Learning), we learn how to regulate ourselves when we're feeling anxious or overwhelmed, and how to solve problems and identify feelings and emotions. In Art, I get to be super creative! We paint, draw, learn how to shade – you name it! PE is one of my favorite classes, especially when we play Hula Hut or Pickleball. Coach always has music playing

on his big speaker.

My day ends with a short Mind Masters session on an iPad where I play different games that help improve my working memory, inhibition, and processing speed.

At Prentice, I feel like they just get me. They understand how I learn best, how I like to move, and how being in a small group really helps, so I've learned so much here. I'm so happy I get to go to school at Prentice!



Here I am being greeted when I arrive on campus by Mrs. Green, our Head of School.



This is my Orton-Gillingham Group.



I'm walking back to class with some friends.

Stephanie Seiber

A RECENT LOOK BACK AT PRENTICE

A Day in the Life at The Prentice School

A Jr. Higher's Day Let me take you on a journey through a typical day, packed with learning and fun!

I start my day by hanging out with friends before the bell rings. It's always fun to catch up and maybe play some basketball outside before classes begin.

First on my schedule is a 50-minute History class. Learning about history and different cultures is always interesting, especially since our teacher likes to hear our opinions, questions and discussion points. It really helps having only 12 students in a class because I actually feel like my opinion matters.



Then, it's time for my 50-minute Writing period. I really like this class because it gives me the tools and strategies I'll need to be prepared for high school. I work in a small group, learning how to improve my writing by using special graphic organizers, assistive technology, and guidance from my teacher.



A short 15-minute recess allows me to recharge, hang out with friends, and maybe play some more gaga ball, football, pickleball or basketball.



Science class is up next, and it's always a highlight of my day. Our classroom is a full-fledged lab, filled with experiments, student-built robots, space projects hanging from the ceiling, a greenhouse, and a student garden. Just this semester, I did dissections, examined real tissue inside a bone, looked at different types of muscle specimens under a microscope, helped build a garden, presented on a genetic disease and more.



Then comes Math, where learning feels more like solving puzzles than crunching numbers. Working in small groups allows me to explore different problem-solving strategies at my own pace. So much of what we learn in math class is connected to real life through projects and other learning activities that deepen my understanding of the concepts and help me make better sense of them.

After lunch recess, we dive into Amplify Language Arts. This class is fantastic because it presents complex topics in a way that's accessible and engaging. This class combines reading practice, comprehension, grammar and vocabulary. We also work on projects to get us comfortable speaking and presenting in public.



Next, it's either PE, SEL, or Art. In SEL, we focus on developing essential life skills like problem-solving and emotional regulation. Art class is a chance to unleash my creativity through painting, drawing, and more.



And PE is always a blast, whether we're playing games or learning new sports skills.

At the end of the day, I participate in Mind Masters, where I play games to improve my cognitive skills including working memory and other executive functioning skills. Then it's off to my after-school club, where I get to explore my interests and passions even further.



At The Prentice School, I feel understood and supported in my learning at school. Most of all, I feel confident and prepared for the next step in my life - high school. From personalized instruction to projects and activities, every day is filled with growth and discovery. I'm grateful to be part of such a nurturing community.



When did you attend Prentice?

5th-8th grade

When did you graduate from Prentice?

2022

What is different about Prentice than your other schools?

They really take the time to help you individually. I also loved my Jr. High Science teacher, Ms. Zippwald. She let us garden and had us create our own Fairy Garden.

What high school do you currently attend?

Mater Dei High School in Santa Ana

How did Prentice help set you up for success at your current school?

The teaching techniques used at Prentice really helped me gain confidence. Also, the emphasis on executive functioning made a big difference for me as I transitioned to high school.

What is something you wish everyone knew about Prentice?

Prentice really helps you become the best version of yourself.

What are your current plans for after high school?

I hope to go to college and study marine biology. I also hope to continue visiting my teachers as Prentice, as they were such an important part of my life.

Mind Masters

COGNITIVE TRAINING PROGRAM

At Prentice, we are constantly seeking innovative ways to support our students' diverse learning needs. Equipping students with strategies, resources, and tools to be successful is an important part of what we do to ensure each child reaches their full potential. Now, we're excited to share the results of groundbreaking research that could revolutionize how schools begin to approach education for students with literacy-based challenges like dyslexia.

Dr. Eugene Wong at Cal State San Bernardino has been leading a study on cognitive training and its impact on Prentice students' working memory, processing speed, and cognitive flexibility. Mind Masters is a 20-minute daily regimen integrated into the school year; the program is designed to enhance the cognitive abilities mentioned above that are essential to strong academic performance. What sets the Mind Masters program apart from other educational support strategies is its implementation within the school day, making it accessible to all students.

Traditionally, Computerized Cognitive Training (CCT) studies have been conducted outside of the school setting, limiting their reach and effectiveness for students who could benefit the most. Dr. Wong's project, however, breaks new ground by seamlessly integrating CCT into the academic curriculum. The results speak volumes: improvements in working memory, cognitive flexibility, and processing speed were observed.

In Dr. Wong's work, he and his colleagues analyzed data from 95 Prentice students to demonstrate the improvement in cognitive abilities resulting from Mind Masters. All of their work is done at the group-level so that it is possible to highlight the impact of cognitive



Dr. Eugene Wong, Lead Researcher for the Mind Masters Program, and Devon Green, Head of School

training; there is no data released on an individual student level.

So, what did they find? Well, in two words: "Great Results!" The Mind Masters program produced treatment effects for each of the cognitive variables (i.e., working memory, cognitive flexibility, and processing speed) in just one school year. A treatment effect is a number that indicates the impact of an intervention on an outcome (e.g., Mind Masters' impact on working memory); the larger this number, the greater the effect. A number from .01 to .05 is a small effect while a number from .06 to .13 is a moderate effect. Any number that is .14 or greater is a large effect. Now, the results; for working memory and cognitive flexibility there was a moderate effect of Mind Masters while we saw a small effect for processing speed.



WORKING MEMORY

For the Sightseeing training group, there was a significant improvement in Digit Span scores post-training compared to pre-training.

COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

For the Recollect training group, there was a significant improvement in Trail Making task scores post-training compared to pre-training. Similarly, the Sightseeing training group showed significant improvement in Trail Making scores post-training compared to pre-training.

PROCESSING SPEED

For the Recollect training group, there was a significant improvement in Coding scores post-training compared to pre-training.

These results, after just one year of Mind Masters, underscore the effectiveness of CCT in improving cognitive abilities, particularly working memory and cognitive flexibility. In addition, the integration of CCT into the school day provides a promising avenue for supporting students with learning differences. By embracing innovative approaches like cognitive training, we can unlock the potential of every child, empowering them to thrive academically and beyond.



Mind Masters Prentice Team

Why is this research so significant? It's all about leveling the playing field for students with learning differences. Executive Function skills, like working memory, are crucial for academic success, yet many children struggle in these areas, hindering their learning and development. By incorporating CCT into the school day, we're providing targeted support to help bridge these gaps.

But it's not just about individual students—it's about shifting the entire educational landscape. Dr. Wong's research underscores the importance of recognizing and addressing learning differences in all students, not just those with formal diagnoses. It challenges us to rethink how we approach education. If we can simultaneously improve executive functions while teaching students with language-based learning differences how they learn best, we are making big strides in improving overall academic outcomes.

As we reflect on this groundbreaking study, we're inspired by the possibilities it presents. By embracing innovative approaches like cognitive training, we can unlock the potential of every child, empowering them to thrive academically and beyond. At Prentice, we're proud to be at the forefront of this transformative movement, paving the way for a brighter future for all our students.

Dr. Wong's published research can be found at:



Fun with Science

DISCOVERING AHA! MOMENTS AT PRENTICE

Have you heard of the scientific adventures happening at The Prentice School? Here, science isn't just a mundane class—it's a thrilling escapade brimming with experiments, discoveries, and "Aha!" moments that instantly captivate students from the very first experiment! With state-of-the-art science labs and passionate teachers leading the way, students go on a journey of scientific exploration unlike any other.

It's no wonder science is a favorite among students at The Prentice School. How do you prefer to learn and retain information? By passively absorbing knowledge from a textbook, day in and day out, or by immersing yourself in hands-on experiments that spark excitement and engagement?



Imagine this: you're in the lab, donning safety goggles, surrounded by an array of beakers and vibrant test tubes. Your heart races as you witness substances change color, conduct experiments, and observe reactions unfold before your eyes. Whether it's engineering a cushioned landing for an egg drop, dissecting frogs and cow eyes, or constructing earthquake-resistant buildings, each week presents a new adventure. And the best part? You get to play the role of scientist, detective, and researcher—all rolled into one.

Now, picture this: you're in the lab, sleeves rolled up, eager to delve into your latest experiment. Equipped with Don Johnston's Snap&Read, you effortlessly navigate the lab worksheet questions through text to speech, formulate hypotheses in speech to text, and record results with predictive text. When considering



the pivotal question: "Why do you think that happened?" you turn to your textbook, and it reads aloud to you, providing insights into the scientific principles behind the phenomenon. This remarkable assistive technology not only simplifies learning but also empowers students facing literacy challenges to explore their love of science like never before.

Our esteemed teachers, Mrs. de Jesus and Ms. Zippwald, are our scientific superheroes, concocting lessons that cater to every learning style and ability. They breathe life into science with engaging, unforgettable experiences, fostering an environment where questions are welcomed, discussions are encouraged, and ideas are celebrated. Under their guidance, students not only grasp scientific concepts but also unleash their inner scientist and revel in the thrill of scientific inquiry.



Logan Lee Dooley

A LOOK BACK AT PRENTICE

When did you attend Prentice?

4th-8th grade

When did you graduate from Prentice?

2001

What is different about Prentice than your other schools?

Unlike the public schools I've attended, Prentice allows smaller class sizes to focus on ways to address learning differences. In my case, it was dyslexia that was my main challenge. During my early years at public school, I constantly felt like I was struggling with being "different" because I couldn't seem to learn simply by reading. But at Prentice, I was not "different," as all my fellow students were struggling with some form of dyslexia. At Prentice we were taught to use multi-sensory programs to "learn how to learn," despite our learning differences.

Tell us a little bit about what you do now, and how you got here.

My passion for the sport of Trampoline has resulted not only in becoming a three-time U.S. Olympic Gymnastics Team member - and becoming the highest-scoring U.S. male Olympian in the sport of Trampoline, but has also resulted in my career as a co-owner of one of the most successful Gymnastics gyms in the country, (and I'm told) as well as one of the most highly-regarded trampoline coaches, resulting in becoming an Olympic coach for the 2021 Olympic Games.

How did Prentice help set you up for success in high school, college and/or beyond?

Because of my positive experience at Prentice, I felt a significant increase in my self-confidence and in my ability to advocate for myself whenever necessary, I felt much better prepared for success in high school, in college - and, in fact, in life.

What is something you wish everyone knew about Prentice?

First, I wish that everyone could KNOW that Prentice exists! There are so many students who are in desperate need of the specific education that Prentice teachers are specially trained to provide.

What are your current plans for the future?

My current plans for the future are to continue to take a leadership role in providing creative and positive ways to ensure that the sport of trampoline is a shining example of how "USA Gymnastics is committed to building a community and culture of health, safety



Logan with his mom, Nancy, and his wife, Erin

and excellence where athletes can thrive in sport and in life." (USAGymnastics.com: The Movement Starts Here)

What makes you continue to come back to Prentice?

I'm always happy to visit the students and staff at Prentice to share with them my experience of evolving from an extremely frustrated student, lacking in self-confidence when it came to reading and writing - to a much more self-assured and relaxed learner - all due to the Prentice approach to helping kids with "learning differences" become successful in school and in life!

Is there anything else you would like to share?

In addition to my position as a gym co-owner, I also manage and direct World Elite Gymnastics in Rancho Santa Margarita, California day to day. I also serve as a member of the Board of Directors of USA Gymnastics. I was a trampoline finalist in the 2013 World Championships and was the first U.S. male trampolinist to win a World Cup Series for the U.S. (2010). I was a member of the U.S. Olympic team in 2008 (Beijing, China), 2012 (London, UK), and 2016 (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) I am currently also Sponsored by Vuly Trampolines as an athlete ambassador.

Fit-A-Thon SOARS

Every year we are continually inspired by our Prentice Family amazing support of our Fit-A-Thon Fundraiser, and this year was no different. Even though we had to shift all our activities indoors due to the Tustin Hanger Fire, our students were still bubbling with excitement and were competitive as ever! We were also excited to welcome US Olympian Logan Dooley, Class of '01, back to campus to share about his life and lead our student warm-up.

Thanks to the collective dedication and commitment of our Prentice Family, we raised over \$55,000 - well over our initial goal of \$40,000. Key to the success of the event were our four remarkable donors who graciously



offered to match donations up to \$20,000! Their generosity not only doubled the impact of individual contributions but also served as a catalyst for inspiring greater participation. All funds raised during Fit-A-Thon are used for crucial initiatives such as curriculum enhancements, classroom technology upgrades, and campus improvements.

Fit-A-Thon is more than just a fundraising event; it is a celebration of unity, generosity, and community spirit. It showcases the incredible power we possess when we come together with a shared purpose. We cannot thank our Prentice Family enough for your continued support of our school and our mission. Your commitment reflects an understanding of the vital need for our school and a genuine investment in its present and future success.

Celebrating our Incredible 2024 Gala

On April 20th, we hosted our 2024 Education Elevated Gala at the Marriott Irvine Spectrum bringing together nearly 200 guests and highlighting the Prentice Family's unwavering support of our 37-year mission to provide an innovative education, nurturing environment, and path to success for students who learn differently.

Our speakers, Brian Sullivan and Michael Sullivan (Prentice Alumnus '06), were a dynamic father-son duo, sharing insight from every Prentice perspective and moving the hearts of all in attendance.

The Prentice Family's contributions were essential to the success of the evening. Your generosity and support surpassed all expectations! With an amazing surprise matching donation of our Scholarship Paddle Raise from a very generous donor, we raised nearly \$640,000, making this our most successful Gala to date!

On behalf of our students, Board of Directors, and the entire Prentice Team, we offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of the event. Whether by attending, donating, or volunteering, your generosity and dedication inspire us and reinforce our shared commitment to Prentice.





THE PRENTICE SCHOOL

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THE PRENTICE SCHOOL

EDUCATION ELEVATED

As this school year draws to a close and we reflect on the last nine months, we are so grateful for our Prentice Family. Your investment in our mission allows us to continue helping students see every possibility that is available to them and recognize their learning disability can be their strength.

Prentice is committed to being a safe space where students with language-based learning disabilities can thrive. Please consider making an end-of-school-year gift to support this commitment. From \$30 to \$4,000, your investment in our school and our students makes this possible. We are honored to have you as part of the Prentice Family, and we thank you for your continued support!



Donate online.

