

Celebrating Our 88th Opening of School



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On September 4, 2017, St. Andrew's opened for its 88th school year. We welcomed new and returning students and families onto campus during our annual Opening of School weekend. "You and your families have brought such excitement, energy, hope, and expectation to our community today," said Head of School Tad Roach during his [Opening Day talk with parents](#), "and we understand these emotions also collide with a bit of anxiety and a lot of love for your sons and daughters. We have tried to meet all these powerful emotions with a radical expression of hospitality, generosity, and goodness."

A few fun facts about our 2017-18 student body:

- Total enrollment: 307 (159 boys, 148 girls)
- Total new students: 89 (45 boys, 44 girls)
- Students of color: 116 (38%)
- International students: 59 (19%)
- Geographic diversity: students hail from 27 states, 19 countries
- Total students receiving financial aid: 47%
- Total financial aid granted: \$6,413,119
- Average grant: \$44,846

Faculty first returned to campus during the week of August 21 to gather for meetings and teaching workshops. You can read Tad's remarks from the opening faculty meeting on our [Notes from Tad blog](#). Students began to return on August 28, when seniors arrived on campus to participate in leadership workshops. "The foundation of senior leadership is, first, credibility, consistency, discipline, and attention in the way they live as individuals; then, peer culture and leadership responsibilities to the community," Tad explained during his opening talk with seniors. In workshops, student shared examples of effective and inspirational leadership, and conversely disappointing or debilitating leadership, they've experienced during their previous years at St. Andrew's. They also participated in role play activities that allowed students to walk through scenarios involving honor code violations, drug/alcohol violations, bullying, hurtful language, sexual orientation & relationships issues, and homesickness.

Nearly a third of students returned on Wednesday, August 30 for preseason athletic camps, and on Friday, September 1, we welcomed both new and returning international students and parents for International Families Orientation. New families attended receptions and information panels with faculty and current international students and parents, and new international students also explored campus through a scavenger hunt and took a "field trip" to Middletown to get to know our local area and shop for any dorm supplies they may have been unable to bring with them to campus from home.



All remaining students and parents returned to campus on Opening Day, Sunday, August 3.

After parents departed in mid-afternoon, new students met with their Big Brother or Big Sister (a VI Form student) to tour campus, meet faculty advisors, and review class schedules together. Later in the day, after dorm meetings and an all-School meeting in Engelhard Hall, students, faculty, staff and families attend the annual Opening Day Square Dance and cookout on the Field House lawn. Senior Isabelle Mauboussin '18 reflected on her first Square Dance three years prior. "Before I came here, I was most nervous about the Square Dance," she said. "I thought it as something everyone would be forced into, so I anticipated it being really awkward, and as a freshman, I thought I was going to make a fool out of myself. But I was mistaken—everyone was completely immersed in the spirit of it, and I felt like the School was welcoming us with open arms. I remember going to back to dorm that night and saying to my roommate, 'Oh my gosh, I love this school.'"

Finally, on Labor Day Monday, students gathered with their classmates for Form orientations. II Form students participated in listening and get-to-know you exercises with each other under the guidance of III Form Deans Melinda Tower and Matt McAuliffe. IV Form students visited the Echo Hill Outdoor School, where they traversed a ropes course and engaged in other activities designed to build trust and communication between classmates. Meanwhile, V Form students participated in leadership development activities in the Chapel. "This orientation is intended to engage students in an exploration of what it means to be a responsible student and effective leader

in the community," said Chaplain Dave DeSalvo. "We identified some of the core values of the School and explored how best to create and protect a culture of respect for ourselves, our campus, and each member of our community."

"Orientation Day is a wonderful day for all Forms to come together to work on different skills," said Dean of Leadership Ana Ramirez. "Our objectives for the day are to allow students to explore strategies for achieving balance and resilience; to practice ways to appreciate and support others toward reaching their goals; and to begin to learn to integrate their emotional gifts as they learn and grow and contribute to our community."