Dark Matter.

Astronomers have used telescopes for 400 years to identify and study the stars and planets and moons and other objects in space. Our solar system has its sun and eight planets and numerous moons and comets and asteroids and other objects flying around in orbit. Our sun is one small member of the milky way galaxy, a spinning cluster of 300 billion stars – and who knows how many planets orbit those stars? And our home galaxy is just one of 200 billion galaxies in the known universe.

However, it seems that these billions of galaxies and quintillions of stars don’t move the way astronomers predict they should. The current best theory says that the universe also includes DARK MATTER, which is invisible – even through telescopes. In fact, calculations suggest that 84% of the known
Some people believe that. Turns out good grades and high test scores are like the visible 16% of what’s there. We’re missing the rest: the rest is invisible dark matter.

In the past two years 80 nationally prominent private schools have begun to work on a project that will alter the way they think about education: how to teach character traits that have proven essential for success in school and in life: teamwork, creativity, ethics, resilience, curiosity, and perseverance.

What about creativity and curiosity, two of the other non-cognitive skills critical to success? Here’s an example from one of our upper elementary classes.

The group’s web site says, “After decades of study, researchers have proven that non-cognitive skills and attributes are just as important as cognitive skills in determining academic and life success.”

Since this has not been the focus of these conventional prep schools, they are comparing notes about how to teach these non-cognitive skills. The challenge they’ve set for themselves is to alter the way they think about education. How are they doing that? One school leader wrote to the group: “In our back to school meetings we’ll be discussing how to make language about non-cognitive skills part of daily life in classrooms, advisory groups, and our Common Room, where I think we’ll put up signage about skills like task initiation, sustained attention, etc.” In other words, they’re going to put up posters encouraging students to initiate work and to sustain attention.

How do we at Post Oak develop task initiation and sustained attention? Rather than using inspirational posters to encourage initiative, from the earliest age children are invited to choose their own work. That’s task initiation. And we protect children’s concentration when they’re working; we don’t interrupt them to go on to another activity or to quiz them on what they’re doing. That’s called ‘sustained attention.’ So when a three-year old student chose to cut strawberries for his class’s snack food, and worked on it without interruption for 30 minutes, he was developing both initiative and perseverance.

What about creativity and curiosity, two of the other non-cognitive skills critical to success? Here’s an example from one of our upper elementary classes.

The teacher invited students to contemplate a blank white board — to make their minds as blank as that board and then to record their thoughts. Here’s what one boy wrote:

“A blank mind does not exist. A mind can never be blank. When I stare at a wall, I think about things I have been doing, things I am excited for, and things I am doing now. When I do not think, I feel I feel the cool AC on my legs, all my itches, my hair weighing down on my head, and my clothes gaping at me. Even though it is feeling, not thinking, I still think of how they feel, whether it is in words or not. I THINK about FEELING. This is all stating that a blank mind does not exist, but if you stare at a wall for 5 minutes, it will definitely wander, wander from music to a book to an international puppy space station. Your mind will think of crazy things that you will think about later.”

Cutting strawberries? Staring at blank walls? Do we ignore conventional academics? No, we do that, too, and do it well. We just structure our student’s work in such a manner that they are developing non-cognitive character traits along the way, each and every day.

That fine, you say, but let’s get real. Will they get into college? Absolutely. This year at Post Oak High School, our first junior class has begun work on the International Baccalaureate diploma program — a rigorous curriculum for grades 11 & 12 recognized by colleges across the United States and around the world. And we already have a series of recruitment visits scheduled for admission officers from 15 colleges and universities — literally one admission officer for each member of the junior class.

Yes, we’re taking care of business. And for fifty years, we have been educating children with full knowledge of ‘dark matter’ character development.

What about education? How to teach it without interruption for 30 minutes, how and what your child is learning. We invite and encourage current Post Oak parents to attend, whether for the first time or for those desiring a chance to take the journey again. Space is limited, so sign up early to reserve a spot.

The realization that learning can be fun and stepping out of your comfort zone can be so rewarding.

The Post Oak community couldn’t be more proud of their efforts.

Two Post Oak Alumna take the Stage!

Becky Bereswill (2005) will be the skating performer acting as Elsa for Disney’s on Ice ‘Froz’n’. She is the first person to play this character. The tour begins in September with performances in Houston on April 15-20. Becky, a student at the University of Michigan, is thankful to Post Oak Middle School for being so cooperative with her figure skating schedule, and feels confident that it helped her to get where she is today.

Stephanie Styles (2006) is an actress, singer, and dancer based in New York City. She graduated Summa Cum Laude with a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from The University of Michigan. Stephanie recently made her film debut in the feature film ‘The Submarine Kid’. She has now been casted as Katherine Plumber in Disney’s North American Tour of the Tony Award winning musical NEWSIES.

Both Becky and Stephanie began developing their passion for the arts while at Post Oak. Having witnessed their talent emerge from the early stages makes it all the more exciting to watch them take center stage as young adults. The Post Oak community couldn’t be more proud of their efforts.
**THE 2014–2015 POST OAK FUND**

**TOGETHER WE CAN!**

We have raised $214,000 of our $300,000 goal. Thank you, Post Oak parents! The campaign continues until we reach our $300,000 goal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014–15 PARTICIPATION TO DATE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PARENTS</strong> 70%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYEES</strong> 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TRUSTEES</strong> 100%</td>
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Our sincere thanks to Post Oak Fund Chairs Carol & John Howenstine and Class Captains for their efforts.

For printable response forms or to donate online, go to www.postoakschool.org or contact the Development Office at (713-661-6688) or christinacantu@postoakschool.org.

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**GALA PROJECTS IN THE WORKS!**

- Parents and students work together on Errol Pinto’s Gala project
- A parent volunteer assists with the creation of Phoebe Yeager’s Gala project

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**THE 2014–2015 POST OAK FUND AUCTION! ACTION!**

Where will you go on your next vacation? To the pristine slopes of Deer Valley, Utah, the excitement of New York City, the bright lights of Las Vegas, or even the local shores of Galveston? We will have adventures in these locations and MORE waiting for you at the Gala!

More details will be coming soon. Keep an eye out on the upcoming Post issues for additional information about this year’s auction offerings!

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**RESERVE A ROOM AT THE HOUSTONIAN**

Reserve a room at the Houstonian to make it a full night of dinner, dancing, silent and live auction, and celebrating Hollywood-style with old and new Post Oak friends!

Post Oak’s Biennial Gala is one of two major fundraisers for the school. THIS is a gala year and we hope to see you THERE!
Please be sure your family members have sent an RSVP!

If you would like your child’s grandparents or other relatives/friends to be invited to this year’s Grandparents’ & Friends’ Days, please visit www.postoakschool.org (left hand menu option) and submit their email address. If you already know which guests are coming, please make sure they RSVP either online or by mail.

Additional printed invitations are available at the front office.

November 24 & 25, 2014

**Grandparents’ & Friends’ Days**
AT THE POST OAK SCHOOL
November 24 & 25, 2014

**THE POST OAK SCHOOL BOOK FAIR**
STARDATE 2014

Barnes & Noble
3003 Holcombe
Monday, November 24
12 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**BLAST OFF TO READING**
with books, activities, music, and more!

**TO POST OAK AND BEYOND!**
For those visitors who are attending Grandparents’ & Friends’ Day on Monday, November 24th, we encourage them to continue their Post Oak experience by going to the Book Fair after the morning Grandparents’ Day activities are over. With prior parent consent, guests visiting younger students are able to take those students with them to the Book Fair during the day.

**MONDAY**

**GRANDPARENT’S & FRIENDS’ DAY**

9:00 – 9:15 a.m. Arrival/Breakfast
9:15 – 9:45 a.m. **Welcome** by Head of School John Long. Delightful student presentations!
9:45 – 11 a.m. Guided tours:
- Young Children’s & Primary Classrooms
- Classroom visits:
  - Elementary & Middle School
11:00 a.m. Departure from Post Oak

**POST OAK BOOK FAIR**
AT BARNES & NOBLE
(3003 W. Holcombe)

12:00 – 9 p.m.
- **Space Craft Stations**
  - Build your own space shuttle glider
  - Create your own wrapping paper
  - Learn about light and color as you build your own kaleidoscope
  - Decorate your own canvas bag

1:00 p.m.
- **Storytime with Librarian Cory Eckert**

3:00 p.m.
- **Storytime with Librarian Cory Eckert**

4:00 – 8 p.m.
- **Far Out Activity Stations**:
  - Meet illustrator Bill Megenhardt and watch him bring your favorite storybook character to life!
  - Learn to BUILD simple machines using gears, levers, pulleys, and LEGO kits with Building Brains.
  - Fantastic Face Painting

5:00 p.m.
- **Storytime with Librarian Cory Eckert**

5:30 – 7 p.m.
- **Middle School’s Sidewalk Café**
  Feed the whole family without leaving the event! Chick-fil-A meal deals will be sold by Middle School students just outside of Barnes & Noble. All proceeds benefit Middle School’s Microeconomy project.

6:00 p.m.
- **Storytime with Librarian Cory Eckert**

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- **Music by PONS Teacher Jeremy Grisbee**

8:00 p.m.
- Formal program ends (shopping continued)

**TUESDAY**

**GRANDPARENT’S & FRIENDS’ DAY**

9:00 – 9:15 a.m. Arrival/Breakfast
9:15 – 8:45 a.m. **Welcome** by Head of School John Long. Delightful student presentations!
9:45 – 11 a.m. Guided tours:
- Young Children’s & Primary Classrooms
- Classroom visits:
  - Elementary & Middle School
11:00 a.m. Departure from Post Oak

**THREE, TWO, ONE...**
**BLAST OFF!!!**

Blast off to a world of reading at this year’s Book Fair! Books can be fun, informative, exciting, and imaginative. Accept this mission and venture to a nearby galaxy to see where your imagination can take you!

Enjoy an out of this world experience of fun and exploration at space activity stations for every planet. Activities will include a science station, Lego-building, craft making, a special storytime with Librarian Cory Eckert, illustrations by Bill Megenhardt, and a musical performance by High School teacher Jeremy Grisbee.

The schedule of activities will help you plan your mission to Barnes & Noble. Book Fair begins at 9 a.m. on Monday, November 24, and ends at 9 p.m. Come shop earlier in the day – and then return for the stellar festivities with your children later in the afternoon. Volunteers will be on hand to assist you throughout the day.

Our faculty has selected books you can purchase for our Library and classrooms. Additionally, when you purchase any item through Barnes & Noble (books, games, puzzles, etc.) during the Book Fair (and through Friday, Nov. 28 in-store, the proceeds support our library. Shop online at bnbarnesandnoble.com and use the online code 11401205 until November Saturday, 29.

**POST OAK AND BEYOND!**

For those visitors who are attending Grandparents’ & Friends’ Day on Monday, November 24th, we encourage them to continue their Post Oak experience by going to the Book Fair after the morning Grandparents’ Day activities are over. With prior parent consent, guests visiting younger students are able to take those students with them to the Book Fair during the day.
Q. What’s your favorite thing about POHS?
A. The teachers.

Q. What’s your favorite food?
A. I really, really love pasta with tomato sauce.

Q. What are your major interests and hobbies?
A. Sociology, Psychology, swimming, and fencing.

Q. What’s your favorite Houston hangout spot?
A. Hermann Park

Q. What’s been your favorite J-term or A-term project so far?
A. Creative Writing

Q. What’s your favorite TV show?
A. Parks and Recreation

Q. What colleges do you plan on applying to?
A. Boston University, Northwestern, University of Chicago

Q. What’s your favorite color?
A. Blue

Q. Title of the last book you’ve read?
A. The Bluest Eye

Q. Out of all of the POHS trips you’ve taken, what’s been your favorite?
A. Our trip to West Texas

Q. Name someone who has had a strong impact in your life up until this point.
A. My best friend, Natalie

Q. What is your favorite song right now?
A. Ain’t No Rest for the Wicked

My Transfer

I recently transferred back to Post Oak from another private high school in Houston. I have gone to Montessori school my whole life, except for those two months at the other school. I found that I didn’t like the traditional teaching method because it makes you learn things by memorizing them, and to me, that isn’t learning. I also wasn’t feeling academically challenged and thought I was losing my hard working skills that I got from being a Montessori student my whole life. It was hard for me to admit that I had made a mistake in choosing the other school, but I knew that I needed to in order to get the education I need.

Now that I’m back at Post Oak, I have found that I like it more than I thought I would. Everyone has been super welcoming and I feel like I never left. I’m super glad that I came back, and even though I wish I had trusted my gut and gone to Post Oak in the first place, I wouldn’t give up my experience at the other school. Being at that school taught me a lot about myself that I never would have learned otherwise, but now I’m just glad I’m back.

POHS IN THE NEWS

The Bay Area Citizen wrote an interesting profile about 11th grade student’s experience at Post Oak High School and her internship at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Read the full article by visiting www.yourhoustonnews.com.

HS Junior competed for the Farish Cup in the US Ladies Polo Tournament at the Houston Polo Club last weekend, and won her finals game! Congratulations to and her team.
TEDx Youth 2014
WORLDS IMAGINED

WHEN
Saturday, November 15, 2014
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

WHERE
Episcopal High School
Benitez Chapel | 4650 Bissonnet, Bellaire, TX 77401

Episcopal High School and The Post Oak School are co-hosting the 5th annual TEDxYouth student event in Houston. Other participating schools include Cinquain Prep, Duchesne, Emery/Weiner, and Kinkaid.

This TEDxYouth conference is a worldwide event; schools across the globe will be hosting and participating in their own TEDxYouth events on the same date, in conjunction with Universal Children’s Day. Check out the link on the left menu of Post Oak’s home page for live streaming and more!

Volunteer Spotlight: Alumni Parent
Jeff McClure

The Post Oak School would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to alumni parent Jeff McClure who, along with an associate of his, is coaching middle school students on the mock trial. Jeff is a highly successful Houston trial attorney whose daughter Laura graduated from Post Oak in the 90’s. This is the third time Jeff has donated his time to coach our Middle School students. He started first when Laura was here, then two years ago for our last mock trial, and now this year. The amazing generosity of our parent body is an important part of who we are as a school and as a community, and we couldn’t do it without your help.

Thank you Jeff!

Middle School: On the Go!

Middle School has been busy! This week students and faculty have been at Blackwood Land Educational Institute, last week they had CTP4 testing, and the week before that they were in Washington, D.C.! Tune in to next week’s Post when we will feature some of the students’ accounts of their experiences.

Don’t “Like” Social Media?
Here’s what you’re missing from Middle School!

Bearkats Basketball
2014-2015 SCHEDULE

DECEMBER
5 & 6 @Memorial Lutheran Tournament
8 vs. St. Stephen’s 4:30
9 @ Emery Weiner 6:00

JANUARY
20 vs. Emery Weiner 4:30
26 vs. St. Stephen’s 4:30
29 vs. St. Stephen’s 4:30

FEBRUARY
3 vs. St. Stephen’s 4:30
10 vs. St. Stephen’s 4:30

Not included in the schedule will be 8 games in the TCAL with a chance to advance to Regionals and then State.
Parenting the Love & Logic Way®

presented by Phylis R. Tomlinson, LPC, LMFT, ATR-BC

This series of courses offers solutions for families with children from early childhood to beyond adolescence. Previous participants are encouraged to return to share experiences and reinforce skills. Caregivers are also welcome. All classes are open to the public.

LEARN SOLUTIONS FOR:

• How can I stop my children from bickering and fighting?
• How do I get my children to help with chores without an argument?
• Is there a way to discipline my toddler in public without creating a scene?
• How can I get my teenager to come home at the agreed-upon time?
• How do I get him to stop spitting food or whining at dinner?
• And many other day-to-day parenting challenges...

This parenting program is designed to give you practical skills that can be used immediately!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Phylis Tomlinson, Post Oak Counselor & Independent Facilitator of Parenting the Love & Logic Way® curriculum
phylistomlinson@gmail.com • 713-668-6558

Please send registration fees payable to Phylis Tomlinson in advance: 4010 Bluebonnet #109, Houston, TX 77025, or c/o The Post Oak School, 4600 Bissonnet, Bellaire, TX 77401

Please be advised that there is no childcare provided for the classes.
1. Lower Elementary students listen to the founder of Malayaka House, an orphanage in Uganda, explain what life is like in Africa.
2. A child in Young Children’s Community (YCC) drinks from a glass at the table.
3. A Lower Elementary student creates art in the style of Piet Mondrian.
4. An Upper Elementary student works on his model of the Solar System.
5. Middle School students hard at work on their CTP-4 examinations.
6. Physical Science demonstrations are a source of curiosity in Upper Elementary.
7. A student in Lower Elementary works with Geometry material.
8. A child in the Young Children’s Community takes a seat at the snack table with her friends.
9. A Primary child demonstrates how to pour salt for bread baking.
10. Solving division problems with the test tubes is big work in Lower Elementary.
11. An Upper Elementary student prepares her History presentation.
NOVEMBER 16–22

Wed 11/19
Coffee w/ Elementary Director: Transition to Lower Elementary

Thu 11/20
Elementary Parent/Child Night 6:30–7:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER 23–29

Mon 11/24
Grandparents’ & Friends’ Day 9:00–11:00 a.m.
Book Fair noon–9:00 p.m.
No ASEP Classes

Tue 11/25
Grandparents’ & Friends’ Day 9:00–11:00 a.m.
No ASEP Classes

Wed-Fri 11/26-28
SCHOOL CLOSED Thanksgiving Break

Check out our calendar online at www.postoakschool.org

Nanny Needed
Post Oak Family seeking full-time nanny. Our current nanny of 4-1/2 years is returning to school in January. Looking for 40-50 hours per week between hours of 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. We will work with nanny on a mutually agreeable schedule. We have a five year old girl, three year old boy, and 14 month old girl. Please call or text Evy at [redacted] or email [redacted]

NO PARKING ON EHS CAMPUS
We have had a number of complaints from Episcopal High School security regarding our use of gates and parking on their campus. Please be advised that the ONLY permitted use of the EHS campus easement is to EXIT through the Peace Circle gate, continue to Bissonnet without stopping, and make the turn to exit the property. If you need to care for your child(ren) before exiting campus, please pull around on the inside of the Peace Circle.

ABOUT THE POST
The Post appears every other Friday of the regular school year.
You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or a PDF version online.
Submit letters, articles, or photos in electronic form by 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before publication to Communications Coordinator Elisa Schmidt (elisaschmidt@postoakschool.org). If publication is on a Thursday due to school closure on Friday, then the deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the preceding Monday.

THE POST OAK SCHOOL was founded in 1963 and accredited by both the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS) 4600 Bissonnet, Bellaire, Texas 77401 • Telephone: 713-661-6688 • Fax: 713-661-4959 • www.postoakschool.org

Parents of Primary Students
Please keep your carpool signs visible during both arrival and dismissal. We want to be sure we are calling your children by name, for safety’s sake in addition to modeling courtesy for them.

Nanny Needed
Post Oak Family seeking part-time nanny for two afternoons per week and occasional weekends. Days are flexible, about 10-15 hours per week. Previous experience with a Post Oak Family is a plus. We have two girls, ages three and one. Please call Marcel at [redacted] or email [redacted]

Bearkat Spirit Days
SPORT YOUR POST OAK GEAR EVERY FRIDAY!