

In light of our Gala just being completed, I would like to use what was our school celebration event to spark a conversation about its importance in respect to National School Choice Week. NSCW was celebrated this past week and is the world's largest celebration of opportunity in education for parents and their children. In short, the week is a chance to commemorate your choice as a parent at Newberry Academy to provide a better opportunity for your children.

As the only college preparatory school in the area, your choice as a family is becoming increasingly important in our ever-changing world and I congratulate you on your choice. Through recent testing and competitions, Newberry Academy has once again demonstrated that our students are capable of the highest awards and achievements. In this spirit, I will be hosting several "town hall" style meetings in the upcoming months for parents who want to engage in meaningful discussions about the metrics and data of a Newberry Academy education. In the meantime, please allow me to begin the thoughts with this: our K-8 students AS A SCHOOL were in the upper 1/3 percentile rank nationally on the latest Stanford testing, our Upper School students' averages on the ACT and SAT were significantly higher than state and local averages, and our recent college admissions are in line with our 98% four-year college acceptance rate.

While I will talk more on this in the meetings, this data has become even more important this past week with the publishing of a prominent national study that ranked the states in terms of education. Unfortunately, South Carolina ranked 40th on the list out of the 50 states. However, the study went further in comparing a state's education level with the state's annual median household income. South Carolina was 42nd there. It was interesting to see actual data that validated your choice to have your children in a college preparatory environment and the future that it secures for them. Across the board, it was common to see in this study that the more educated a state, the higher the annual household income.

National School Choice Week gives us all the chance to trumpet the accomplishments and the well-being of our children as the school locally that is working to address this trend. Regardless of the methodologies and reporting of the study, it still addresses the point of the importance of K-12 college preparatory education. Adults have traditionally told children to value education, and this study, along with numerous others, once again has validated the idea behind this age-old adage. Add to that fact your choice as a family to put your children in Newberry Academy to give them that advantage and we truly do have something to celebrate.