



FULFILLING OUR COMMITMENT

THE CAMPAIGN FOR LAKE OCONEE ACADEMY





>> “When we started this school, we had **GRAND IDEAS** about what we could accomplish. Did I think we’d grow as quickly as we have? Probably not, but **OUR SUCCESS HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING.** We owe that success to superb students, engaged parents, great teachers, and a tremendously supportive community.”

—Dr. Otho Tucker,
Chief Executive Officer
Lake Oconee Academy



A COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS



A collage photo frame hangs on a wall in the main office of Lake Oconee Academy (LOA). Smiling back are 11 kindergarteners—LOA’s first students. When LOA opened in 2007, those 11 students didn’t attend class on the school’s beautiful 24-acre campus near the lake that inspires its name. They were in a church down the street—the only available location for a determined startup public charter school that, in less than a decade, has gone on to transform education in Greene County.

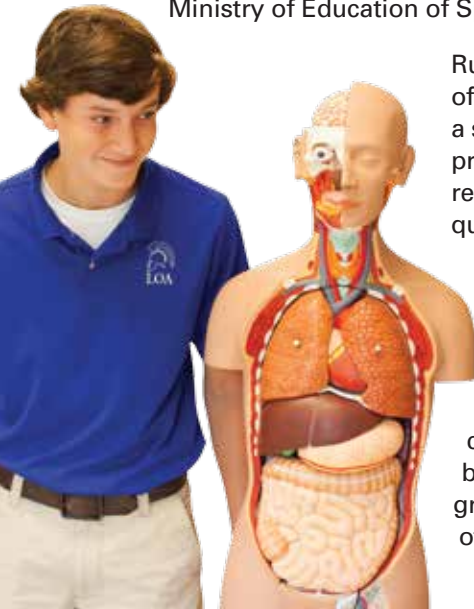
Those pioneering LOA Titans opened the doors for the over 820 students who now call this award-winning school home. LOA’s remarkable growth and its numerous recognitions provide abundant evidence of the school’s impact on our community. However, with such popularity, LOA has quickly outgrown its four permanent buildings and three large supplemental modular units. With its first senior class graduating in the spring of 2018, new facilities are critical to provide LOA’s upper level students with their own distinct space to best prepare them for college and the world beyond.

That need for facility space is the basis for a \$19 million project to add two state-of-the-art buildings to the campus that has served as LOA’s home since 2010. This construction will be funded through financing and a \$2 million capital campaign. It is the next step in fulfilling the commitment to the community, the students and their families. When fully realized, the school will deliver exceptional education to Greene County students of all ages and backgrounds. It also will complete LOA’s ascent as a leader and model for successful schools in Georgia and across the country.



A COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

Innovation is a hallmark of LOA. The school augments its traditional curriculum with forward-thinking programs and partnerships such as Project Lead the Way which emphasizes science, technology, engineering, and math; WE.org, a pilot program with a global focus and service initiative; and the International Spanish Academy a dual-diploma program from the Ministry of Education of Spain.



Rural education can sometimes be limited because of a lack of resources. However, LOA has proven that a school can create a very high-quality educational program by effectively and efficiently using the resources it has, no matter how limited. This high-quality program then draws in talented faculty and staff and additional families to the surrounding area, resulting in both an exemplary school and supportive community.

LOA's rigorous academics challenge students in the classroom while stressing the importance of citizenship, scholarship, and community involvement beyond the school's walls. LOA's curriculum and graduation requirements far exceed those of the State of Georgia. They deliberately emphasize the arts,

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

While it's understandable for LOA to be closely identified with the Lake Oconee area, LOA truly is a countywide school. More than 60 percent of LOA's students come from outside the lake area, making the student body one of the region's most diverse. Open to all students of Greene County, a state-mandated lottery is held should applications exceed capacity. A larger school with more seats would minimize

the possibility of an interested student being unable to attend LOA because of space concerns.

The Governor's Office has projected that Greene County will grow at a rate of 2.0–2.8% per year from 2015-2030 which would result in a 30% or more growth rate over 15 years. A high-quality school like LOA is crucial to serve new residents, many of whom are young families.

foreign language, and community service, areas often cut from traditional public school curriculums.

The fine arts are the heart and soul of LOA and are central to the core curriculum. Student artwork and ceramics decorate every building. Fourth graders are enrolled in classes in LOA's state-of-the-art piano lab and fifth graders are enrolled in the band program. Upon entering middle school, students may choose their own musical path or opt for other performing arts opportunities such as theatrical plays, chorus, and musical theater.



LOA has endeavored to be as competitive in the sports arena as it is in the classroom. Student-athletes now compete in varsity and junior varsity sports through the Georgia High School Association, as well as participate in middle school leagues. LOA fields teams in cross country, volleyball, softball, basketball, soccer, baseball, cheer, golf and tennis. After securing the school's first three league championships in 2016, the growing middle and high school athletics program is just beginning to make its mark.

In less than a decade, with students ranging from Pre-K to 11th grade, LOA has grown into Greene County's largest public school, yet it retains a personal touch. Even in the shadow of this growth, the culture has not wavered - there remains a real sense of community and camaraderie among students. They know each other's names, no matter the grade. Younger students aren't shy about asking older students for help, and those older students never refuse. If a student is having difficulty, faculty and staff work together to help resolve it.

» **“Our International Spanish Academy students take at least 25 PERCENT of their high school courses with Spanish as the language of instruction. When students use their Spanish skills outside of Spanish class, they BEGIN TO OWN the language.”**

—Dr. Hessie Vasconcelos, Spanish teacher

When families look to move, many seek out the best schools, and then relocate to the area with those that rank highest. With several local, state, and national awards to its credit, LOA is certainly appealing. Amenities like the lake and proximity to Atlanta without the hassles of living in the metro area make Greene County an attractive relocation destination. When families move to Greene County because of LOA, the entire community benefits. Existing businesses thrive and new ones open, bringing even more prosperity to the area. A healthy, successful school like LOA can lead the way toward an even better Greene County.





A COMMITMENT



AT LOA, education is a continuum. Elementary school prepares students for middle school, which prepares them for high school, which prepares them for post-secondary education. With a campus expansion and room to grow the upper school, that continuum won't be broken. Students could attend LOA from Pre-K through their high school graduation. That kind of consistency instills pride in one's school and in one's community. A high school with a dedicated facility ensures educational excellence at all levels.

In 2018, Lake Oconee Academy will graduate its first senior class. The valued traditions created by those students will leave behind a lasting legacy

» "We're the **TRENDSETTERS**. People look up to our school. That's one of the most interesting things about being here, **LEADING BY EXAMPLE**. That's what makes us special. We decide our culture and traditions."

—Bobby Hatfield, LOA's first graduating class



TO GROWTH

and will form the foundation of those treasured buildings for decades to come. Some alumni may even return to Greene County after college to teach at LOA and contribute in their own way to that education continuum.

Since its founding, LOA has added a grade each year, and even with the 2014 addition of modular units for current high school students, the school is far over capacity. Teachers share classrooms and many staff members lack offices. New construction would allow LOA to accommodate approximately 1,150 students, growing the upper school to approximately 400 students by 2025. The new buildings will feature wide, attractive corridors; high, wood ceilings; and plenty of windows for natural light, all echoing the atmosphere in LOA's current permanent buildings. Breakout areas would provide flexible spaces with moveable furniture for individual or group work. Currently, upper school students stretch out with their laptops on the floor of the modular units' hallways to do their work in between classes. It's a creative solution, but it is not a long-term solution.

AWARDS & POINTS OF DISTINCTION

- Most recently, LOA has been named a College Board Advanced Placement (AP®) Capstone™ school for the 2017–18 school year—one of only 21 participating high schools in Georgia. The AP Capstone™ consists of two courses—AP® Seminar and AP® Research—which will qualify students for the AP Capstone Diploma™ and signify to colleges that these students have developed the outstanding analytic, research, problem-solving and communication skills that it seeks in its applicants.
- Greene County's largest public school
- Graduation requirements include three years of Spanish and 70 hours of community service
- LOA's innovative piano lab includes 24 keyboards
- Students in the International Spanish Academy earn dual diplomas from LOA and the Ministry of Education of Spain
- Greene County's Large Business of the Year
- Named highest performing charter school by the Georgia Charter School Association
- Selected as a 2014 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education
- Ranked as one of the Best 50 Public Elementary Schools in the United States by TheBestSchools.org
- Ranked number 1 out of 1,172 elementary schools in Georgia by schooldigger.com
- Received a School Climate Star Rating of 5, the highest, from the Georgia Department of Education

A COMMITMENT

Lake Oconee Academy's picturesque campus is one of its greatest assets. Mixed with that beauty are the technological necessities that power a campus geared to excel in the 21st century. The campus is fully wireless. Each classroom is equipped with a Smart Board, and LOA's science labs, media center, and other academic facilities are among the finest in the state. The academic setting was designed with flexibility in mind which enhances the academic program. New construction will build on LOA's existing strengths and expand them in exciting ways to serve the school's upper grades. The \$19 million project includes:



NEW UPPER SCHOOL CLASSROOM BUILDING

A 20,000 sq. ft., two-story classroom building will be the academic centerpiece of the upper school. It will include:

- Learning spaces for traditional instruction as well as breakout areas;
- 17 high school classrooms, including two fully equipped science labs;
- Dedicated offices for key support staff, including the school counselor, college counselor, and high school principal;
- Administrative offices for staff, a conference room, and staff work areas; and
- Wide corridors and student lockers.

TO THE FUTURE



STUDENT ACTIVITY CENTER

The two-story, 32,000 sq. ft. Student Activity Center will provide extracurricular and dining facilities for the upper school students and common areas to benefit the entire student body. The Student Activity Center will include:

- A large commons area with seating that can be used for student dining, receptions, or as a gathering space with comfortable seating and a snack bar;
- A Gym that seats 800;
- A Full kitchen;
- Fitness center, locker rooms, and training room; and
- Ample additional space for offices and storage.

The \$2 million funds raised in this capital campaign will also provide **TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES, FLEXIBLE FURNITURE** (much of it with wheels to offer the utmost in classroom mobility), **SAFETY FEATURES** and **GREEN SPACE**. Once the new buildings are complete, classrooms in the modular units currently occupied by high school students would be converted to middle school space. That would give those students a facility of their own.





A COMMITMENT TO AMBITION

Rigorous academics opens the door for the creation of citizens who are prepared to think critically, understand history, address social issues, and create a world committed to opportunity for all.

Your participation in this capital campaign will support the ambition, mission, and passion that is Lake Oconee Academy. LOA's goal will continue to be providing its students and others with a model that will develop generations of future leaders committed to citizenship, scholarship, and community.

» CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

Technology	\$972,000
Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment	\$600,000
Green Space	\$250,000
Contingency	\$178,000
TOTAL	\$2,000,000

A COMMITMENT TO YOU

When Lake Oconee Academy's charter was approved for the 2007-08 academic year, the school made a commitment to Greene County, its families, and the state of Georgia. With a mission to increase student achievement by building a culture of high expectations for all students, LOA has succeeded beyond its wildest dreams. Yet, there is still so much more to accomplish.

LOA is a school that remembers its humble beginnings, while having a clear vision of where it wants to go. This ambitious \$19 million project will not only provide crucial facility and technological upgrades to LOA's exceptional campus, it will instill an unwavering sense of pride in our community that will last generations. Lake Oconee Academy's growth and success is Greene County's growth and success. The ripple effect could extend to communities across Georgia and perhaps nationwide.

A total of \$2 million must be raised philanthropically to provide the supplemental infrastructure needed to fully realize our vision. The greatest beneficiaries will be LOA students, whose educational experience will prepare them to achieve their fullest potential. Your partnership is essential to our success. We hope that we can count on you because so many students are counting on LOA.



Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ted Baker in black ink.

Ted Baker
Campaign Co-chair

Handwritten signature of Rick Wolfert in black ink.

Rick Wolfert
Campaign Co-chair



**Citizenship, Scholarship & Community:
Preparing students for the global society
in which we live, work, and play.**



Lake Oconee Academy

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