



# The Day School Cotillion of 2023



## A LETTER FROM OUR HEADMASTER, DR.D

### *The Announcement*

As we approach the end of the school year, we are preparing for the finale, **DaySchool for Children's Cotillion & Awards Celebration**. This year we will not have it at the Dupont Country Club which we are so accustomed to but will have it somewhere in which all of our families may still attend. In the past, Pastor Troy and Dr. Dee would foot half of the bill for the Cotillion as members of the club but the cost has grown beyond our expectations. Nevertheless, we have found another venue and while we enjoyed hosting the families at the country club, it is more important to focus on the main purpose of the Cotillion.

The information on the venue, cost, time, dress code, and RSVP list has already gone out. So make sure you go through all of the information and return it on time. Our parents are always excited and asking when we will do the Cotillion again, especially since we skipped our last planned Cotillion because of the pandemic.

For us, even though we are constantly teaching our children basic manners, such as saying please and thank you, and learning to treat others as they desire to be treated, nothing compares to the wonder and joy of seeing the children practice such higher level social graces seen during Cotillion. Many past parents and students attest to how these acquired skills have helped them stand out. We do the Cotillion about every three to four years and expect all of our families to participate, which they do. Our families look forward to this exciting time and are so proud to watch their children bud and blossom in social graces. We believe that you too are anticipating this social endeavor as well. The Cotillion will be held at the end of the school year on Saturday, June 3rd, 2023, as an awards formal celebration beginning at 11 AM and ending at 3 PM.

All the young ladies (girl students) are expected to wear white formal dresses or gowns and all the young gentlemen (boy students) are expected to wear black, white or dark formal suit attire. Parents wear formal wear as well in whatever color/style they desire. We are asking all families to put this special experience on their calendars if you have not already. This year we will do one Leader in Me Module from Sean Covey's "7 Habits of Happy Kids" and thereafter the children will begin preparation for their Cotillion at the end of April as a part of their Social Skills Classes.

### *Our Why*

The Directors of the National Association of Junior Cotillions say there is a huge demand for these kinds of social functions because most wealthy families begin very early in having their children participate in Cotillions. Their three and four-year-old daughters are learning to walk, shake hands and be comfortable in upscale environments! Their sons learn how to appropriately shake hands and hold intelligent conversations, be mutually respectful of others, generous, purposeful, and mannerly. These experiences give their children the opportunity to practice over many years until they become very confident in themselves while in a very high-end environment. However, in today's world, socially sophisticated parents who may not be classified as "wealthy" also want their kids to take part and gain these skills, recognizing that these skills do set their children apart.



The leaders within DC Cotillion Organizations say, “There is no typical Cotillion student anymore”. Furthermore, many African-American families, especially entrepreneurs, professionals, and those in leadership are becoming just as competitive as they too are making sure that their children also have these opportunities presented to them. While many outsiders aren’t even aware of such things or think of these things as antiquated or non-essential, more and more Africans and African-Americans, while growing in wealth, are quickly taking advantage of training their children in social graces. Why are parents doing this?

## *The Power of Relationships & Etiquette*

According to Emily Post Institute in 2020, they found that 78% of parents believe that the COVID-19 pandemic has made it more important to teach their children manners and etiquette. Why? In today’s competitive society, those with well-developed social skills have a tangible advantage in virtually every aspect of their lives. These skills empower individuals to feel comfortable, self-assured, and confident with themselves and others. It also allows them to communicate more effectively and to set a leadership example in college admissions interviews, high-profile positions, work opportunities, or in any social situation while promoting personal growth, confidence, and character. Social skills assist in becoming successful and are essential in building long-lasting relationships.

While academics, talent, and skill are essential to everyone’s future, similar studies conducted by Harvard University, Stanford Research Institute, and The Carnegie Foundation indicate that over 85% of one’s career success is directly connected to one’s social skills and relationships. If one does not have the proper social skills, this can inhibit the development of high-quality relations and affect your financial and social positioning. How? Others will be able to see if one is not socially astute and therefore they can offend others when they do not understand what is socially appropriate behavior. The person may just be unaware! However, that lack of awareness is not beneficial and often causes one to miss opportunities. As The DaySchool for Children students gain academic excellence, they are also acquiring social and emotional skills for overall life success.

For many who grow up amongst the wealthy, cotillions and debutante experiences serve as a rite of passage. The majority of these children live in multi-million dollar homes and spend their summers in the Hamptons or overseas in Spain, London, or France. Their parents see these experiences as a way for their children to learn social graces and gain an advantage. While the children may see them as simply another event to spend time with their friends, they do not realize the gift their parents are contributing. It will give them a profitable and constructive edge for now and in the future.

At The DaySchool for Children, we do inform our children and families, while giving them direct instruction and knowledge, wisdom, and enlightenment about why these things are significant. In the future, they may decide to further this knowledge with more training. For us, we understand the significance of guiding our children to their personal best. We understand what we are doing and the power behind laying this foundation of personal growth.

## *The Need for These Relationships*

These levels of experiences have a long and storied history in African-American culture. People from the African Diaspora have often had to carve out a space for their own rites of passage that provided a space where they would be honored and recognized for their personal achievements.

These families did these things because they had the unwavering spirit to fight with their faith and efforts for the betterment of their community. They were strategic and purposeful. They had a “fire shut up in their bones”, a passion to ensure the well-being of their legacy! Children modeled their parents and became just as passionate.

My parents came from that Era when they had to fight for an education and among a plethora of other things that should have been given as a human right. They did not take education lightly as many young people do today who fail to study and work hard to be their personal best. Families worked together to ensure that the well-being of not only their children but their neighbors’ children also. It was bred in them that they had to be twice as intelligent, twice as talented, and twice as good and they put this into their children.

### *My Heart for Our Children*

They were proud of the doors that were opened through HBCUs such as Spelman, Morehouse, Howard, Hampton, and others as well as the doors that opened through Princeton, Yale, and Harvard. I still remember the greasy chicken the church mothers use to send me in college along with the letters of encouragement I received in graduate school from the older ‘saints’ who never had the opportunity to go to college. All of those ‘rich’ kids from school were asking for more of that greasy chicken because it taste so good! When I was preparing to go study for a year internationally at Oxford University, it was the church that bought me new suitcases and stuffed my pockets with extra money to ensure my well-being. That is the power of a well-built community. We still believe in the power of effort, church, God, and community and we believe that all DaySchool Children are destined for greatness because we are a school-based community with quality parents who put forth great effort to get great results. It does still take “a village to raise a child”. We do not want our children to be ordinary. We know that they are extraordinary and excellent!

This experience is very near and dear to my heart since I was a child, myself. I remember my mother making my sister and I walk around with books on our heads and the mothers had society groups like Jack & Jill, Links, and church groups. They put on the Debutante Balls, Teas, and Cotillions but often these things separated many deserving children who could not participate because the organizations were based on “social class” groupings. My father was a great Bishop and man of God that loved people and taught me the importance of giving back generously. Whether you had little or much, I grew up watching him operate in his life’s work as he directed me in supporting children in African and Indian orphanages. In the States, I saw that a proper school environment and events like Cotillions serve as an opportunity to pour into all of our children so that they could learn appropriate social behavior. This would allow them to have the chance to learn and enjoy practicing the appropriate norms that would help them in life.

I envisioned this etiquette training as becoming a part of the DaySchool education. When our children grow up they will be confident and comfortable in any mode or class of society. Cotillions give our children practice in carrying themselves in a responsible, considerate, socially astute, and respectful manner that will become their everyday disposition; natural and organic. The best social skills programs also teach young ladies and gentlemen how to mutually respect one another and how to get along and build one another up. We also desire for them to spiritually mature so that they can edify each other to fulfill God’s purpose on the inside; both male and female.

Our Cotillion classes at The DaySchool for Children break down social fear and inhibitions at an early age. It teaches etiquette and manners, respect and consideration of the opposite sex. It teaches physical



regard, develops confidence, and establishes teamwork and cooperation. It reinforces non-verbal and verbal communication. It teaches how to listen more deeply and how to appropriately interact with the opposite gender in a structured and healthy manner, including how to be aware and confident in all social situations.

In preparing our DaySchool Children, we take our cues from top JDW Cotillion experiences that are directed by an exceptional staff of instructors. They not only teach at primary and secondary school levels but also at university, business, and corporate levels. Their objective is to contribute to their students' character by building a foundation of social awareness for future relationships and lifetime success. All of our Day School children deserve this opportunity! We look forward to seeing you there.

With Love,

*Dr. D*

*Founder & Headmaster of The DaySchool for Children*

