The Hockaday School’s Institute for Social Impact uses the power of engaged, hands-on learning to prepare our students for leadership in their communities, workplaces, and society. Anchored in Hockaday’s mission and building on our longstanding community partnerships in Dallas and beyond, the Institute allows students to engage with diverse partners, learn from civic leaders, tackle projects with community impact, and put their creative ideas into action for lasting social benefit.

The Institute for Social Impact flows directly from our School’s mission: Believing in the limitless potential of girls, Hockaday develops resilient, confident women who are educated and inspired to lead lives of purpose and impact. Hockaday delivers an extraordinary education both in and out of the classroom, and that education doesn’t end at the walls of our School. Our surrounding neighborhoods, the city of Dallas, and communities across our state and beyond are an extension of the educational experience. Hockaday has long recognized this interconnectedness and has developed many deep and mutually-beneficial community partnerships to enrich our students’ learning experiences and give back to the communities who have supported us throughout our history.

Middle School students work with robotics at Joe May elementary school in Dallas.

Upper School students created a garden and food desert at TR Hoover Center in South Dallas.

Hockaday launched the Institute for Social Impact in 2018 to organize its community engagement work for greater impact and to make a statement about the importance of this concept as part of an effective education in the 21st century. Led by Executive Director Laura Day, a recognized leader in the community service landscape in Dallas and nationally, the Institute is a distinctive approach among independent schools across the country. It allows Hockaday to extend our reach, increasing opportunities for collaboration with non-profit entities, businesses, and other Dallas-based community organizations. Through a carefully designed set of real-world projects and experiences, Hockaday students have the chance to test what they are learning in the classroom, tackle tough problems, learn to work in teams, cultivate empathy and respect for others with different backgrounds and expertise, build character and confidence, and explore their purpose in the world.
LEADING LIVES OF PURPOSE AND IMPACT
Building a social impact mindset

LOWER SCHOOL
Measure air quality at carpool to design campus environmental impact solution.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
Interview children of Habitat for Humanity House and design and construct a backyard playhouse based on their dreams.

UPPER SCHOOL
Join public, charter schools and community leaders to collectively design policy solutions for urban public schools.

"IT HAS PREPARED ME TO LEAD A LIFE OF PURPOSE AND IMPACT. IT'S MORE THAN JUST MAKING THE GRADE. NOW THAT I HAVE ALL THIS, I WANT TO HELP SHARE MY KNOWLEDGE WITH OTHERS AND MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE."
HOCKADAY ALUMNA
CLASS OF 2018

LAURA DAY
Executive Director
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MEASURED COMMUNITY IMPACT

Over the past three years, 3rd Grade Reading STARR results across our supported elementary campuses (7 elementary schools) have increased by 11 percentage points, steadily outpacing growth at the state, county and district levels.

Adoption rates have increased at Operation Kindness since the First Grade began reading to them three years ago.

Director led 4 simulations/immersions last year focused on poverty, homelessness, environmental justice, food deserts and stray animals, and students came up with solutions after the immersion/simulation.

377 UPPER SCHOOL STUDENTS signed up for recurring service projects in our community during our school day.

Second Grade has created and led a sustainable bag company connected to their theme of environment each year for the past 4 years.

MEASURED COMMUNITY IMPACT

ADVOCACY SKILLS
REAL WORLD EXPERIENCE
DESIGN SOLUTIONS
EXPLORE PURPOSE
EMPATHY

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