



The Grammar School

69 Hickory Ridge Road South

Putney, Vermont 05346

STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK 2009-10

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Welcome and Welcome Back to The Grammar School!

Our student and parent handbook provides each Grammar School family with pertinent information about the operations of the school, daily life on campus, and the rhythm of the school year. Our goal is to make the information clear and accessible, however, as you read the handbook, do not hesitate to call or e-mail if you have questions.

This is only one of our ways to establish the vital family-school partnership. This partnership begins with our mission and the emphasis on our small size and high expectations. It is continued with our frequent communications at all levels throughout the school and the many gatherings of our entire community.

As you read through the handbook, you will find that we have many traditions and celebrations and many ways in which your family can be a part of what we do. So, please join in the fun and make The Grammar School years a terrific experience for your entire family.

Sincerely,

Steve Lorenz
Head of School

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SECTION 1: EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND STRATEGIC PLAN

The Grammar School Educational Philosophy

Our History

The Grammar School, an elementary day school serving preschool through eighth grade, was founded in 1960 by a group of Putney, Vermont families. Led by Dick and Dottie Richardson and George and Kitty Shumlin, this group sought to create an educational experience for their children that was both joyful and inspiring. The program offers core academics with additional emphasis on art, music, drama, foreign language study, environmental education, reading for pleasure, physical skills development, and cross-country skiing. As in 1960, our program is based on a belief that the elementary years provide the foundation for all future success.

In 1966, the school was relocated to its present site on Hickory Ridge Road. The original design of the main building provided for a student body of 50 to 60 students. In 1995, the school purchased a building and thirty acres of property to house the 7th and 8th grades. Today, The Grammar School consists of three buildings on a 60-acre campus and provides for a student body of approximately 125 students from three states and over 20 towns.

Our Mission

As a small community of parents, students and teachers in conscious partnership, The Grammar School (TGS) integrates high expectations for achievement, creativity, self-discipline, and social responsibility. We cultivate in each student a lifelong enthusiasm for learning, a strong sense of self, and a desire to contribute constructively to society. Our program provides students with an excellent academic, artistic, athletic, and ethical foundation.

TGS Mission as amended by the TGS Board of Trustees, April 2007.

Accreditation and Memberships

The Grammar School is accredited by the State of Vermont and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., a non-governmental, nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include elementary schools through collegiate institutions offering postgraduate instruction.

The Grammar School is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), Vermont Independent School Association (VISA), Vermont Principals' Association, Educational Records Bureau (ERB), and School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS).

Governance

A board of trustees, comprised of parents and community members, governs the Grammar School. In addition, the Head of School is an ex-officio, non-voting member. There is also a non-voting faculty representative appointed by the faculty annually. The board governs in accordance with corporation by-laws adopted on November 18, 1998 and revised on May 19, 1999 and April 19, 2000.

Decisions exclusive to the trustees include:

Approval of the Mission

Appointment of, compensation for, and annual review of the Head of School

Long term planning and financial security

Establishment of policies

Decisions in partnership with the Head of School include:

Development of policies

Budget development, approval, and authorization of resource allocation
Fund raising requirements
Optimal enrollment targets

Decisions Exclusive to the Head of School include:

Admission
Staffing and employment contracts
Program and plant oversight and management
Administrative procedures and information systems management
Crisis management planning and oversight

Much of the work of the Board is accomplished by several standing committees: Executive, Development, Evaluation, Finance and Investment, Building and Grounds, Personnel, and Committee on Trustees. Each committee consists of at least three members: a chair, a representative from the staff, and a member of the larger community (including parents, friends, or alumni). Other committees may be formed at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, and may include: Technology, Marketing, Major Gifts, or Environmental Responsibility.

Organizational Structure

A copy of a chart depicting the organizational structure of the school is available in the main office.

Non Discrimination

The Grammar School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or age in the administration of its admission, educational, personnel, or other school administered programs or activities.

TGS Strategic Plan

Vision

The Grammar School nurtures intellectual curiosity, creativity, and personal growth. Students are challenged by a core academic curriculum, with outstanding programs in the visual and performing arts, music, language, environmental studies, and physical skills development. A dedicated staff inspires students to seek solutions to the complex ethical, environmental, and technological challenges they will encounter in the world.

The Grammar School is a fully enrolled and financially sustainable school situated on extensive meadows and woodlands. Scholarships and financial aid make the school accessible to students of diverse backgrounds. The Grammar School attracts a committed and caring staff that embraces the distinctive contributions of each and every person in the community. At The Grammar School, students, parents, and staff know they can make a difference—and they do.

Core Values

The Grammar School values the imagination and independent thinking of children.

The Grammar School integrates challenging academics with engagement in the arts and outdoors.

The Grammar School curriculum cultivates social and environmental awareness as well as responsibility in the broader world.

The Grammar School values outstanding teaching.

The Grammar School fosters acceptance of each person's uniqueness and strengths.

Goals and Actions

Resources

Our goal is to identify and secure the necessary resources to be a financially sustainable school that educates students from a breadth of economic backgrounds, attracts and retains a top-notch faculty and is able to support the physical needs of our program.

- Create a five-year business plan that supports the goals of this Strategic Plan and encompasses a realistic plan for financing improvements to our physical plant.
- Explore non-tuition revenue sources.
- Develop a plan to attract and retain major donors.
- Continue to educate our community regarding the finances of an independent education.
- Assess our physical plant and create an action plan for improvements to accessibility and safety including updates to the driveway and front entry of lower school.

Community

Our goal is to strengthen the conscious partnership within The Grammar School community, and to expand our relationships with broader communities.

- Review and formalize the New Family Orientation with the goal of sustained attention to new family needs throughout the year.
- Create and implement a plan to improve communication that includes expanded use of our website.
- Review and implement purposeful activities to broaden community involvement and engage the surrounding communities.

Staff

Our goal is to attract, develop, and retain a staff whose professional lives and practice parallel the best in their field.

- Create parity with other schools by improving salary and benefits, creating a salary scale consistent with similar National Association of Independent Schools and continuing to build the Sabbatical Fund.
- Maintain optimal teaching environments that include maintaining favorable student: teacher ratios, supporting teacher mentoring and review and continuing to foster a strong sense of collegiality.
- Strengthen professional development starting by identifying needs and creating a plan to support those needs.

Environmental Responsibility

Our goal is to expand our elementary environmental education curriculum and sustainable institutional practices.

- Create and implement a plan to amplify and promote environmental education across all grades.
- Create environmentally responsible protocols for both master planning and the ongoing operations of the school.

Marketing

Our goal is to create and implement an integrated marketing plan to promote our school and attract new students with special focus on grades Pre-K through 2.

Program

Our goal is to have a program that realizes our vision as stated with emphasis on problem solving, creative thinking and addressing social issues.

The key areas below will be the focus of the next five years:

- **Foreign Language**
 - Evaluate and establish goals for the Foreign Language curriculum that include alternative languages choices.
 - Establish and implement a system to monitor foreign language choice and placement level of our graduates in secondary schools.
- **Visual Arts**
 - Establish a coordinated K-8 visual arts curriculum that aligns with our vision of excellence and continues to be a point of differentiation for our school.
 - Assess the integration of visual arts within the curriculum.
 - Determine the feasibility of expanding the art teaching position to 100%.
- **Physical Skills Development**
 - Assess current Physical Skills Development curriculum and staffing needs to ensure alignment with Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities.
 - Communicate curriculum to community.
 - Conduct a needs assessment for the sports program including the feasibility of offering a spring after school sports program.
- **Community Service**
 - Map current community service curriculum.
 - Enhance the community service component of our program to include continuity across the grades.
 - Encourage developmentally appropriate progress toward student-driven community service initiatives.
- **Technology**
 - Define the role of technology in our curriculum.
 - Continue to assess and articulate the goals of the 2007 Laptop Initiative
 - Create a five-year plan to include a schedule of software and hardware needs to ensure we stay current.
- **Upper School**
 - Continue to evaluate the 6th, 7th and 8th grade program and the preparedness of our students for secondary school.

SECTION 2: DAILY LIFE AND THE SCHOOL YEAR

Daily Life

The School Day

Students arrive at school no later than 8:15, classes begin promptly at 8:20, students have a snack and recess at mid morning, and eat lunch in their homerooms at 12:00.

Families provide their children with a healthy snack, lunch, and drink. Items are available for purchase at the school store in the main office for children who forget their lunches.

Students are dismissed at 3:05 and buses leave at 3:10. Children must be picked up no later than 3:15 when supervision ends.

On half days, school is dismissed at noon, and buses leave at 12:10.

Families must notify the office of arrangements for pick-up or after-school activities that differ from their child's regular schedule. The Grammar School will not release a child to anyone for pick-up unless that person has been pre-approved by the child's parent or parents. We expect a parent to pick up his/her child or notify the office if someone else will be doing so. We will ask parents to provide names of people who can pick up their children and to inform the office in writing if there is a change. In addition, if families *do not* want their child picked up by specific people, please notify the office in writing.

Academic schedules are different for each grade; copies of the daily schedule are available from homeroom teachers.

Student Absences & Tardiness

Parents should call the office 802-387-5364 by 8:45 a.m. if their children will be absent or late for any reason. Parents should also let the office know if they plan to remove their children from school during the school day.

A typical number of absences for a generally healthy child is three to five days per year. Although a child can be protected with good nutrition and enough sleep, genuine sick days are hard to avoid. Students who miss more than five days of school are obviously at a serious disadvantage in the learning situation.

Attendance is taken each day at 8:20. If a child is not in his/her homeroom at that time, he/she will be marked absent. If a child arrives after 8:20, he/she will be marked late and **must** check in at the office prior to joining his/her class. Absences and tardiness become a part of a child's permanent record. Secondary schools will consider the number of late arrivals or absences when considering a child for admission.

Parents are responsible for contacting a child's teacher(s) to arrange for homework assignments to be sent home if the child is well enough to do school work.

See Section 4 for policies on health and medical issues.

Planned Absences and Family Trips

We ask parents to avoid the scheduling of trips and appointments during school time and to work with the school year calendar in the planning of family trips. Routine visits to the orthodontist, dentist, or doctor should be scheduled after school.

What to Wear/What Not to Wear

At The Grammar School, appropriate dress should be loose enough, opaque enough and cover enough of the body to avoid being a distraction to others or making others uncomfortable. Clothing should cover the midriff. Tops and shirts should not be too low cut or revealing, and shorts and skirts should not be too short. Boys' and girls' undergarments should be covered. "Heelies" or any form of shoes with wheels are not allowed at TGS. Hats may be worn in the cubby room and hallways only. Students should always wear weather-appropriate outer clothing, particularly in the winter. This includes hats, coats, gloves/mittens, and boots. Classroom teachers may request that children bring both indoor and outdoor shoes.

What to Bring/What Not to Bring

Snacks and Lunches

Students should bring a snack and a lunch, including something to drink, to school each day. It is particularly important that students bring water if they are staying for an extracurricular sports program. Occasionally, classes hold all-school lunches as a means to raise funds, but snacks are still needed on these days. Traditionally, the 8th grade sells pizza once a week to raise money for their spring trip. Special lunches will be announced in the Wednesday notice.

Skis and Skates

In the winter, K-8th graders are required to have cross-country ski equipment and 5th through 8th graders should also have ice skates. More information on this topic is included below in the *Winter* section of this document. There are ski rentals available at school, as well as a ski/skate sale each year.

Extra Clothing

For younger grades in particular, we ask that children keep a change of clothing in their cubbies, including undergarments and socks, etc. We have a beautiful 60-acre campus and we make use of it for play as well as for scientific exploration, which often results in children getting their clothes wet or muddy. Weather-appropriate outerwear should be worn every day. Students should also have appropriate PSD shoes in their cubbies every day.

Pets

Generally, students are not allowed to bring pets to school. Please leave your pet in the car unless the pet is part of a classroom experience and the homeroom teacher has given permission. A pet coming to school should be on a leash or in a cage when entering the building.

Cell Phones

Cell phones may not be used or out of a student's backpack during school hours, in or outside the building. If a child needs to make a call home, he/she may use school phones with the permission of the office manager or other staff member. Failure to follow this protocol may result in confiscation of the device and other consequences determined by the Head of School.

Personal Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices may be used on school buses, to and from school, but must remain in students' backpacks or cubbies during school hours. Personal electronic devices may be used on buses during school-sponsored trips at the discretion of the chaperoning teacher. Failure to follow this protocol may result in confiscation of the device and other consequences determined by the Head of School.

All-School Meeting

Students, faculty, and staff meet together once a week for approximately half an hour for announcements, presentations, plays, and celebration of the week's birthdays. Speakers, special events, and talent or variety shows also occur at all-school meetings. Parents are invited to join us at any of these meetings.

Workjobs

Starting in grade 4, all students at TGS participate in “workjobs” to help keep the school clean. Students work in mixed-age teams under teacher supervision to sweep, vacuum, dust, take out trash, or help on the playground with younger students. Workjob assignments change about every six weeks.

Composting and Recycling

Through our waste disposal vendor, TGS participates in a large-scale composting program that allows our paper, cardboard, and food waste to be composted and put to agricultural use. We recycle glass, metal, and plastic containers through our local waste management district. We continue to work to reduce the amount of material we send to the landfill, and ask for families to support this effort by using reusable food containers whenever possible.

Communication

Communication During School Hours

If a parent and child need to communicate during the day, we request that such communication goes through the office manager, who will convey messages unless circumstances warrant direct communication. Students may not use cell phones during the school day (see *What to Bring/What Not to Bring* for more information).

Wednesday Notice

Our main line of communication to parents is the Wednesday Notice, which is e-mailed to all families. All announcements of events, activities, meetings, and schedule changes are made in these notices. The Wednesday Notice is also posted on our website, www.thegrammarschool.org.

Activities or events specific to only one classroom will not appear in the Wednesday Notice. For example, if a class is going on a field trip and needs drivers, this will not be printed in the Wednesday Notice. Homeroom teachers communicate information about individual classroom activities via regular e-mails, blogs, or letters home.

Parents wishing to have information included in the Wednesday Notice should e-mail it to the office manager no later than 10 a.m. on the Monday of the week during which the information is to run.

School Cancellations/Snow Days

A phone tree is organized each year to facilitate more urgent communication. The phone tree is used on days when school is cancelled due to inclement weather. It is customary to follow the school cancellation patterns of the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union District. Radio announcements are also placed on WTSA (96.7FM) and other local radio stations, and posted on www.rovers.net.

Web site

The Grammar School’s Web site is www.thegrammarschool.org. It contains information about the school, its programs, calendars, and schedules. Please let us know if there is something we can add to this site to improve it or make it more helpful.

School Culture and Ongoing Activities

Buddy Program

A “buddy” program links students across the grades in yearlong partnerships. Buddies (mixed-age groups of two or three) meet regularly for activities including: reading together, writing funny poetry, working on art projects, or assembling donations to community organizations.

Social Skills Curriculum and Social Skills Counseling

The Grammar School seeks to inspire in our students honesty, self-discipline, and a sense of community, kindness, and respect for others. The TGS community believes that the best environment for learning and growth is one in which students are free to make clear choices with the guidance of wise and caring teachers and within a clear framework of reasonable expectations.

The socials skills curriculum is woven into the fabric of the school culture. To support students, teachers, and parents in maintaining a healthy school community, the school employs a social skills counselor who works in classrooms and with teachers, students, and families.

Community Service

Service to the larger community is a part of each classroom, and ranges from collecting donations for food shelves, to fundraising for local and global humanitarian organizations, to visiting with nearby senior citizens. Each class completes at least one community service project during the course of the year.

Student Council

The student council was formed in the spring of 2008 with two purposes: “One is to be a bridge between the students and the faculty if a student needs help with something but does not feel comfortable talking with an adult. The second purpose is to aid the faculty in making decisions that affect the student body.”

The student council is comprised of 6th-8th graders. Students apply to serve on the student council by submitting a letter to the head of school and council advisor. The council serves for the school year and meets regularly to respond to suggestions/concerns that have been raised by the student body.

Behavior and Discipline

The school plays a guiding role for our students; any behavior that is detrimental to the progress, safety, or wellbeing of the group or counterproductive to the learning environment will not be tolerated. The following steps will be taken in providing guidance to the student:

- a) minor infractions will be brought to the student’s attention by the teacher and discussed;
- b) with repeated infractions (two or three occurrences), discussion with the student will continue and a plan of corrective action will be formulated. The parents will be informed of this and consulted on the corrective plan;
- c) if there are infractions beyond this, the Head of School will become involved with the student, teacher, and parents. At this point, corrective action may include varying lengths of time spent away from school;
- d) a major violation (physical violence, abusive language, destruction of property) will bring immediate involvement of the Head of School and parents.

Term reports will reflect any steps that have been taken in dealing with students’ behavior.

Suspension and Dismissal

The school retains the right to suspend or dismiss a student. The Head of School holds these prerogatives.

Libraries

Our libraries are at the heart of the school. The main library is in the lower school, while a smaller library in the upper school contains books appropriate for upper-school readers.

Combined, we have a circulation of approximately 9,000 books and other materials.

Lower school classes have a daily reading period, called Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), for approximately one half-hour. Additionally, each class from Pre-K through 5th grade has a designated weekly or bi-weekly library period. Grades K-4 participate in the Red Clover Book Award, and 6th graders participate in the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award program. Students (and parents) are invited to use the library as frequently as they wish. No strict limits are imposed on the number of books that may be signed out, and no fines are charged for overdue books; however, there is a charge for lost or damaged books. Periodically, overdue notices are sent home. Parents play an important role in helping students keep track of library books and returning them to the library on time. Parent should contact the librarian if they are billed for a book they're certain has been returned.

Each fall the library sponsors a book fair for parents, students, and the community, and during the winter the library's birthday is celebrated. Proceeds from the book fair and birthday party benefit the library and its programs. In the spring, students in grades K-8 and their families join in the March Reading Challenge.

Homework

Homework at TGS varies in the amount assigned per class and per teacher. It is the goal of the faculty to assign meaningful homework that reinforces what is being studied and/or builds upon special projects and class work. The amount of homework increases for older grades. The faculty works to coordinate homework schedules in the upper grades to avoid overloading students on certain nights. Questions or concerns about the length, frequency, or nature of homework assignments should be addressed to the assigning teacher.

After School Sports/Extracurricular Activities

Our policy for sports is to: (1) encourage all students to participate, regardless of ability; (2) provide basic instruction; (3) nurture love of the sport and (4) have fun. Generally, each sport will have one or two after school practices per week for each season. Practices generally end at 4:30.

The Grammar School encourages all students to participate in our after school sports program. It is an opportunity for students of all ages to interact and enrich their sense of community. Different opportunities are available for different age levels; please refer to the Website or contact the After School Sports Coordinator for complete information. All after school sports at TGS depend on the good will of parent and staff volunteers.

Competitive sports encourage kids to play their best, to learn to cooperate, to become part of something greater than themselves, to win with pride and lose with dignity. At TGS, competitive sports are viewed as an important opportunity to learn and practice sportsmanship. This includes fair play, respect for opponents and coaches, courtesy to all, a striving spirit and responsibility for one's own actions. TGS expects this of all students, coaches, and parents.

Student Sales

Student sales of goods to support outside organizations must be approved by the Head of School or the Director of Development, and must follow the fundraising guidelines located in the *Policies* section of this document.

Use of the Local Culvert

The "culvert" is a local swimming hole used by TGS students, faculty, and staff since the opening of the current school building. It is located approximately 1/4 mile down Hickory Ridge Road across from the lower school playground. It is occasionally utilized by students and their teachers after school sports programs or on other hot days near the start or end of the school year.

Guidelines for swimming at the culvert are as follows:

- Whenever feasible, have more than one adult present.
- Parental permission is needed for swimming in the culvert.
- Jumping is allowed only for children in 5th grade and up with parental permission.
- Parents should indicate on the permission form if they do not give permission for their child to jump from the culvert.
- If children are jumping in, the adult/adults will position themselves to be able to monitor the top and bottom of the culvert area.

These guidelines apply to TGS students and summer camp enrollees during program time.

Secondary School Counseling

The Secondary School Counselor offers secondary school counseling to 7th and 8th graders and their parents. The Counselor meets with families in the fall or by appointment to provide information about secondary schools and the processes for visiting and applying to schools.

Academic Support Students

The Grammar School admits and educates a limited number of students with special needs. Acceptance and continued education are contingent upon the school's ability to provide accommodation and remediation within the framework of the school's resources and the students' participation in The Grammar School's educational programs.

Faculty In-Service Days

Faculty in-service days are an integral part of the professional development of our faculty and staff. These days are used for a variety of purposes including workshops or classes, curriculum or school climate planning, reading and discussion on educational topics, or visiting other schools. Faculty in-service days are generally held for two or three days prior to the beginning of the school year, for two or three one-day sessions during the school year, and for two or three days after the close of school in the spring. Faculty in-service dates are noted on the school calendar.

School Vacations and Holidays

School vacations generally include: a long weekend in late October, a winter break starting in the third week in December and returning just after the start of the New Year. TGS alternates its spring vacation schedule each year to accommodate families with connections to private or public school schedules; breaks will be held either for one week in February and one week in April, or for two weeks in March. TGS typically observes the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday in January, and Memorial Day in May. Consult the school calendar for specific dates.

Late Summer/Fall Summer Packet

In late July, the office manager will send home a packet to families which includes: a letter from the head of school, letter from the office manager, the TGS community phone book (rough draft), class list, calendar of TGS events, bus information, student information/permission form, computer/Internet agreement form, physician's form, field trip permission form, TGS volunteer opportunity form, a grandparent form, and other forms as necessary. All forms need to be filled out and returned to the office by August 15. For families with two homes, both parents will receive a packet, but only one parent will receive the permission forms.

Parent Partner Contact With New Families

New families will be contacted over the summer by a family in their child's grade. The school sets up these partnerships so that play dates can be arranged over the summer to introduce new students to classmates before the start of school. Parent partners should also be available to

answer questions new families might have about the school. New parents who have not been contacted by a parent partner should the admission office know.

Communication From the Homeroom Teacher

During the month of August, homeroom teachers send their first letter of the year to each family. This first note home includes information about start-of-school conferences, needed supplies, expectations and general information about the start of school, and an invitation to All-School Clean Up Day.

All-School Clean Up

On a Saturday toward the end of August there is an all-school clean up, when parents and faculty work on projects to ready the school for opening. In addition to the day's practical purpose, it is also a time for new and returning families to get acquainted. The day begins at 9:00am and ends with a picnic for all at noon. There is another clean-up day in the spring.

New Student/Family Orientation

All new families will be invited to an orientation prior to the start of the new school year. New students go to their classrooms while parents meet in the library with the Head of School, the Director of Admission, and other staff. Homeroom teachers introduce new students to the classroom and the school's general physical plan, and spend some time in a shared activity (e.g. games, treasure hunts, helping set up the classroom, etc.)

Start-of-School Conference

In the week prior to the opening of school, parents are asked to attend a conference with their child's homeroom teacher. The purpose of the conference is to discuss student goals and expectations for the year and to share information about the curriculum.

All-School Potluck

On a Friday evening early in the school year, The Grammar School community comes together for a potluck held in the school auditorium. Each family is asked to bring a dish and sit family style in a very relaxed atmosphere. Every family is encouraged to attend.

Curriculum Information Evenings

Curriculum information events are held on two weekday evenings in mid-September, one for grades K-4, and one for grades 5-8. The evenings are designed for parents to hear firsthand about curriculum goals for the upcoming school year. K-5 parents meet in their child's homeroom, with visits from teachers of art, French, and music. Because grades 6-8 operate on a departmentalized middle school model, those parents first meet together for a curriculum overview of each subject, then meet with their child's homeroom teacher for more specific information on field trips, fundraising, and other class plans. Detailed curriculum information for each grade is available on the school's Web site: www.thegrammarschool.org.

Fall After-School Sports Program

TGS offers cross-country running and soccer as fall sports. Cross-country running is open to students aged 6 and up, and practices or meets are held once a week. Soccer is offered for students in grades K through 8 in mixed grade teams of K-1st-2nd, 3rd and 4th, 5th and 6th, and 7th and 8th. Practices or games are held twice a week. The athletic director oversees the scheduling of games and events. Dates for practices, games, and meets are posted on the school's Web site and in the Wednesday notice. TGS also hosts a cross-country race open to area students in late October. Parents who are interested in coaching or assisting on sports teams should contact the athletic director. The fee for participation in the fall sports program is \$20.00.

All-School Hike

Once a year in the fall, the entire school completes a local hike and enjoys lunch and singing before returning to school. Parents are welcome to join in the fun.

Medieval Faire

The Medieval Faire is held every fall at TGS. The Faire is a daylong celebration, featuring medieval-themed games and activities for children, live music, and a marketplace of homemade foods. This is one of the two major fundraisers of the school year and all families, faculty, and staff are asked to participate either that day or in preparation. The parent coordinator of the event begins preparations in the spring and organizes food, games/events, and staffing during the fall. This is also a major public relations event for the school.

Long Fall Weekend

A long weekend break is held in late October. This usually starts with a parent conference day and is followed by a day or two without classes. Check the calendar for specific dates.

Fall Open House

TGS holds open houses on Saturdays in fall and spring in order to showcase our school to the greater community. The open houses are an advertised opportunity for people to visit TGS for a performance, light lunch, and afternoon event highlighting the educational aspects of the school. Current parents and students are welcome at open houses. Current families are the school's most effective ambassadors; if you know of families that might be interested in TGS, please encourage them to visit the campus for open houses or other events.

In The Winter

Winter activities begin in January and continue until mid-March.

Winter PSD

Cross-country skiing is the winter PSD program, weather providing. It is our history, our heritage, and our promotion of a healthy life skill. K-8th graders are required to have cross-country ski equipment and 5th through 8th graders should also have ice skates. There are ski rentals available at TGS, as well as a ski/skate sale in late fall. The winter PSD schedule is adjusted so that several hours a week can be spent skiing on our trails or playing games on the lower field.

Winter Off-Campus Ski Program

Starting after winter break, Tuesday afternoons are reserved for a ski program (for grades K-8) at either Okemo Mountain (alpine) or Grafton Ponds (cross-country). Both programs include a ski lesson and time for free skiing, and parents are encouraged to participate. The program runs for six or seven weeks. Complete information on the program, fees, and logistics are sent home in November.

Winter After-School Sports Program

Cross-country skiing is embedded in the history of TGS, with its roots coming from TGS families cutting trails so their kids could ski to school. To encourage an appreciation of this sport, TGS has hosted the local Bill Koch Cross Country Ski League for over 25 years. Although the venue may change, Bill Koch Ski League practices are held after school for all interested students in the area. In addition, there is a racing program for students wishing to take their skills to a higher level.

Winter Concerts

All parents are invited to the winter concerts before December vacation to enjoy holiday and solstice vocal and instrumental music. The winter concerts are held on two evenings (one each for lower and upper school students). Check the calendar for dates.

Secret Santa

About two weeks before the winter break, students, staff, and faculty select names from a hat and become a “Secret Santa” to person they select. Secret messages are given with clues to the “Secret Santa’s” identity, which is revealed with a small gift at an all school meeting just before the winter break. Guidelines will be posted in the Wednesday notice. Although we refer to this tradition as “Secret Santa,” we do not ascribe any religious characteristics to the practice.

Winter Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in January to discuss the students’ progress.

Winter Open House

See information on the Fall Open House. The winter open house is usually held in February.

Library Birthday Party

This February event is as old as TGS, and started as a way to acquire books for our library. Today, the librarian circulates a list of desired books, and those who wish may purchase a requested book for the library. Students entertain one another with literary-themed games and the event culminates with cupcakes for all.

8th Grade Evening Theatre

A theater event is held at the school to raise money for the 8th grade spring trip. It is held on a weekday evening in fall or winter and features homemade dinner and/or desserts and a play appropriate for all ages.

In The Spring

Spring activities begin in mid-March and continue to the end of the school year in June.

7th & 8th Grade Musical

All 7th and 8th graders participate in a musical production culminating with four consecutive evening performances in April or May. The production process takes about two months and requires parental support with sets, props, costumes, and lighting.

Spring All School Clean Up

The spring clean-up day is held on a Saturday morning in spring and includes lunch. The whole family is invited. See Fall Clean Up for more information.

Grandparents’/Grandfriends’ Day

On the 2nd or 3rd Friday in May, grandparents are invited to the school to attend morning classes and events with their grandchildren. Those children who don’t have local or available grandparents are encouraged to bring a “grandfriend.” Grandparents and grandfriends are entertained in the classrooms, at recess, at a coffee hosted by the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Head of School, and at an assembly of student music and theatre performances.

Spring Fundraising Event

The annual spring fundraiser is vital to completing the annual fundraising expectations of the budget. Event venues change from year to year; past events have included auctions, author evenings, and celebrity events. The event usually takes place on a Friday or Saturday evening in

mid-May and is for adults. The event is organized and planned by parent volunteers in coordination with the development office. Planning begins in the winter, and all parents are asked to participate in some way.

Spring Concerts

K-6th graders present a spring concert of vocal and instrumental music at the end of May.

7th & 8th Grade Trips

Traditionally 7th and 8th grades take weeklong trips away from school during April or May of each year. Specific details are available from the homeroom teacher.

Last Day of School/Field Day

On the last day of school, school is dismissed at noon. The morning's activities include a "field day" of all-school races, water balloon contests, and other celebratory games. As with all our events, parents are invited to come and watch the fun.

Graduation

Graduation takes place in the evening of the last day of school. It is a major event for the school and usually lasts for a couple of hours. After an opening reception, each student is honored in a singular speech given by the faculty or staff member of his or her choosing and each graduate gives his or her own presentation. Traditionally, these have included musical performances, poetry readings, or speeches. A retrospective of artwork by each of the graduates decorates the halls. The whole school is invited to this event.

In The Summer

Summer Camp

The Grammar School hosts a four-week camp each summer. The camps are open to the public as well as to TGS students. The program features two two-week sessions focused on arts, sciences, and athletics. The camps provide a summer opportunity to work with professional artists and educators. Fun, learning, and creativity are emphasized in each of the components. Students may pick courses to create a mixed day that matches their interests. Information about the summer camps is mailed out in early April and is available on the website.

Summer Information Packet

See *Late Summer/Early Fall* for more information.

Summer Hours

Staff works an abbreviated schedule during the summer. Call the office for specific hours.

SECTION 3: PARENTS AS PARTNERS

General Parent Support

At TGS, we depend on volunteerism and parent participation. The Grammar School is able to offer a program with extra life and vitality because of our parents' interest in, and support of, our educational goals. Coaching sports, chaperoning field trips, assisting in the ski programs, helping in the library, offering presentations, working on special classroom projects, creating costumes for plays, and coordinating fundraising events are just a few of the ways parents contribute to their children's education each year. Because parents are so vital to the success of their children's education, parental involvement in the school is crucial.

Volunteer Opportunities

Parent Committees

Currently, there is no formal Parent Association at TGS, but traditionally each year a parent or group of parents volunteers to coordinate and undertake tasks necessary to fulfilling fundraising needs, providing support for open houses and other small promotional events, and providing food for social events, such as concerts. There are a number of committees in which parents can participate including, but not limited to: Building and Grounds; Medieval Faire; Spring Fundraising Event. A list is circulated to parents in the July summer information packet asking them to signify their interest in serving on one or more committees.

Class Parents

Each class has at least one designated parent to whom the teacher can turn for extra help. This can mean coordinating drivers for field trips, helping the teacher on all-school clean up days, organizing classroom fundraisers, and generally being a liaison between the classroom and the school community at large. At the end of each school year, the Director of Admission seeks out parents to serve as class parents for the following year.

Coaching Sports

In the fall, TGS fields soccer teams at the 3rd/4th, 5th/6th and 7th/8th grade levels, and offers a K-1st-2nd soccer activity. In addition, TGS has a cross-country running team for ages 6 and up. Parents interested in coaching or assisting should contact the athletic director or after-school sports coordinator. The winter off-campus ski program depends on parent chaperones for its success. Currently, TGS does not have a spring sports program but parents often organize after-school games and other sporting activities.

Class Trips

Class trips are an integral part of the curriculum. Generally parents are called upon to assist with transportation needs. Throughout the year, students in all grades can expect to take two full-day field trips connected with classroom studies. In addition, local trips (i.e. to ponds and streams, to libraries, to historic or work sites) may be scheduled as appropriate, depending on the balance between curricular needs of the class and respect for other scheduled subjects.

Overnight trips may be a part of the students' curriculum. Overnight and longer trips are generally funded through activity fees that are delineated on tuition bills. Major trips, like those to Quebec or Washington, D.C. are planned well in advance.

Trips that take place during school days contribute to curriculum goals and are previewed, planned, and led by the teacher. Class trips for pleasure usually occur at the close of the year.

Chaperoning

We ask parents who accept the responsibility of chaperoning a trip to review and follow the guidelines below for assisting on field trips.

- 1) Parents must abstain from using any alcohol or drugs prior to or during the trip.
- 2) Parents must not smoke in the car with children in it.
- 3) Parents who help us by driving students must carry a minimum of \$300,000 per accident liability coverage and are required to provide a copy to the Office Manager. Parents who are driving students should also provide the Office Manager with a copy of their current driver's license. Should there be an accident while driving children on a school trip in their own automobile, the parent's auto insurance would provide primary coverage and the school's insurance secondary coverage.
- 4) All children must wear a seat belt.
- 5) Parents should feel free to maintain a reasonable noise level in their vehicles.
- 6) Children should be within sight and sound of an adult at all times.
- 7) Parents should expect courteous behavior from children at all time, and should feel comfortable addressing any child's behavior deemed inappropriate.
- 8) Once back at school, parents should keep their group together until they can release students to the classroom teacher. Children are expected to help clean up the vehicle in which they ride.
- 9) Parents are asked not to deviate from the planned transportation route or program.
- 10) Please make other arrangements for very young siblings.
- 11) Parents share the full responsibility of caring for children while on field trips.
- 12) Parents shall use discretion if allowing children to watch a video in their vehicles.

Reimbursement of Approved Expenses

If a parent has incurred an expense on behalf of a school event and that expense was pre-approved, he or she must fill out a reimbursement form and attach the receipt(s) in order to be reimbursed for the expense. Forms are available in the main office.

Substituting

Each year, TGS seeks parents and other community members as classroom substitutes in case a teacher needs to miss all or part of a school day. Parents who are interested should call the office for details. Those interested in substituting will be required to provide a resume, complete a criminal check process, and interview with the Head of School. Substitutes must fill out a substitute form (available in the main office) in order to be paid for their time.

Supervision of Children at After School Events

- a) Parents need to arrange transportation for off-campus after school events, including sports events. The school bus is not available for after school events.
- b) Parents are responsible for their children at **ALL** after school events.

- c) Parents are expected to keep their children under the direct supervision of an adult from the time they arrive to the time they leave.
- d) Parents who send their children to an event but do not themselves attend must arrange for the supervision of their children by another adult.
- e) At an after school function, Grammar School staff holds no responsibility for the students. Parents accompanying the students are in charge at all times.
- f) There will be no classroom or computer use during after school events.

Communication and Concerns

It is not unusual for a situation to arise where a parent needs to ask a question, clarify an issue, or raise a concern. For student- and class-related issues, the best strategy is to talk with the teacher. Respectful, direct, and honest communication is always best. At times this may present an awkward situation and if advice is needed, the Assistant Head of School and the Upper School Coordinator can help to handle these concerns. Finally, the Head of School is available if these avenues have been exhausted.

Questions and concerns on school policy can be directed to the appropriate office: Admission, Business, Development and Alumni Relations, or Main Office. Other policy questions can be directed to the Head of School.

Fundraisers and Annual Fund

Spring and Fall Fundraisers

The Grammar School holds two major fundraisers each year, one in the fall, and one in the spring. More information on these events, the Medieval Faire, and the Spring Fundraising Event, is included in Section 2.

The Annual Fund

The Grammar School is an independent school. This means that the School itself is solely responsible for its own governance. As an independent school, The Grammar School is able to accept the most qualified students, hire the most capable faculty members, and determine its own curriculum. Small class size and individual attention are part of the “independent school experience” that The Grammar School students enjoy. However, tuition alone is simply not enough to sustain the quality of a The Grammar School education. Like all other independent schools, The Grammar School relies on tuition, Annual Fund contributions, income from endowment, and other special fundraising projects to meet its operating costs. The Annual Fund is vital to the School’s financial health.

The Grammar School’s Annual Fund consists of unrestricted contributions given on a yearly basis by parents, alumni, grandparents, parents of alumni, faculty and staff, and other friends to help the School provide its students with a superior education. Annual Giving meets needs in the operating budget each year, sustaining everything that goes on at The Grammar School. The largest areas supported by the Annual Fund are faculty and staff salaries, benefits and professional development; curriculum support and advancement; financial aid; technology; and maintenance of grounds and facilities.

More information about the Annual Fund, including ways to give, can be found on our website or by contacting the Development Office.

SECTION 4: HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Absences and Illnesses

Children who are ill should not be in school. Parents should inform the office between 8:30 and 9:00 if they are keeping a child home. Our general guidelines regarding whether to keep a child home or send him/her to school are:

DO NOT send a child to school if:

- a) he or she has a fever (children must be fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) prior to returning to school);
- b) he or she has vomited the previous night;
- c) he or she has nits or lice.

Consider keeping a child home if:

- a) he or she is coming down with a cold;
- b) he or she is complaining of nausea, diarrhea, or abdominal pain.

The Grammar School follows Vermont Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines and recommendations regarding disease outbreaks.

Special Medical Needs and Allergies

If a child has special medical needs, parents must provide the school with full details and instructions regarding these needs and may be requested to accompany the child on any field trips. If a child has an allergy, we need to know what he/she is allergic to, what kind of reaction to expect, and how the reaction should be treated. Parents are responsible for providing the school with a clearly labeled kit with the necessary medications and supplies to keep with the first aid supplies.

Medication

We discourage children from bringing medications to school. If, however, a child is on a medication schedule that requires administration during the day, the medication should be brought to the main office with a note from the parents regarding the time and amount to be given. **State law requires a written note to the school from the prescribing physician before the medication can be given at school.** We do ask parents, if at all possible, to apply salves and give medications before and after school.

Over the counter (OTC) medications (acetaminophen, ibuprofen, bismuth subsalicylate, and diphenhydramine) are available in the main office at school. If a child is given any of these medications, the person administering the medication will record it in the office. OTC drugs should not be sent to school with children.

Medical Records and Exams

Medical forms are sent with the other materials during the summer and should be returned completed to the office by September 1. All newly enrolled students must have a complete physical examination including documentation of immunizations (completed Student Health Report form). Returning students do not need to have a complete physical examination, but need to have a Physician's Report of Health Form completed and signed by their physician each year.

A complete immunization record for each student must be on file at The Grammar School. A child should be immunized appropriately for his/her age in accordance with the Vermont Department of Health's recommended schedule for Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (whooping cough), Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German measles), Hepatitis B, and Varicella. **State law requires that all students receive a second MMR booster (measles, mumps and rubella)**

before beginning kindergarten in September. This does not necessarily require a physical exam, but should be noted on the physician's form and must be received in the office before students begin school. No child shall be required to be immunized if documentation is provided that immunization is medically contraindicated, or that parents object for religious or other reasons.

All students in 7th and 8th grade must have received at least their initial dose in a series of three Hepatitis B vaccinations prior to the beginning of the school year.

Head Lice – No Nit Rule

The school has a “no nit” policy that requires careful comb out with a special comb and prohibits students from returning until a no-nit condition is obtained. **Parents are expected to check for head lice prior to the opening of school in September.** There is also an all-school check during school hours at the beginning of the school year. Parents need to inform the school of head lice in the family and are responsible for eradicating the problem before bringing their child back to school. It is the parents' responsibility to be vigilant throughout the year in identifying and treating head lice. During a period when head lice are prevalent, the teachers will check all children as often as seems necessary. Children with evidence of lice will be sent home for the necessary treatment. Parents should inform the school if they discover lice on their children, so that other children in the class can be checked.

Permission-to-Treat Forms

Parents must complete, sign, and return the Student Information and Permission-to-Treat forms to the office. These forms are copied and held at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital. In case a parent cannot be reached in an emergency, the hospital is allowed to treat the child.

Field Trip Consent Forms

Field trip consent forms give permission for children to participate in field trips and for the teacher to make any necessary medical decisions regarding children's wellbeing while on the trip. Consent forms are taken with the class on all field trips. Children may not participate in field trips until the main office receives the consent form.

Emergency Care During the School Day

In the event that a child becomes ill or is injured, faculty/staff will care for the student, and the nurse consultant may be called. Parents are called if the child is ill or injured and needs either to go home or to see a physician. In the event of an injury or illness requiring more than the usual first aid treatment, 911 will be called and parents notified immediately. If necessary, a child may be transported to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.

SECTION 5: SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Drop Off and Pick Up Times

Students should arrive at school no later than 8:15 a.m. Buses arrive at 8:15 a.m. The school day commences at 8:20 a.m. Classes are held until 3:00 p.m. and students are dismissed at 3:05 p.m. Bus departure time is at 3:10 p.m.

Use of the Driveways/Parking Areas

The school driveway speed limit is **5 M.P.H., 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.** Please pay attention to both sides of the driveway as children cross throughout the day. Please do not assume that children will look both ways before they cross, particularly since play areas border and sometimes include the driveways and parking lots.

To make it possible for teachers on duty to monitor children going to and from cars and to avoid gridlock, please note the following patterns of driveway use, which will ensure the best oversight of the area:

- At the Main Building, please use the parking lot overlooking the field for long term parking, i.e. when getting out of the car. For drop-off and pick-up, please use the spaces to the left of the stairs.
- At the Upper School Building, all cars entering the driveway should keep to the right, circling counterclockwise to discharge students at the front of the building. Parking is provided to the right of the building. Cars should be backed into the spaces, in order to avoid backing into the driveway when leaving.
- Parking is NOT ALLOWED on Hickory Ridge Road for any reason.

Riding the Bus

The School offers bus service to and from the Newfane/Brattleboro area and the Walpole/Saxtons River area. At the beginning of each year, several central stops are established along a main line route. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure the children are delivered to these places promptly and picked up at the end of the day. Remember, no one may pass a school bus which has its red lights flashing, whether at the bus stop or in the school parking lot.

In the event of a mechanical failure of one of the buses, the school tries to arrange for another school bus. In the event of a breakdown, parents are called to volunteer for driving and car-pooling.

There are several options for paying for the use of the bus on an occasional basis. Students who ride infrequently should purchase bus tickets in the office on the day of the ride. Students who ride on an infrequent but regular basis should purchase a book of tickets in the office. Bus fees will be prorated only for students riding a minimum of half time on the bus through the year. The Business Office will bill parents.

Bus Riding Rules

Traveling to and from school on the bus should be a positive and pleasant extension of the school day. The best way to prevent problems is to set expectations. We ask parents to take the time to review the following basic rules with their children before the first day of school.

1. State law requires that each rider sit in one seat facing forward for the duration of the ride. Children may not change places while the bus is in motion. Children must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop, and then get off promptly.

2. Students may not put hands or arms or any other part of their body out of the windows.
3. Children must use a normal speaking voice on the bus. Shouting, yelling, or loud outbursts are disturbing to the driver.
4. Poking, grabbing, shoving, hitting, or throwing objects is not acceptable.
5. Children may not drink, eat, or chew gum while on the bus.
6. Vandalism will not be tolerated.
7. Permission to transport any animal or exceptional items that could be harmful or distracting must be obtained from the driver.
8. Finally, if the driver asks for a certain activity to stop, it must stop promptly, without debate or argument.

Buses are equipped to carry skis, poles, and ski equipment.

The drivers have the responsibility of driving safely. Ultimately, it is the driver who knows when the safety threshold of noise or activity is crossed. Should a child's behavior endanger anyone's safety, the driver or the Director of Transportation will talk with the student and notify parents of the situation. The Director of Transportation may ask a student not to ride the bus for a period of time. If a rider repeatedly breaks the bus riding rules, the Director of Transportation may discontinue bus service to that child. In these circumstances the bus fee is not refundable.

If a student who already rides a bus daily wants to ride on the other bus, he or she must stop by the office for a ticket so the bus driver and the office will know who is on the bus and where they are going. Since this student has already paid for bus service, there is no additional fee.

The Director of Transportation and the Head of School, under the guidelines of the State of Vermont and those of the school, make decisions regarding the routes of the buses.

The Grammar School bus drivers will continue to let older riders (grades 4-8) off the bus at an alternate stop based on the child's request. For younger riders (K-3), parents should send a note to the driver designating an alternate drop off for that afternoon. Children in Kindergarten through grade 3 will not be let off the bus unless there is a designated adult there waiting. They will be returned to school if there is no one to receive them at the bus stop. In the event no one is there to receive a younger rider, the child will stay on the bus until parents are contacted and arrangements are made. Parents should inform the homeroom teacher if a child who regularly rides the bus will be picked up at school. The teacher will inform the bus driver and main office.

Parents of children who miss the bus will be contacted to pick up their children.

Drivers have cell phones for emergencies only.

SECTION 6: STUDENT EVALUATION

Conferences and Written Reports

Communication about student progress and learning is a critical aspect of the school/family partnership. Conferences are scheduled four times a year: before the start of school, midway through the fall, in late January, and in the spring. Parents of K-5th grade students receive a conference checklist, while 6th - 8th graders receive mid-term checklists for each course. Additional conferences may be scheduled if necessary.

Written reports are mailed to parents at the close of the fall term in December and at the end of the school year in June. Students in K-5th grade receive a combination of written comments and checklists indicating a child's level of competence based on what is expected at grade level at that point in the year. Students in grades 6th-8th receive achievement and effort marks in addition to written comments for each course.

Testing

Students in grades 5 through 7 take the Educational Records Bureau Tests (ERBs) over a one-week period in the spring.

Students who plan to enter an independent secondary school should plan to take the SSAT in the fall of their eighth grade year. Students may take the SSAT in the spring of their 7th grade year to become familiar with the testing experience. More information is available from the Secondary School Counselor.

Student Records

Student records are kept in the office and maintained by the Office Manager. These records are available to teachers. When a student transfers to another school during the elementary years, the complete educational records follow the student. Parents may request a photocopy of records at the cost of photocopying. All tuition payments must be paid in full before transcripts are released to another school.

Parents of students applying to independent secondary schools bring each school's materials to the TGS office. The Office Manager will distribute forms and collect teacher recommendations and send all materials, including transcripts, directly to the school. In this way we hope to ensure that all materials arrive together and in a timely manner. The office will also be better able to track the dates when materials are sent. There will be a \$5 fee per school to cover postage and copying. Payment should accompany each request.

It is the policy of the school to retain a copy of the student record sheet for each student who has attended The Grammar School. This student record sheet shows years of attendance, a pass/fail indication of completion of the academic program through 5th grade, and a record of achievement and effort marks for 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. The student record sheet contains scores of all tests administered at TGS. In addition to the student record sheet, the school retains a copy of the last year's set of written reports for one year after a student has left. The school will provide information to parents and/or legal guardians regarding attendance and achievement during and following the dates of enrollment. We will not deny information to one parent on the request of the other.

SECTION 7: SAFETY AND SECURITY

Crisis Management

TGS maintains a Crisis Management Team to plan for and respond to any unusual circumstances affecting the school community.

Members of the Crisis Management Team are: the Head of School, the Business Manager, the Plant Manager, the Office Manager, and additional members of the administrative staff. In the absence of the Head of School, the Assistant Head would serve on the Team.

In the event of an accident or incident of great damage to the school property and/or population, the members of the Crisis Management Team would coordinate their actions to:

- Understand what happened.
- Decide on the procedures to follow in dealing with the situation.
- Assign areas of responsibility, respond to the members of the community, and keep staff informed.
- Make plans for the resumption of normal school schedule.

Emergency Plans

The emergency plans, which have been developed by the TGS Crisis Management Team, are outlined below:

- **FIRE:** The fire alarm will sound *only in the event of a fire or a fire drill*. Established fire drill procedure will be followed. Fire drills are held on a monthly basis.
- **EVACUATION:** A member of the Crisis Management Team will circulate promptly to each classroom. The fire alarm will NOT sound, but teachers will immediately follow the same procedure as for a fire drill, reporting attendance upon assembly in the parking area. Further directions will be given at that time.
 - In the event of a bomb threat, we will walk to Putney Central School. Otherwise, depending on the emergency prompting the evacuation, we will board the buses and evacuate to the Arts Center at Landmark College, to our designated emergency evacuation center at Bellows Falls Union High School, or another safe area as directed by emergency personnel. Upon arrival at the safe area, we will call the local emergency radio stations and, if possible, run the phone tree.
 - Vermont Yankee and the Vermont State Office of Emergency Preparedness have worked with schools to develop response plans for many situations. All schools will be notified verbally of any widespread emergency. We also have a Public Notification System radio in the office which monitors weather alerts as well as other emergency alerts.
 - In the event of an area-wide evacuation emergency, our primary relocation center is the Bellows Falls Union High School. Weather conditions, however, could determine whether an alternate location would be safer and we would transport there. Parents will need to listen to the regular emergency radio stations to determine to which relocation center our students have been evacuated. It will then be up to individual families to arrange to pick up children at the designated relocation center. Parents must check children out from the relocation center with the TGS faculty member in charge of our students.

- **SECURE-IN-PLACE/LOCK DOWN:** In the event of a lock down alert, a member of the Crisis Management Team will circulate to each classroom with directions for either a classroom secure-in-place/lock down or an all-school secure-in-place/lock down. All external doors will be locked. One lock-down drill is performed per school year by the crisis management team. Access to the school may be limited or denied during the time of a lockdown or lockdown drill.
 - For a classroom secure-in-place/lock down, teachers will lock their classroom door, close and lock all windows and close shades, turn off lights, stay away from windows and await further information from a Crisis Management Team member.
 - For an all-school lock down, teachers will lock all windows and close shades. Classes will be directed to a central area appropriate to the emergency. Further directions will be forthcoming from a member of the Crisis Management Team.

Child Abuse/Neglect

As required by State law, we are mandated to report any suspected or reported neglect or abuse.

Child Release Policy

The Grammar School will not release a child to anyone for pick-up unless that person has been pre-approved by the child's parent or parents. We expect a parent to pick up his/her child or notify the office if someone else will be doing so. We will ask parents to provide names of people who can pick up their children and to inform the office in writing if there is a change. In addition, if families *do not* want their child picked up by specific people, please notify the office in writing.

Parking/Speed Limit

The speed limit in the parking lot and driveways is 5 M.P.H., 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

Playground Safety

Faculty/staff monitor all playground activity.

Water Testing

The state and the EPA require us to test our water regularly for lead, copper, bacteria, nitrates, volatile organic compounds, and inorganic and synthetic compounds. Should there be a problem and test results need to be rechecked, signs are posted at the faucets until a second set of test results are returned. This is a useful cautionary procedure and should not cause alarm. The school has always been in compliance with state and federal regulations.

Asbestos Plan

Material containing asbestos used to insulate the elbows of hot water pipes was removed in August of 1989. Since August of 1989, The Grammar School building has been asbestos-free. An asbestos management plan is on file and available for inspection in the Plant Manager's office as required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act under [40 CFR 763.93 (g) (4)].

SECTION 8: SCHOOL POLICIES

Hazing

Purpose

Hazing and activities that involve hazing are abusive and illegal behaviors that harm victims and negatively impact the school environment by creating an atmosphere of fear, distrust, and mean-spiritedness. The Grammar School is committed to providing a safe and orderly environment that promotes respect, civility, and dignity for all students. It is the purpose of this policy to create and preserve an educational environment free from any type of hazing or activities that involve hazing.

Policy

The Grammar School strictly prohibits students from engaging individually or collectively in any form of hazing or related activity on school property, or in conjunction with any school activity, or involving any person associated with the school, regardless of where it occurs. Any student who participates in hazing or related activities, or conspires to engage in hazing will face immediate disciplinary action.

Definitions

1. "Hazing" means any action taken or situation created that causes, or is reasonably likely to cause, harassment, bodily danger or physical harm, serious mental or emotional harm, extreme embarrassment or ridicule, or personal degradation or loss of dignity to any student or other person associated with The Grammar School. Excluded from this definition of hazing is the ordinary physical activity of customary athletic events, intramural activities, or other similar student contests or competitions.

2. Related activity means activity associated with the above definition of "hazing."

3. "Conspire to engage in hazing" means to plan, encourage, or fail to report hazing and related activities prohibited by this policy.

Prohibited Conduct

Activities that may be construed as hazing under this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Any act that involves physical aggression that causes or is reasonably likely to cause bodily danger or physical harm to an individual;

(b) Any forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of an individual;

(c) Any activity that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, or emotional harm, or any other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

Consent No Defense

Consent is no defense to hazing: i.e., the implied or expressed consent of a person or persons to hazing shall not be a defense to discipline under this policy.

Reporting Requirement

1. School personnel who become aware of hazing or related activities, or who reasonably believe such may have occurred, shall report such incident(s) immediately to the Head of School

2. Students who become aware of hazing or related activities, or who reasonably believe such may have occurred, shall report such incident(s) immediately to a member of the

faculty/staff or the Head of School. If reported to a faculty/staff member, that member shall, in turn, report such incident(s) to The Head of School.

Disciplinary Action

Any disciplinary action taken against a student due to the student's involvement in a hazing or related activity shall be at the discretion of the Head of School. Disciplinary action can include expulsion of the student from The Grammar School.

Policy Dissemination

1. This policy shall be posted in a prominent place in each of The Grammar School's two buildings. The policy shall also be published in student, parent, and employee handbooks.

2. The Head of School, Faculty, the Athletic Director and all athletic coaches shall each inform his/her students about this policy at the beginning of each school year and prior to the beginning of each team or group's activities for the year.

Adopted by the Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, TGS, July 14, 2001

Harassment

It is the policy of The Grammar School to maintain a working and learning atmosphere free from unlawful harassment. Harassment violates one's basic civil rights and undermines the integrity of the school environment. It is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by both federal and state laws. Harassment of any kind is unacceptable behavior and hurts all of us in the TGS community. It is the policy of TGS to oppose and prohibit without qualification all unlawful harassment.

Therefore, TGS will investigate all complaints of unlawful harassment and take appropriate action including discipline against any member of the TGS community who is found to have violated this policy.

Definition:

Unlawful Harassment: verbal or physical conduct based on disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation, creating an intimidating environment which interferes with a person's job performance.

Sexual Harassment: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other verbal or physical conduct the submission to which is made a term of a person's position; or the submission or rejection is a component of the basis for decisions affecting that person; or conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with one's performance or creates a hostile work environment.

Reporting:

Any faculty or staff who observes or otherwise witnesses an act of unlawful harassment or to whom harassment is reported must take immediate and appropriate action to stop the harassment and prevent its reoccurrence. The faculty or staff must report the details of the incident to the Head of School.

The faculty or staff who has responded to an act of harassment must make a report of the incident to the Head of School at the earliest opportunity. The Head of School will then decide whether the action taken was appropriate and in the best interest of the student and/or TGS. The Head of School may also decide whether there are any other actions that need to be taken at that time.

Any student, faculty, or staff who believes that he or she has been the object of unlawful harassment as defined in this policy or who believes that corrective action taken against a report of harassment was ineffective, may bring that complaint to the attention of The Head of School or his designee.

Investigative procedures:

a. Informal Method

Since TGS takes the possibility of harassment seriously, the Head of School or his designee shall immediately investigate any complaint of unlawful harassment. However, the Head of School may determine that it is possible to resolve the complaint more effectively through a voluntary mediation session between the accused and the accuser. The parent(s) of the student(s) involved must be notified, if possible, prior to the mediation or as soon as practical thereafter. If the accused and the accuser both believe that a resolution has been achieved, no further action need to be taken. If the incident involves two (or more) students, the result of the mediation shall not be placed in either student's file.

b. Formal Investigation

The Head of School or his designee shall conduct any harassment investigation. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the accused, the accuser, and any individual who may have first hand knowledge of the alleged incident or other circumstances germane to the investigation.

Once the Head of School or his designee has fully investigated all relevant circumstances, the investigator will produce a written finding of facts and conclusion. The findings will include all of the relevant evidence used to conclude the investigation, the issues defined by the investigator, and a determination of the allegations. The findings will also include any resolution deemed to be fair and just by the Head of School.

Confidentiality:

The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable. Those charged with the investigation and anyone trusted with knowledge of the allegations will attempt to keep the details of the complaint and the information revealed during the investigation confidential. However, confidentiality is an ideal that cannot be guaranteed because of the number of interviews that may be required. TGS recognizes that both the accused and the accuser have a vested interest in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related material and will make every practicable effort, consistent with its legal obligation, to investigate in a confidential manner.

Final report:

The Head of School will make a written report of the incident and its resolution. The report will include a summary of the allegation, the witness's statements, and a conclusion. The report will be reviewed, signed, and acknowledged, by both the accuser and the accused.

Results of policy violation:

A person who is determined to have violated this policy may be subject to actions including, but not limited to: a warning, exclusion, suspension, expulsion, or any other remedial action (such as counseling, education or training) deemed appropriate.

The results of the investigation shall be maintained in the files of the Head of School.

PRIVACY REQUIREMENT

It is a separate and distinct violation of this policy for any member of the TGS community to either retaliate in any way against any person who reports alleged harassment against any person who testifies or assists an investigation or who knowingly compromises the confidential nature of the investigation by disregarding the need for privacy. Retaliation includes but is not limited

to any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment and may be redressed through application of the same reporting, investigation, and enforcement procedures as described for a claim of harassment.

False reporting

A person who knowingly makes a false report of harassment may be subject to the same action that TGS may take against any other individual who violates this policy. A false report is one that is made in bad faith or with actual malice. The filing of a valid complaint will not reflect upon the status, grades, or work assignment of the complaining party.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees - 1/17/99

Computer/Internet Use

The Grammar School is pleased to offer students of our school access to the Internet. To gain access to the Internet, all students must obtain parental permission and must sign and return a form agreeing to the terms of the acceptable use policy. These forms are sent home in the summer packet. Please see the form for more information.

Tobacco, Drugs, Alcohol

TGS is a tobacco, drug, and alcohol free school.

Philosophy

All students have a right to receive an appropriate education in an alcohol and drug free environment. The school encourages educational programs that provide every student with an understanding of the physical, psychological, social, and legal dangers associated with drug or alcohol abuse.

Policy

It is the policy of TGS that no student shall knowingly possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal drug, regulated substance, or alcohol on any school property, or at any school-sponsored activity away from or within the school. "Drug" means any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance as defined by state or federal regulation or statute.

Consequences

The Head of School in consultation with faculty will determine consequences for first offense. Subsequent offenses are grounds for suspension or expulsion.

Weapons

No student or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in a school location or at a school-sponsored function.

The school will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public who violates this policy.

Definition: A "weapon" is defined as any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, air guns, pellet guns, BB guns, all knives, blades, clubs, explosives or explosive devices, and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon.

Exceptions:

- 1) Firearms stored in a locked vehicle in accordance with Vermont law.

- 2) Instructional personnel using tools in the course of their job.

Consequences

The Head of School in consultation with faculty will determine consequences for first offense. Subsequent offenses are grounds for suspension or expulsion.

We look for parent support to enforce this policy.

Fundraising

The Grammar School is a community of students, parents, teachers, and staff “in conscious partnership.” Fundraising is a critical component of the operating budget of TGS and of many class activities, be they for a field trip, a local food shelf, or a specific project. This policy is written with the intent of supporting and balancing both the needs of the institution and those of student, parent, or teacher initiatives. The policy is intended to support these efforts and allow all fundraising operations to run effectively and in a manner consistent with the Mission of TGS.

Fundraising is defined as the collection of money, donations of goods and/or services, sales of goods or services, and event programming for the purposes of charitable donation or organizational budget enhancement.

Restricted/Unrestricted Gifts:

Restricted gifts are those that are specific in nature and are received in the form of goods, services, or money. All intended gifts must be referred to the Development Office to ensure that the donor’s intentions meet the needs and mission of the institution, that there are no conflicts or overlapping efforts that might interfere with other fundraising initiatives and that if received, the donor is properly acknowledged.

Unrestricted gifts are general in nature and are usually intended to support the School in a general manner. Again, all intended gifts should be referred to the Development Office.

It is critical that TGS processes and accounts for all gifts in a manner consistent with the requirements of the IRS and the TGS Business Office. Please refer any questions from donors to the Development Office.

Activities:

The following guidelines are applicable to all fundraising activities by student, teacher, and/or parent organizations at The Grammar School

1. The sponsor of a fundraising activity must obtain approval of the fundraising activity from the Head of School or The Director of Development.
2. The fundraising activity is required to offer a benefit to the TGS community that is consistent with the School’s educational mission.
3. An accounting of any funds raised must be provided to the Business office within five business days after the event. The business manager or Head of School may require a proposed budget with projected revenues and expenses.
4. Event sponsors are responsible for ensuring that proposed activities comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
5. Commercial or corporate sponsorship of programs or events is permissible with prior approval from the Head of School or the Director of Development.
6. If goods or food items are sold, items should, whenever possible, be environmentally friendly, have nutritional value and should be locally produced.

SECTION 9: ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT/RE-ENROLLMENT, TUITION, AND FINANCIAL AID

Admission Policies

The Grammar School seeks to enroll children who are motivated to learn and whose families are supportive of the child's needs and the school's programs. The school does not discriminate against applicants on the basis of their race, color, sex, marital status, national or ethnic origin, and welcomes children of all religions.

Enrollment/Re-Enrollment

- 1) A signed enrollment contract and deposit are required for enrollment or re-enrollment. All parents or guardians, including those who have applied for financial aid, are required to enroll their children and submit their deposit no later than March 1 to hold a place for their child. Students not enrolled by March 1 will be placed on a wait list and enrollment will be contingent upon available space.
- 2) Enrollment commits the parents or guardians to the payment of the full year's tuition unless the parents or guardians notify the school in writing prior to July 15. After July 15, no cancellation, refund or reduction of the full year's fees will be allowed due to withdrawal, suspension, dismissal or absence of the student for any cause whatsoever including school closure in the event of a disaster or pandemic.
- 3) Financial Aid: No application for aid will be considered by the Financial Aid Committee until the school receives the signed enrollment contract and deposit. Once the school has made a financial aid offer, parents have 15 days in which to accept or decline the offer, after which time the funds offered may be reallocated to another applicant. If a financial aid offer made after March 1 is not accepted by the parents or guardians, the enrollment deposit will be returned upon receipt of a written request from the parents or guardians within 15 days of the tuition aid offer.
- 4) Re-Enrollment Review: See below for Re-Enrollment Policy. If, after the end-of-year reports, the school determines that a student should be placed in an alternate educational setting, that student's enrollment deposit will be returned.

Tuition Payment

- 5) Payment Due Date: Tuition, less the enrollment deposit, is due in accordance with the payment plan chosen on the enrollment contract. The business office will issue bills in July and November.
- 6) Late Fee: By enrolling your child at The Grammar School and agreeing to pay the tuition and fees charged for such educational services, you expressly agree to pay a late charge of \$100 on any overdue payments. Tuition and fees are due on the date indicated on the tuition bill. Payments not received within 15 days of the due date will be assessed a late fee of \$100. Families who default from the TuitionPay plan will also be assessed a \$100 late fee.
- 7) Exceptions: It is expected that all tuition payments will be paid by the date due. All requests for exceptions must be submitted to the Board of Trustees *prior* to when the payment is due (i.e.: August 1 and December 1). Requests for exceptions should be made in writing to the Board Chair with a copy to the Head of School. Any family requesting more than one alternative payment waiver from the Board of Trustees may be required to enroll in TuitionPay for all future tuition payments.

- 8) **TuitionPay Termination:** Any family that is terminated by TuitionPay for lack of payment must make the remaining tuition payment and fees to the business office immediately by cash, check, or credit card.
- 9) **Withholding of Service:** The school may withhold educational services or program participation from students whose accounts are overdue as of the first school day of the academic year or upon return from December break if a payment plan has not been submitted to the Board. Transcripts for students with overdue accounts will not be released.
- 10) **Leaves of Absence:** Requests for leaves of absence (any leave longer than 3 weeks) must be made to the Board prior to July 15. Parents or guardians are responsible for the tuition for the period of time their child is at The Grammar School, AND 50% of the tuition for the period their child is on leave. Tuition is due prior to the beginning of any leave of absence. Families taking a leave of absence are required to submit academic records to TGS upon their return.

Transportation Registration

- 11) As part of the enrollment process, families should sign up for bus transportation on the enrollment form prior to March 1. After March 1, riders will be accommodated as space is available.
- 12) The transportation fee is billed and is due with tuition. In the event of rapidly increasing costs (e.g. gasoline) transportation fees may be adjusted during the year.
- 13) Bus transportation may be offered to children under five if the child rides in an approved car seat provided by the parent.

Date of Adoption - December 1981

Revised April 1993, Dec 1993, Sept. 6, 1994, Nov. 30, 1994, Jan 1996, Jan. 19, 2000, Mar. 11, 1999, Sept. 19, 2000, January 22, 2002, January 27, 2006, January 29, 2008.

Tuition Rates for the Current Year

Tuition rates for the current year are available in the Admission office. Upcoming year's tuition will be determined at the January meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Re-Enrollment

The Grammar School re-enrolls children who are motivated to learn and whose families are supportive of the child's needs and the school's programs. Re-enrollment is contingent upon the school's ability to reasonably accommodate the child's academic and emotional needs. Each child's review for re-enrollment occurs annually.

Re-enrollment materials are sent to parents in February. In order to reserve a place for the following year, parents must return the enrollment form and deposit to the school by March 1.

Alternative Educational Setting

On occasion, the school may recommend another educational setting for a child. There are circumstances when The Grammar School cannot provide an effective education for a student in this group setting.

Because The Grammar School does not provide the range of special education services found in area public schools and other specialized independent schools, we believe it is sometimes in the best interest of the student to help the family find another, more appropriate school for the child.

Recognizing that the separation of a student and family from the school community is a delicate and difficult procedure, the Head of School will always be involved in the process of counseling a family to consider another educational setting.

Financial Aid

To the best of our ability, we try to ensure that any family that wants a Grammar School education for their child can have one.

Applications for financial aid are handled through the School and Student Service for Financial Aid of Princeton, NJ. Those applying for entrance to the school should submit their financial aid applications at the same time. Parents of returning students will be sent forms by December 1 and should submit their SSS form to Princeton no later than January 15. All parents are required to submit a copy of their most recent Form 1040 directly to the school. No application for financial aid will be considered unless a student is re-enrolled.

The Financial Aid Committee meets in late February. Parents of returning students will be informed of the committee's decision by March 15, provided their SSS application is received in time. New applicants will be informed at the time of acceptance, or as close to March 15 as possible.

Each year, the Board of Trustees allocates a portion of the total operating budget to scholarship aid. Historically, this allocation has increased as tuition costs have risen.

The School and Student Service (SSS) form is The Grammar School's criterion for establishing a consistent and fair evaluation of the financial need of each family. As with many schools, we are unable to fund 100% of the amount that SSS recommends, but we use that figure to distribute the budget allocation equitably. This percentage may vary from year to year, depending on the need and the number applicants. In the past, we have provided aid for over 30% of the student body.

The basic view of the School and Student Service for Financial Aid is that the primary responsibility for financial support of a child's education rests with the family. We ask our families to be respectful of the school's resources and the need to distribute them fairly. We ask first that all parents who can work, do. If a family is fortunate enough to have the support of a relative for a child's education, we ask that you do not submit an application for aid. Should a grandparent or other relative or friend offer partial support, and you would like to apply for aid, you must still fill out the SSS form completely. By giving this kind of consideration to the process, families can help the school be of greater assistance to those for whom the school's financial aid program is the only resource.

It is our sincere hope that we will not have to lower an aid offer due to limited funds, but this may occur if the applicant pool for aid suddenly increases. It is our policy to provide aid to all qualified applicants and to assist each family in making decisions that will help make quality education available to them.

The school offers a monthly payment plan through TuitionPay. Please request a brochure from the office.