



## **Imagine the Possibilities**

### **The Grammar School Strategic Plan 2008- 2013**

#### *Imagining the possibilities...the crafting of a new strategic plan...*

The arrival of our new Head of School, Steve Lorenz, could not have been more perfectly timed with the need to update our five-year strategic plan. Our previous plan as executed under the leadership of our past Head, Chris Osgood, took us on a path that included strengthening our sense of community, automating the library, expanding language instruction to all grades and enhancing our art program to include increased program time for our younger students as well as a new physical art space for all. That plan was our roadmap and guide for what we needed and wanted to accomplish to fulfill our mission.

With the old plan nearly fulfilled, an enthusiastic new Head brimming with ideas and a landmark anniversary, our 50th, on the horizon, the Board of Trustees agreed that it was time to embark on the crafting of our next plan. A committee of eighteen strong representing parents, trustees, alumni, faculty and staff started down this year long collaboration to create our roadmap for the future.

A day long retreat focused our attention on creating the vision for the next five years. Concurrent with subsequent committee work, we reached out to our community to find out their thoughts about The Grammar School. What did they see as our strengths? What differentiates us from other schools? What would they want for the future of The Grammar School? We did our first ever electronic survey that included these questions and had a 55% response rate. We followed up the survey by hosting seven strategic plan chat groups where 35% of our immediate community came out to engage in a dynamic discussion of some of those same questions and be part of the process.

Taking all we had learned from our reading, research and community input, our vision and core values formed and from there, the key actions we would need to accomplish to achieve our goals.

It is exciting to be talking about what The Grammar School will look like when we enter our fiftieth year. Thank you to our community for your active and passionate role in this process and your shared responsibility as we work to achieve these goals.

#### **The Strategic Planning Committee**

Steve Lorenz, Head of School

Liz Olmsted, Co-Chair

Karen Wu, Co-Chair

Charlie Boswell, Douglas Baskett, Margaret Clark, Ken Dufort, Libby Holmes, Linda Kosiba, Elaine Kraiger, Marcia Leader, Mark Long, Tara Meinhard, Jim Mooney, Shane O'Keefe, Marjorie Ray, Leslie Salmon, Lynne Shea.



## **The Grammar School**

69 Hickory Ridge Road  
Putney, Vermont 05346

### **Mission**

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

### **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 who embrace 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.

## **TGS Strategic Plan: 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.



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- 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 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 Grade 2.

### **Program**



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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.