



George Stevens Academy – Annual Report to the Community January 2024

Dear Town Residents,

I write with much gratitude to be serving as the interim Head of School for the peninsula's town academy. I have learned much in my short time here, and one of the certainties I now have is how important this school is to the peninsula. I see first hand what it means to alumni, to young families who move here in the hopes of building a community around their children's local school, and to the neighbors who watch students grow up and return to meaningful work in local businesses. GSA holds a unique place in the history of the Blue Hill peninsula, and I am proud to have a window into the ways it prepares for its future.

I'm happy to share the following facts about the school today:

- I'm proud to document some of the many ways our students contribute to the well-being of the community. Each graduate must complete 60 hours of community service. In addition, student council has organized a food drive, raised funds for H.O.M.E, and delivered winter sand buckets for those who couldn't otherwise have sand for their sidewalks and driveways. Our musicians have played for the Blue Hill Fair, craft fairs, parades, library events, and holiday concerts. Advisory groups read to elementary school students. And we have hosted a middle school dance, basketball game, and game night that help our peninsula middle school students get to know one another.
- This year saw a dramatic increase in volunteer participation in the school. This includes two weekend "work days," a new Booster Club, landscapers, the installation of student art, Friends of the Dorm who help make our boarders feel welcome and entertained, and a cadre of folks who are ready to write, photograph, and edit. And of course, our history was rewritten by the alumni who stepped forward with expertise, labor, and materials to save the west wing of the gymnasium building...at no cost to the school. Equally transformative is the Blue Hill Public Library's donation of sixteen librarian hours per week.
- 256 students are enrolled as I write with the following breakdown: Blue Hill, 99; Brooklin, 17; Brooksville, 27; Castine, 15; Hancock, 1; Orland, 6; Penobscot, 17; Sedgwick, 34; Surry, 31. Six students board at GSA, and 3 pay privately.
- Our Board of Trustees includes Sally Mills '85, Chair, Blue Hill; Deb Ludlow '79, Vice Chair, Brooksville; Tony Politano, Treasurer, Castine; Bill Case, Clerk, Blue Hill; Sara Becton Ardrey, Blue Hill; Amy Baker, Blue Hill; Alden Blodgett, '78, Penobscot; K. Guinness, Blue Hill; Wilson King, Blue Hill; Tyler Knowles, Blue Hill; Susan Loomis, Castine; Robyn Sealander, Brooklin; Liffey Thorpe, Brooksville. The board actively seeks representation from all peninsula towns and welcomes any nominations.
- Our board voted to end our boarding program in June. This has allowed them to focus on selling property no longer necessary for the school's use. We hope to provide the same cultural diversity achieved in boarding through homestays and will love hearing from anyone interested in hosting a student next year.
- Significant focus on the school's facilities has begun with the repair work on the west wing and ultimate removal of the east wing of the gymnasium building to make way for an improved entrance and bus drop-off and pick-up.

Finally, we thank you in advance for the support you can provide through our very necessary request of \$1,700 per student for supplemental tuition. It is the same request as last year, so no additional tax burden will ensue.

For more about GSA, our budget, our audit, our programs, and what's happening on campus, visit our website at www.georgestevensacademy.org.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley Borrer Jackson".

Shelley Borrer Jackson
Interim Head of School