

the **Sage**School
where gifted children grow

2006 - 2007
Annual Report

Report from the Head of School

The 2006-2007 school year was marked by high energy and high achievement.

We began the year by welcoming 157 outstanding students who travel from 40 different towns and reside in three states. The remarkable journeys these students make to come to The Sage School are just the beginning of the story of our school. Over the summer, we had the opportunity to improve our campus and reposition our school with a new logo and other branding initiatives; but when it came time to set our strategic priorities for the year, we once again came back to the people as being essential to implementing and fulfilling our mission – to provide the best possible program for academically gifted children. It is through the combined efforts and incredible focus of the staff, the Board of Trustees, the Sage Parent Association, the students, and their families, that we are able to achieve such impressive results.

If there are two things that bind and focus the work of the school on a day-to-day basis, they are the mission and the strong feeling of pride that resonates throughout the community. It is a powerful motivator for all we do. There is pride exuding from all corners of the school. First and foremost, we are proud of our students. They are extraordinary in their academic work and other accomplishments both on campus and off. Over the course of the year, when I heard the results of the National French Competition: FLES, the MathCounts competition, the Geography Bee, and the US Chess: National K-12/Collegiate Championship, and when I reviewed SAT scores that are far superior to those of the average student entering college, I was stunned by how

with seemingly little effort our students accomplish outstanding results. While we have become accustomed to the remarkable success of our students, the word is spreading quickly and it is very exciting.

Each year, I attend the National Association of Independent School's annual conference. This year, it was held in Denver and when I share with you some of my experiences over those four days, you will see how people know and hear of our wonderful little school. It all began in the airport; I happened to be booked on the same flight as several other independent school folks who were also attending the conference. After exchanging small talk with these school heads, the conversation quickly moved to discussing our soon-to-be graduates. "We are always looking for Sage School students to apply," a director of admission said. A fellow head of school knew exactly which eighth graders had been accepted and began asking how we might convince them to attend his school. I hardly had time to get coffee before jumping on the plane.

The next morning was snowy and gray as I made my way from the hotel to the convention center; it was all I could do to keep my footing as I entered into a large group of people who were coming from the NAIS Global Summit presentation. I knew that our students had been chosen to participate in the NAIS Challenge 20/20 project; they joined with The Grange School in Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria to solve the problem of world poverty. What I did not know was that the students had taken the initiative to write letters to a list of national leaders sharing with them what

they had learned and asking the leaders to join in ending poverty. Pat Bassett, the President of NAIS, had received one of those letters written by eighth grader Jessica Surgenor and was so impressed with the ideas and passion in her letter that he referenced her and the work of her fellow classmates in his opening remarks at the Global Education Summit. As I made my way through the crowd and then the convention center, I was stopped repeatedly by people who heard Jessica's words that morning. As I write this letter, I am reminded that the successes that I have come to accept as routine at Sage are truly remarkable.

At the same time, the incredible energy and silliness that presents itself each time we go through the ritual of announcing at Friday morning meeting that today is pizza day, reminds me that the students are ordinary in ways that all young children are. However, because we are focused on the mission of the school and motivated by pride, our students grow, mature, and achieve in a way that is striking for children who are so young. Thanks so much for being part of the success and I hope that you, too, share in the wonderful feeling of satisfaction that comes from being part of a job well done.

Sincerely,
Katherine G. Windsor
Head of School



Report from the Board Chair

Looking back at 2006-2007, I'm pleased to report that The Sage School continues to improve in ways great and small, while staying true to its purpose and values. Having been a part of the Sage community for 13 years now (first as a parent and now as a trustee), I've seen many changes, but Sage has always stood out from the crowd because of its unchanging mission.

Sage is dedicated to providing an educational program that serves the needs of academically gifted girls and boys ages 4 to 14 in the greater Boston and Providence areas. This mission is unique in the region. Unlike other schools, Sage recognizes and addresses the distinct needs of gifted learners. Our talented Head of School, Katherine Windsor, in partnership with the Board of Trustees, leads the school and its staff in fulfilling Sage's mission and improving the lives of many children and their families.

Woven into the fabric of The Sage School are our core values of Community, Balanced Students, Academic Challenge, Faculty, and Flexibility. Those values give Sage strength and endurance. Sage's core values, along with its mission, shape the school's program and guide the teaching and administrative staff, as well as the Board of Trustees, in everything we do.

During 2006-2007, Sage's Board of Trustees focused on identifying and addressing the school's strategic priorities. Drawing upon the goals set forth in the school's 2004 strategic plan, the Board chose two areas of emphasis – Sage's teaching and administrative staff (the People priority) and the physical facility that houses Sage's program (the Place priority).

Guided by our People priority, Sage strives to recognize, support, and enhance our team of highly qualified faculty and administrators by compensating them well, encouraging their ongoing professional development, and offering an excellent work environment. To address our Place priority, Sage seeks to provide suitable facilities for the current needs of Sage's multi-faceted educational program and plan for future needs as the school grows gradually to its optimal, small-school size of 200 students. The Board believes that, by keeping a steady focus on these two priorities and using resources effectively, Sage can realize its vision for the future. The Board will keep the community informed of progress in these areas, including plans for future capital fundraising.

All members of the Board of Trustees give selflessly of their time, and I'm grateful for the generous contributions and strong commitment of each individual who served on the Board in 2006-2007. In particular, we owe many thanks to those who held leadership positions last year, whose names are listed in this report.



This past June, our community welcomed Brenda Lyons as the new chair of the Board of Trustees. In her six years of service on the Board, Brenda has shared her exceptional organizational abilities and business savvy and shown her strong commitment to the Sage mission, program, and people. As a trustee, Brenda has led several committees, including Development and Strategic Planning, and has played a leading role in key initiatives such as the *Campaign to Bring Sage Home* – the capital fundraising effort that allowed the school to purchase its campus in 2005. I'm delighted to continue my service on the Board in 2007-2008 under Brenda's leadership.



Finally, I want to thank everyone in The Sage School family for supporting me as chair of the Board over the years. You have made the experience meaningful to me because of the boundless energy, deep intelligence, and unwavering commitment you have demonstrated in the part you play here at Sage. I look forward to remaining an active participant in the Sage community and to sharing with you the joy of supporting a unique school that is treasured by gifted learners and their families.



Sincerely,
Erin S. Pastuszewski
Chair, Board of Trustees



Report from the Admission Office

The Sage School opened the 2006-07 school year with 157 students, an enrollment increase of 7% over the previous year, and an impressive reenrollment of 87%. The high percentage of retention underscores the quality of the faculty and their dedication to these gifted students. We welcomed 34 new students who represent 21 new families to our community. These families come from 40 different cities, as well as three states, which makes our community so incredibly dynamic and unique. Our community efforts to raise the consciousness of educating gifted girls, as well as paying attention to the female educational experience here at Sage is reflected in our increased gender diversity. This year girls represent 44% of the school population.

Our journey continues as we work toward our optimum enrollment of 200 students. The Middle School graduated the last of its one section eighth grade. Beginning in 2007-2008 there will be two sections for each of the three grades in the Middle School which will complete the growth pattern of classes for the three divisions. The Admission Office has taken steps to increase enrollment in the Pre-Prime class by focusing outreach to preschools and daycare centers. We will also work with many members of the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE) to feature events designed to create an awareness of and the benefits to independent school communities for younger children.

As we look toward the next admission cycle, we are excited about the school's new website and redesigned admission materials. With the dynamic nature of the web and a significant culture shift toward web-based information gathering, the new website positions The Sage School well to increase the inquiry pool of candidates. The ability for visitors to request information or a tour, seek resources about gifted education as well as see regular updates to "happenings" at the school with the click of a mouse, enables not only to reach interested families, it encourages them to keep coming back to see what's new. Our Open House events remain a strong opportunity to showcase The Sage School experience. In the coming year, we will add an Open House in May to target public school families who are looking for different educational options. We look forward to another successful year!

Sincerely,
Nancy Surgenor
Director of Admission

Report from the Development Committee

Each year, our community demonstrates its tremendous commitment to The Sage School through its support in the form of gifts and volunteerism. This year was no exception. The Development Office achieved record-breaking voluntary giving in excess of \$240,000 for the 2006-2007 school year.

Following are highlights of the key initiatives of the Development Office.

Annual Campaign: Heather and Matt Marx served as chairs of the 2006-2007 Annual Campaign, with **Lorraine Britting** serving as vice-chair. Under their leadership, the Annual Campaign raised over \$150,000 in unrestricted giving and an additional \$31,000 for special projects. Heather introduced Griff and Gronk to our community. These fun characters traveled throughout The Sage School getting to know every nook and cranny. Each week our community looked forward to reading a new adventure – whether it was Griff and Gronk demonstrating some mischievous behavior on campus or interviewing staff members – we followed the progress of the Annual Campaign through these two beloved characters!

Heather and Matt, and Lorraine, we thank you for your creativity, leadership, and support of our school. We all await next year to learn if Griff and Gronk will return to The Sage School.

Auction: This year, we tried a new event for the school – a Gala Auction. And what a gala event it turned out to be!

The auction was planned and supported by an Auction Steering Committee comprised of parents **Raina Alves, Heather Collupy, Tracy Gorfinkle, Beth Gross**, and myself, along with Director of Development, Shelley Cornish. The Auction Steering Committee was supported by many staff and parent volunteers.

On Saturday, April 28, 2007, we welcomed over 125 people to campus to join in on the festivities. With bidding on over 150 items during the silent and live auctions, a gourmet meal by The Perfect Pear, and lively dancing, the evening was fun and memorable. **Steve Lyons and Jon Surgenor** received a last minute invitation to serve as co-auctioneers, and were delightful in enticing those in attendance to bid on live auction items.

Wine sommelier **Bob Harkey**, and his wife Jan, demonstrated their continued commitment to The Sage School and The Cummings Library Fund by donating champagne and wine to complement the dinner. Their generosity and underwriting allowed us to set aside funds for additional bookshelves in the library.

The event was a tremendous success, and raised over \$55,000, including \$1,200 for picnic tables to expand and improve our outdoor learning spaces. Everyone had a great time! Thank you to the Auction Steering Committee, Steve Lyons and Jon Surgenor, Bob and Jan Harkey, and the entire school community for your time, gifts, and participation.

Relationships and Communications: Each year, we focus on maintaining strong relationships with our current families and alumni families. As a result, our community continues to expand and grow stronger. We continue to host dinners, receptions, and alumni events. The success of each of these events is the result of our tremendous volunteer group. Thank you to everyone who has supported these events by volunteering time, hosting, serving, cleaning up, and participating. It is because of you that we continue to grow a strong community!

On behalf of the Development Committee, I thank each member of our community for your commitment to the initiatives we undertake in support of the school's mission. Together, we are achieving greatness!

Respectfully,

Brenda Lyons

Chair, Development Committee



The Sage Center For Learning, Inc.
Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2007

ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,022,697
Accounts receivable – net	34,507
Contributions receivable – net	27,819
Prepaid expenses and advances	21,305
Investments	53,131
Cash and cash equivalents – restricted:	
Loan fund	7,270
Interest reserve fund	31,841
Property and equipment – net	3,160,572
Deferred marketing costs – net	64,900
Utility deposits	<u>10,500</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$5,434,542</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable and accrued expenses	\$288,849
Advance tuition and deposits	941,408
Capital lease obligations	217,143
Deferred pension obligations	53,526
Loan payable	<u>2,235,000</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>3,735,926</u>
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	1,668,497
Temporarily restricted	<u>30,119</u>
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>1,698,616</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$5,434,542</u>

Statement of Activities for the Year Ended June 30, 2007

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT			
Tuition and related fees	\$ 2,958,106	—	\$2,958,106
Less: financial aid	<u>(185,718)</u>	=	<u>(185,718)</u>
	2,772,388	—	2,772,388
Contributions	239,678	—	239,678
Special events, net	64,242	2,300	66,542
Interest and dividend income	42,041	—	42,041
Gains on investment	5,798	—	5,798
Other income	3,279	—	3,279
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>60,802</u>	<u>(60,802)</u>	=
TOTAL REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT	<u>3,188,228</u>	<u>(58,502)</u>	<u>3,129,726</u>
EXPENSES			
Program services	2,576,051	—	2,576,051
Support services	256,068	—	256,068
Fundraising	<u>141,098</u>	=	<u>141,098</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>2,973,217</u>	<u>=</u>	<u>2,973,217</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	215,011	(58,502)	156,509
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>1,453,486</u>	<u>88,621</u>	<u>1,542,107</u>
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$1,668,497</u>	<u>\$30,119</u>	<u>\$1,698,616</u>

Report from the Treasurer

Sage concluded 2006-2007 in a strong financial position, exceeding budget expectations, and well placed to meet the future needs of its students. The committed efforts of our community, Board of Trustees, and faculty and administration combined to make 2006-2007 an outstanding year. The Board of Trustees and Finance Committee continue to allocate resources and plan for future revenue streams with the strategic priorities of the People and the Place in the forefront.

People: Over the last few years, we have focused on increasing the salaries and benefits of our faculty and staff. I am pleased to announce that in the 2006-2007 fiscal year, The Sage School's contribution to TIAA-CREF, the 403(b) retirement plan, increased from 2% to 4%.

Place: A new boiler system increased efficiency and significantly decreased utility costs. Other physical improvements made this year include new math and humanities furniture in the Middle School, new cubbies in the Prime and first-year Junior classrooms, and new lockers for the older Junior and Middle School students.

The Sage School is fortunate to have a community that is so dedicated to the mission of the school. Because of generous donations, we have been able to add a laptop cart, renovate the Middle School Gallery, purchase new lobby furniture, and install a new scrim

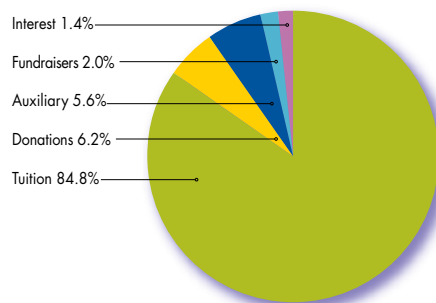
(backdrop) for the stage. Outside additions include new picnic tables and a new walking trail courtesy of Sage Alumnus, Chris Marcus '05, done as part of his Eagle Scout project. These enhancements to our outdoor space offer additional flexibility and provide outdoor classrooms for our students and teachers to enjoy.

Going forward, we will continue to stress economy and efficiency and make all efforts to maintain the school's solid financial footing into the future.

I would like to thank everyone in the Sage community for their continued support, especially all of the parents and families who give freely of their time to serve on committees and volunteer to make this such a remarkable school.

Sincerely,
Solomon Menashi
 Treasurer
 Chair, Finance Committee

Total Revenue 2006-2007



Total Expenses 2006-2007





Mission Statement

*The Sage School is a private independent school
dedicated to providing an educational program
that serves the needs of academically gifted
girls and boys ages 4 to 14
in the greater Boston and Providence areas.*

the**Sage**School

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