

HILLTOP
MONTESSORI
SCHOOL



Annual Report

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR



1972-2022
a vision for learning & life

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Letter from the Head of School



Dear Hilltop Community,

We are introducing a new format for the 2022-23 Annual Report. It is a stand alone document, not attached to our school calendar, as it has been in previous years. We hope you enjoy this new format and welcome your feedback and suggestions, as always.

The 2022-23 school year marked our 50th anniversary as a school. We celebrated the growth and contributions of our community and our school throughout the year, culminating in a big, community-wide event to cap off the school year. In the past 50 years we have grown from a one room cooperative preschool to a 43-acre campus that serves students from 18 months to 14 years – from toilet training to sex ed!

We are the only Montessori accredited school in the state of Vermont, and we spent the year celebrating and reflecting on our past, present, and future. From the Back-to-School Picnic to the end of year community festival and Board Alum Brunch, we appreciated the students, teachers, staff, Board members, and families that continue to make this school the thriving educational experience that it is. We also started looking to our next phase, as we came out of the pandemic strengthened by federal and state grant funding and embarked on a Strategic Plan that will transition us into a future focused on sustainability and community.

We present our 2022-23 annual report with great appreciation to, and admiration for, everyone who has supported Hilltop Montessori School over these past 50 years, and made it what it is today.

With Gratitude,

Tamara Mount
Head of School

Letter from the Board Chair



Greetings to our staff, families, and community!

The 2022-23 school year was an exciting one at Hilltop, as we celebrated our 50th anniversary and held a number of events throughout the year to gather, share memories, and anticipate the future. From our early days at the West Village Meeting House to our beautiful campus that is, indeed, set on a hilltop, our school has seen remarkable growth and evolution over the years. While my family has been part of the Hilltop community for only a few years (so far!), from my vantage point as a Trustee, I am so proud of all that the school has accomplished: we are a fully accredited Montessori school providing an incredible education to students who range from toddlers up to the 8th grade.

Another key facet of the school year was the Board's launch of the Strategic Planning process. Our last Strategic Plan was drafted in 2017 and served as a guidepost through the growth of our endowment, the Indexed Tuition program, and the accreditation of our Montessori program, among many other important initiatives. During the 2022-23 school year, we held a broad variety of stakeholder meetings, conducted surveys, and gathered feedback in one-on-one interviews from all who had perspectives they wished to share on the current state and future plans for our school. The prior plan's principles of Sustainability, Equity, Identity are themes we continue to hear through the current planning process, while we are also looking ahead and dreaming for the future of Hilltop. The Board will be excited to share the updated Strategic Plan later in the 2023-24 school year!

This past year also marked a re-emergence after two years of navigating the roller coaster ride of Covid. In fall 2022, we were able to invite parents back into the buildings, while all staff and students continued in person and tracking positive cases while retaining an uninterrupted classroom-based education for our students. While Covid continues to be a reality, our team stepped into this new phase with support, care, and a strong desire to reconnect and expand our sense of community.

During 2022–23, we also welcomed a number of new Trustees to the Board. Juliette Carr, Louisa Conrad, Nancy Dickson, Shelley Lockyear, and I all joined the Board, many of us stepping into leadership roles; Juliette is leading our Strategic Planning Committee and Process, Louisa led the Development Committee, and Nancy and I stepped in as in-coming Board Chairs, with Nancy assuming the Chair role part-way through the year. I also want to recognize the incredible contributions of a number of Trustees whose terms concluded at the end of the school year: Marta Bernbaum, Todd Fahey, Andrea Lemon, Ellie Pennell, and Caitlin Senni all supported the school and Tamara through the disruptive, difficult years of Covid. We are so grateful for their service and contributions to the school!

If you are interested in joining the Hilltop Board, we invite you to reach out to any of our current Trustees for more information or to join us at the Open Board Meeting in March 2024. Our Trustees bring a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives, which is essential to a thriving Board and school community; prior Board service is not necessary, and we also welcome members of the broader Brattleboro community who are invested in the future of our school and students. The Hilltop website provides further details on the Board, current Trustees and the range of Committees that work on behalf of the school; I encourage you to take a look and reach out with interest or questions.

As we look ahead to the future, I am excited and passionate about all that lies ahead. We are sure to have moments of challenge, but we have a strong team of teachers, administrators, families, and community members who are committed to keeping Hilltop the thriving community that it has always been. Speaking on behalf of the entire Board, I wish to extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the team that keeps Hilltop the very special place that it is, where our children grow and thrive, and where we build life-long connections.

Geneva Morse
Chair, Board of Trustees

Letter from the Board Treasurer



Dear Hilltop Community,

Hold onto your hats! It's that time again. It's time to dive into the fascinating world of finance to bring you Hilltop's annual financial report. Who would have thought crunching numbers could be so thrilling? As Board Treasurer, it falls to me, on behalf of our Finance Committee, to present an exploration of our budgets and spreadsheets and to share some of the highlights of this past year's financial journey.

A Hilltop parent for seven years, my commitment to the school and the community runs deep. It has been so rewarding to witness the school's growth and strategic planning as we map out the next five years and dream big for the next 50! As we navigate the ever-changing landscape of education, I am inspired by the dedication of our board, our admin team, our faculty, and the parents of Hilltop in helping ensure our students have a future as bright and exciting as their imaginations.

A noticeable change in our financial allocations for the 2022-23 year was the increase in professional development spending. We were so pleased to be able to take the entire faculty to the annual American Montessori Society conference held in Boston last year, a transformative experience that enhances the quality of the education Hilltop is able to provide. This initiative was made possible by the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) Hilltop received in 2022.

This one-time tax credit not only enabled us to invest in our faculty's education, but also allowed us to provide a small cash bonus to the dedicated staff who weathered the challenges of the COVID pandemic alongside us. These small acts of support demonstrate our appreciation to the faculty for their unwavering commitment and also contributed to the school's ability to operate through the past fiscal year without taking a draw from our investment funds.

Our financial audit, an undertaking that occurs every second year, took place this year. This comprehensive review is conducted by the external CPA firm, Boisselle, Morton & Wolkowicz, LLP, with the assistance of our school's administrative team. The audit is an essential process that ensures the integrity and transparency of our financial practices. We extend our gratitude to our diligent administrative team for their commitment to this monumental task, encompassing the preparation of our 990 tax report and a full audit which received a completely "clean report".

Looking ahead, the school anticipates financial challenges in the coming years and the board, along with our dedicated administrative staff, is tackling these head-on. We are committed to ensuring the financial health of Hilltop while maintaining the highest standards of educational excellence.

In conclusion, I want to express my gratitude for the trust you place in the board and admin teams as we juggle the dollars and cents and steward Hilltop's financial well-being. Together we will navigate the uncertainties of the coming years with resilience, innovation, and a shared commitment to the continued success of our beloved school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Shelley Lockyear
Board Treasurer

Fiscal Year Report: 2022-23

INCOME

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Tuition | \$2,117,595 |
| School Grants | -\$449,878 |
| Less State Funding | -\$256,829 |
| Tuition/Family Contribution | \$1,410,888 |
| Other Program Income | \$117,600 |
| Fundraising Revenue | \$67,059 |
| State Funding | \$256,829 |
| Grant Revenue | \$893,097 |
| Endowment Draw | - |
| Total | \$2,745,473 |

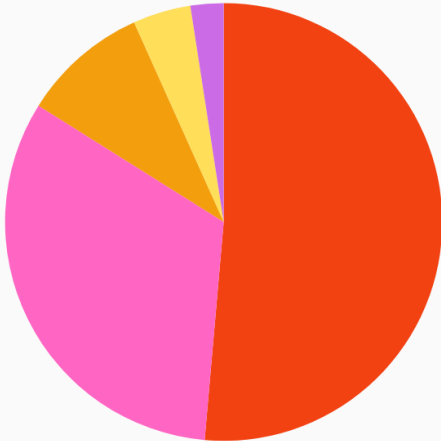
EXPENSES

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Wages & Benefits | \$1,980,349 |
| Administration & Professional Development | \$241,234 |
| Building & Maintenance | \$179,280 |
| Classroom Related & Field Trips | \$64,653 |
| Other Expenses | \$40,951 |
| Depreciation* | \$213,302 |
| Total | \$2,719,769 |
| Increase/Decrease in Operating Net Assets: | \$25,704 |

**Depreciation reflects decreasing the value of property and equipment over time, not a cash expenditure.*

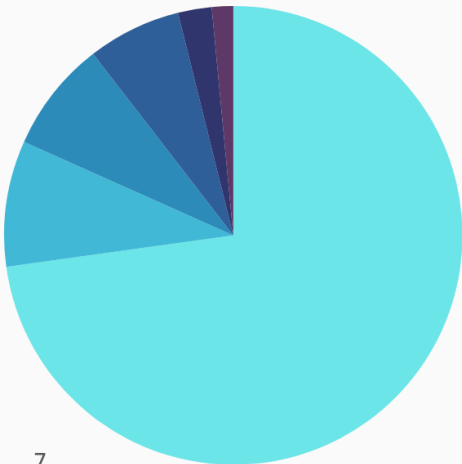
Fiscal Year Report: 2022-23

- Tuition/Family Contribution = 51.4%
- Grant Revenue = 32.5%
- State Funding = 9.4%
- Other Program Income = 4.3%
- Fundraising = 2.4%



INCOME
= \$2,745,473

- Wages & Benefits = 72.8%
- Admin & Professional Development = 8.9%
- * Depreciation = 7.8%
- Building & Maintenance = 6.6%
- Classroom Related & Fieldtrips = 2.4%
- Other Expenses = 1.5%



EXPENSES
= \$2,719,769

Annual Fund 2022-23

As we reflect back on both the 2022-23 school year, and every year before, we are insurmountably grateful to each and every member of the community who has contributed to sustaining the school through donations. Thank you for your continued generosity wherever you have found able – be it through your time, expertise, passion, or gift.

CURRENT FAMILIES

Matthew Bachler and Chrissy Lee
Tanya Balsley
Ericka and Jason Barrows
Chrissy Colon Bradt and Dave Bradt
Todd and Katherine Einig
Elizabeth and Tate Erickson
Catherine and Christopher Flannery
Kelly Gallagher and Ryan Heisler
Megan Gray
Annaliese Griffin and Tom Mylan
Jenny Kessler and Alex Sorenson
Allison Korn and Marco Yunga Tacuri
Gretchen and Nate Lachance
Vanessa Long and Ben Boyarko
Kate Lucy and Jonathan Sellers
Emily Martyn and Ed Hourigan
Caroline Meliones and Joseph Lambert
Eddie Monroe and Jamie LaPlante
Ladd and Lifei Osborne
Amanda Paradis and Matthew Torres
Sheena Rasheed
Gil and Anna Rosenberg
Stewart and Julia Scannell
Travis and Sarah Shine
Meggie Stoltzman and Patrick Wilkins
Elizabeth and James Strong
Sarah and Markus Thessing
Rumbi Vushe and Silas Masawi
Sam Yelin and Chris Lillie

CURRENT GRANDPARENTS

Lauren Alderfer
David Bernbaum
Lucy Chapman
Whit Conrad
Deborah Farrell
Carol Forsythe
Marlene Gorham
John Grasso
Dorcas Gray
John Guswa
Betty Kilmurray
Carol Landa
Michael Lee
Andrew Lasage
Cheryl Liston
Pamela Long
Terry Maguire
Susan Mareneck
Ellen Martyn
Anna Meliones
Eric Morse
Elizabeth Richards
Nancy Riley

ALUMNI

Mark Richards
Nora Gordon
Luke Pennell

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Juliette Carr
Louisa Conrad
Andrea and Edward Lemon
Geneva Morse
Asher Pucciarello
Nancy Wheeler

ALUMNI PARENTS

Martha Anderson
Lauren Campbell
Sandra Campbell
Sara Coffey
Marc Cohen
Mary Current
Alix and Michael Fedoruk
Alison Freeland
Marcy Jones
Melany Kahn
Kim Lier
Leigh Marthe
Tamara Mount
Stephen Phillips
Jeffrey Shumlin
David Snyder
Tonia Wheeler

ALUMNI GRANDPARENTS

Diane Stemmer
Elena Dodd

FRIENDS OF HILLTOP

Rebecca Baldini
Finn Campman
Jay Cook
David Damery
Ashley Dierkes
Rebecca Eisenhandler
Tom Griffith
Jade Harmon
Jennifer Hed
Kerstin Kjellberg
Nadav Malin
Cheryl Matthews
Anne Percival
Desiree Plumbley
Ani Schaeffer
Starr Snead
Jen Stapleton
Ashlyn Stephens
Robert Tortolani

FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS

AmazonSmile Foundation
Big Picture Farm
Brattleboro Food Co-op
Brattleboro Savings & Loan
C&S Wholesale Grocers
Foard Panel
G.S. Precision
Hannaford Community Bag Program
Howard Printing
The Richards Group
Vermont Country Deli
Vermont Jazz Center
Wolf Kahn Foundation

Thank you to all who joined in our

50th Anniversary Celebration!

1972-2022



HMS Heads of School, Tamara Mount (current), Kevin Campbell (past), and Tonia Wheeler (founding).

Graduating Class 2023



Malik Anthes

Brattleboro Union High School

Skyler Nunez-Alvarez

Vermont Academy

Ava Einig

Brattleboro Union High School

Kiley Pillsbury

Northfield Mount Hermon

Talia Engel

Vermont Academy

Camden Robinson

Burr & Burton Academy

Wycke Gangle

The Putney School

Root Rosenberg

The Putney School

Ciana Grasso

Brattleboro Union High School

Clay Steinberg

Northfield Mount Hermon

Aiden LaPlante Monroe

Vermont Academy

Lucas Yunga Korn

Brattleboro Union High School

Max Madow

Brattleboro Area Middle School

Board of Trustees

2022-23

Ellie Pennell

Board Chair

Nancy Dickson

Incoming Board Chair

Geneva Morse

Incoming Board Chair

Todd Fahey

Treasurer

Caitlin Senni

Secretary

Marta Bernbaum

Member at Large

Juliette Carr

Member at Large

Louisa Conrad

Member at Large

Andrea Lemon

Member at Large

Asher Pucciarello

Member at Large

Dora Urujeni

Member at Large

Board of Trustees

2023-24

Geneva Morse

Board Chair

Nancy Dickson

Outgoing Board Chair

Louisa Conrad

Incoming Board Chair

Shelley Lockyear

Treasurer

Juliette Carr

Member at Large

Doug Flood

Member at Large

Asher Pucciarello

Member at Large

Kate Purwin

Member at Large

Julia Scannell

Member at Large

Avery Schwenk

Member at Large

Dora Urujeni

Member at Large

Hilltop Montessori School's mission is to practice responsible independence in a caring community of curious, critical thinkers and thoughtful citizens



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