

A young girl with blonde hair, wearing a red headband with white polka dots and a dark blue dress, is smiling and clapping her hands. She is in the foreground, and other children are blurred in the background. The image is overlaid with a teal-to-white gradient on the top left and a solid blue gradient on the bottom right.

ANNUAL REPORT CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

WINTER
2018

GROVESACADEMY.ORG



Planning Your Legacy with Groves Academy

While monthly and annual gifts support ongoing work, legacy gifts can build capacity to make a difference in the lives of more students in the future. Legacy donors of Groves Academy are making a difference through planned gifts.

Whether it is a specific, residuary, percentage or contingent bequest, these donors find it possible to be extraordinarily generous through their wills. Through legacy giving, you can continue supporting transformative learning for future years.

For more information about legacy giving, please contact Becky Busselman at busselmanb@grovesacademy.org or 952.915.4269.

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[FROM JOHN ALEXANDER]

Friends,

I cannot begin to tell you how genuinely excited I am to be a part of this amazing organization, which is doing so much to help so many, both in the walls of our school and in our community. I thank each of you for your partnership. Your generous provision of time, talent, and treasure allows us to do the work we do, and perhaps more importantly, to dream big so that even more children will benefit.

During my 13-year tenure here, Groves Academy has never been better poised to serve students directly and to positively influence the way students are taught to learn to read—both in our Twin Cities community, as well as in our nation. These last few years of growth have brought additional staff, impressive outcomes, talent, and ideas to our already dedicated experts.

Our organization is fortunate to welcome Kim Peeples as Head of School. She is an amazing addition. She helps to make our school an even better experience for our families and teachers. She has allowed me to have the time as Executive Director to think big with regards to literacy instruction and the strategic growth for our organization.

All three strategic programs—Our School, the Learning Center, and the Institute for Professional Learning are deeply involved in the process of creating five-year strategic plans that when integrated will form our 2023 Plan. The core of this plan will be to show how we can extend our influence to more students and teachers while maintaining the highest quality in all aspects of our organization. I look forward to sharing this plan with you after the Board of Trustees has approved it.

Groves' reputation is growing nationally as we have been asked to speak at national conferences and provide professional development to teachers from around the country. This fall I will be presenting at the International Dyslexia Association's annual conference, and I have been asked to give a presentation this October to faculty members at the University of North Dakota. I will be talking about why colleges of education from around the country inadequately prepare teacher candidates regarding the teaching of reading.

Thank you for your partnership and for being part of Groves Academy's past, present, and future.

With the warmest of wishes,



John Alexander
Executive Director



"Your generous provision of time, talent, and treasure allows us to do the work we do . . . "



"Life is a marathon, not a sprint."

Interview with alum Collin Hamilton

How long were you at Groves Academy and what were a few key things you learned at Groves?

I was at Groves for 3 years, from 2nd grade until 5th grade. I'm a classic dyslexic, so the key things I learned at Groves were reading and writing basics. When I got to Groves in 2nd grade I didn't know all the ABC's and I was not able to write 0-21 correctly.

What did you do after Groves?

In fifth grade I moved to the Eden Prairie School District for two years and was pulled out for special help. In 8th grade I moved to California where I was still pulled out for assistance until the end of 9th grade and after that I was able to get average grades. I also got extra time on the SAT's and AP tests.

I graduated from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo with an Industrial Engineering degree and took a job with Chevron in their renewables group, I now own a solar development company in Santiago, Chile that

has projects in Chile, Argentina and Colombia. I am fluent in Spanish.

How did your time spent at Groves prepare you for your next steps?

Groves gave me the tools to compete with other kids. Even if it took me longer and I didn't get as good of grades, I could compete. It also gave me the confidence I needed to understand that I was not dumb but just needed to figure out how I learned. I learned to focus on the strengths I had and spend extra time in my weak areas.

What is your favorite memory of Groves?

I think my favorite memory is playing at recess. I would assume that's normal as that's what kids care about the most. I particularly liked tether ball (which I noticed was not there when I was back) and also four square.



Why do you think Groves is an important asset to the Twin Cities community?

I truly believe that I would not be where I am today had I not gone to Groves and had not been given the confidence to get out there to try and try again. I feel that every major city should have a school like Groves so that the learning disabled of that city can get the education they need to support the economy.

What would you tell a student who was new to Groves about the school?

This is a safe and fun place for you to learn to take pride in each of your small achievements, a castle isn't built in a day. Focus on your strengths and work extra hard on your weaknesses. Learn to work hard and anything is possible!

Anything else you would like to share with the Groves Academy community?

Life is a marathon, not a sprint. We may start off slower but if we keep working we can surpass even our highest expectations. I truly believe the most difficult thing in life is knowing what you want, not achieving it.



Giving Back to Groves Academy

Alumni return to assist coaching basketball

Groves Academy alumni Anthony Giere and Kirby Puckett Jr. have returned to Groves Academy, lending their skills, passion, and expertise to the Groves Academy basketball program. Anthony is assisting with the Lower School basketball team and Kirby is serving as an assistant coach for the JV/Varsity teams.

"Anthony and Kirby have been critical in our continued efforts to expand and enhance our athletic programming at Groves. Their knowledge and dedication is valued, but above all else, they are building strong relationships with our players. It's truly a win-win."

**– Curtis Olufson, Director of Summer Programs/
Director of Athletics and Activities**

Are you looking for ways to give back to Groves?

Please contact Ashley Gotreau at gotreaua@grovesacademy.org.

Suanne Orenstein

*Ambassador in
our community*

How did you end up getting involved at Groves?

My son, Max, was a student 5th – 8th grade from 1995-99.

Why are you passionate about Groves Academy?

The outreach that Groves does every day to impact the lives of students and their families in our community. Outreach for me is about providing programs that help students who don't necessarily go to Groves but could not be successful without the outreach programs. A significant number of students' lives are improved because Groves does what it does. From kids learning how to read, to attending the college fair and preparing them for life after Groves, there are so many opportunities and so many possibilities to positively impact lives!

How has Groves changed in your tenure on the board?

Groves now offers many more activities and classes for students. There has been growth in the upper school programs and other opportunities. Under John Alexander's leadership Groves has grown so much. It's wonderful to be part of a thriving organization.

Looking back at your time at Groves, what does it mean to you to be an Alumni parent? What advice do you have for current Groves Academy parents?

The word *gratitude* comes to mind. When you leave Groves you realize how lucky we are to have Groves in

the community and you'll never forget it. Advice for current parents is to take advantage of all that Groves has to offer. And giving back however you can will help make a difference for other families.

What did Groves do for Max that he could not get at other schools?

The number one thing Groves provided was confidence. So much so that Max was able to be successful at Hopkins High School and graduate with honors. His transition to college was a breeze.

Describe why you continue to support Groves long after your child attended? As an active ambassador in our community – what does it mean to you?

Groves is a treasure to the community and one of things that makes the Twin Cities great. We support Groves so it can keep providing our community resources and support.

I am proud to represent Groves locally and nationally. Being an ambassador is about making connections, bridging introductions, looking for opportunities and bringing up the good work that Groves does in our community every day.

What is your proudest accomplishment in your tenure on the Board of Trustees?

In 2002, I helped start the College Fair with fellow Groves parent Keith Monroe. Through the years it has provided information and hope to many local and out of town students and families. This past year there were 40 colleges and nearly 500 attendees.



New Transitions Advocate Role

Additional resource for Groves families

Over the past few years, Groves has determined the need for more resources to support our families who are ready to transition out of Groves into another school setting. On average, we have 40 or more families who transition from Groves to a new school each year. Transitioning to a new school takes time, research, school visits, consultations with teachers and preparation.

Groves is excited to announce the addition of Dan Hurley as our dedicated Transitions Advocate to assist our students and families through their transition process. Dan comes to Groves with vast experience in education and he looks forward to being an exceptional resource to our Groves families.

*Find out more by attending the High School and College Transitions community education workshop on March 6.
Event information available at grovesacademy.org/events*



SUMMER PROGRAMS AT GROVES ACADEMY

We are pleased to offer students from the community the same high quality Groves Academy education during the summer that we provide to our students during the school year. Through our specialized curriculum and small class sizes, our summer programs employ the Groves philosophy of developing strengths and talents, remediating academic weaknesses, and tailoring instruction to meet individual needs.

For students entering grades 2-8, we feature a morning and afternoon program, June 18-July 13. The morning is academic—reading, writing, and math; the afternoon program offers fun enrichment activities designed to tap into talents, creativity, and interests. Students can participate in either the morning or the afternoon program—or both.

For students entering grades 9-11, we offer academic classes in study skills, writing, and math, July 23-August 3.

For more information please visit grovesacademy.org/summer or contact Curtis Olufson at olufsonc@grovesacademy.org.





MAKING AN [*Impact*]

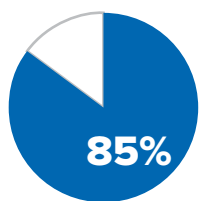
*"My greatest academic achievement is learning to read.
I can never thank Groves enough because the teachers
there gave me the tools, focus and support to learn to read."*

– Ella Beaudoin, Groves Alum

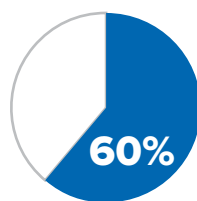
Our school is Minnesota's only established school for students with learning disabilities and attention disorders, and a national leader in educating students who learn differently.



100%
STUDENTS HAVE
STRONG ABILITY AND
DESIRE TO LEARN



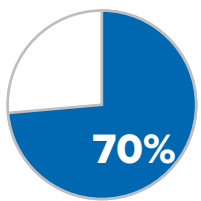
85%
STUDENTS WITH
LEARNING DISABILITIES
SUCH AS DYSLEXIA



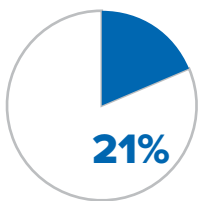
60%
STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION
OR EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING
DEFICIT SUCH AS ADHD



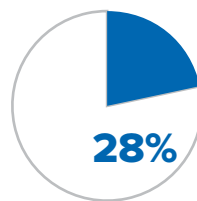
8
students
AVERAGE
CLASS SIZE



70%
STUDENTS PREVIOUSLY
IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL



21%
STUDENTS
OF COLOR



28%
STUDENTS RECEIVING
FINANCIAL AID



3-4
years
AVERAGE LENGTH
OF STAY AT
OUR SCHOOL

"The time you spent with Grace (and me) was so impactful - we are very grateful. We came in for an evaluation, but left with much more. You made Grace the client of the critically important feedback. You made her feel empowered. You told her she didn't have a learning disability. You told her that her real issue was slow processing speed ... and then you gave her strategies for working with that challenge. I could see immediately how she felt hearing all of that from you, and we saw the difference in how she approached her school experience immediately."

– Learning Center family



"As I was leaving a partner school a teacher stopped me and said, 'I just want to say a big thank you for the excitement you have built in my students. In my years of teaching kindergarten, I have never seen my students so eager to learn to read words and spell. They are so excited about letters and even my students that came in with no print awareness are getting it. They all go around the room tapping to sound out words, trying out what they have learned.'"

– Katharine Campbell, Director of Literacy



The Learning Center allows many children and families in the community to benefit from our expertise in diagnosing and supporting those with learning disabilities, attention disorders, and executive functioning deficits. The Learning Center touches the lives of 1,000 students each year.

THE LEARNING CENTER



The Institute for Professional Learning at Groves Academy was established to share the proven teaching methods from our school with other teachers, schools, school districts, and other mission-driven organizations in the Twin Cities and beyond to advance literacy instruction for all.

INSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING





You're Invited to Help Us Close the Literacy Achievement Gap

Please join us for an inspiring evening as we celebrate Groves Academy's leadership in education and impact in our greater community.

All proceeds from the Gala propel the work of Groves Academy's mission to transform lives through education. This includes advancing literacy education in our community, providing scholarships for 30% of our students and closing the literacy achievement gap with our partner schools and organizations.

More than 500 friends and families of Groves will come together to play a role in helping to close

the literacy achievement gap, and to broaden the reach of our mission to build confidence, success, and purpose through transformative learning experiences.

The evening begins with games, punchboards, and a silent auction followed by dinner and dessert. Experience the excitement of a live auction and fund-the-future challenge during dinner.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Dean Bragonier,
Founder and Executive Dyslexic
of NoticeAbility, Inc.

EMCEE:

Don Shelby

GALA CHAIR:

Trish Blake

WHEN AND WHERE:

Saturday, April 28, 2018
Six o'clock in the evening
Marriott City Center, Minneapolis

ATTIRE:

Elegant evening

Tickets on sale now at
GROVESGALA.ORG





THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

2016-2017 FINANCIALS

REVENUE

Our School	\$7,437,099
The Learning Center	\$1,592,628
Institute for Professional Learning	\$346,149
Financial Aid Disbursement	(\$1,109,020)
TOTAL	\$8,266,856

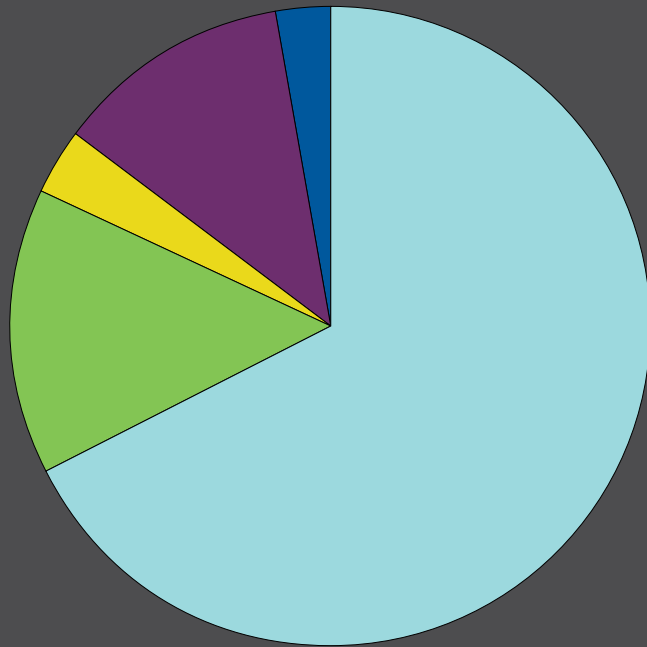
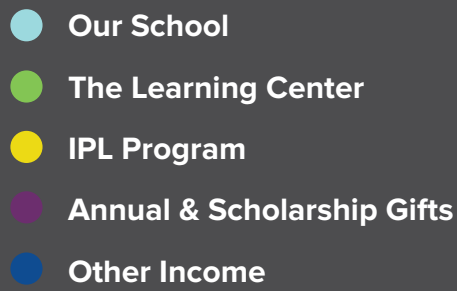
Annual & Scholarship Gifts	\$1,326,120
Other Income/Loss	\$289,326
Net Revenue Total	\$9,882,302

EXPENSES

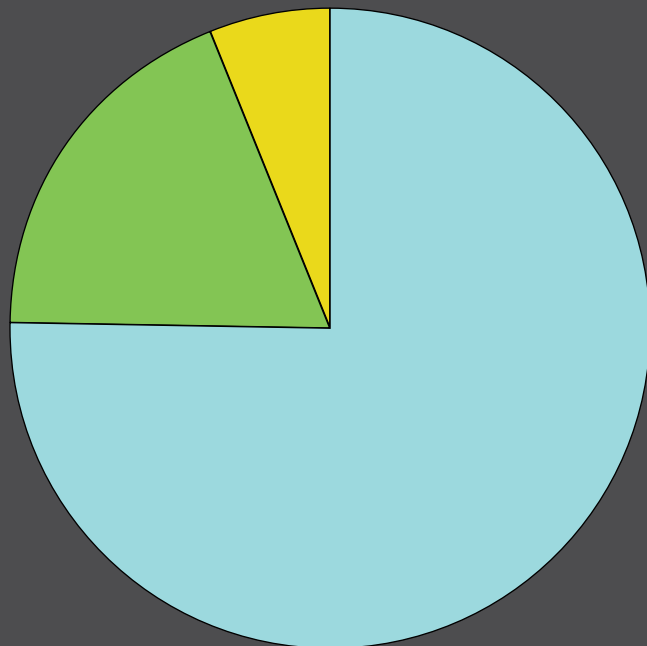
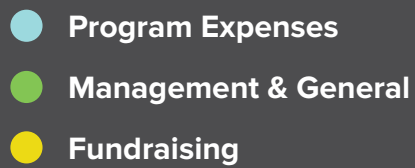
Program Expenses	\$7,496,398
Operating Expenses	\$1,869,491
Fundraising	\$581,446
Net Expense Total	\$9,947,335

NET DEFICIT	(\$65,033)
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REVENUE



EXPENSES



NEW CAPSTONE INITIATIVE CLASS FOR ALL UPPER SCHOOL STUDENTS:

*Q & A with Upper School Division
Co-Director Sue Dinapoli*



Why did Groves decide to create this new Capstone initiative for Upper School students?

The Capstone Initiative embraces our mission to build confidence, success, and purpose through transformative learning experiences. The upper school faculty see the importance of high school as a preparatory experience; the sooner we can introduce students to real-world experiences the better. We are striving to connect our classroom to the world outside of Groves.

How's the class going so far?

It has been an exciting challenge featuring lots of discovery. It has also been great to work collaboratively with the whole organization.

Each part of the Capstone initiative has a specific skill focus. The first part was a self-discovery exercise where students developed presentations and shared their individual stories with Groves' staff in small groups. The second was a small group project where students taught others about something they are interested in via a how-to video or a PSA. We had a film festival style screening where the students showed their films, and members of the faculty and staff awarded Best Picture and other categories. The students were very supportive of one another, and the experience gave everyone a real sense of pride and accomplishment.

On January 17th we connected students with mentors and leaders in the community who came from a variety of professions, careers, and backgrounds. The community members, paired with students conducted a two-way podcast radio interview. The interviews focused on the volunteer's career background, challenges and successes

as well as the student's goals and professional interests. This spring will focus on service leadership.

What are the goals for the students and Groves to pursue this new class?

The class allows students to apply 21st Century modern communication skills of collaboration, research, critical thinking, and self-advocacy to their career exploration, interests, and skill development. We also seek to inspire students to think deeply and openly about what matters to them in their community. We're enabling students to practice essential life skills in a supportive setting.

What are your thoughts about this as the instructor?

We have to connect our kids to the outside world, and they have to imagine themselves and their learning difference not as a challenge but as a strength. We need to flip their view. I see this class as empowering our students to take ownership of their learning. The students are at the center of the design of the curriculum. This can sometimes be a challenge as an instructor because you don't always know where you're going to end up, but I know it's worth it to allow students to own their learning and prepare for the future.

If people want more information or to volunteer their time – what steps should they take?

Please call or email me, Sue Dinapoli at 952.920.6377 ext 1140 or dinapolis@grovesacademy.org.

2017-2018 COMMUNITY EDUCATION WORKSHOP SERIES

Mar 6 High School and

College Transitions

Tuesday, March 6, 2018 from 7-8:30 pm

Presented by Clare Roney, LSC, Groves Academy Career Counselor and Michelle Jonas, Groves Academy Upper School and Transitions Counselor

Mar 20 Why Groves Reading

Instruction Works

Tuesday, March 20, 2018 from 7-8:30 pm

Presented by Katharine Campbell, Groves Academy Director of Literacy

Apr 17 ADHD and Executive Functioning

Tuesday, April 17, 2018 from 7-8:30 pm

Presented by Holly West Jones, M.A., ADHD Coach and Educator

May 8 IEP and 504 Plans:

Advocating for your Child

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 from 7-8:30 pm

Presented by John Alexander, Groves Academy Executive Director, Ethan Schwehr, PhD LP NCSP Groves Academy Licensed Psychologist, and Colin Roney, MEd, Groves Academy Dean of Students

May 22 How to Assess if your Child needs Speech Therapy

Tuesday, May 22, 2018 from 7-8:30 pm

Presented by Meghan Miller, Speech Language Pathologist

\$15 Admittance | Free of charge for current Groves Academy families and Learning Center clients

Free 2018 Summer Workshops:

Monday-Wednesday, June 25-27, 2018 from 9 am-noon

Jun 25 Study Skills and Assistive Technology

Jun 26 Managing Stress and Anxiety

Jun 27 Overview of Learning Disabilities and Understanding Dyslexia

grovesacademy.org/events or 952.920.6377



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OUR MISSION

**WE BUILD CONFIDENCE,
SUCCESS, AND PURPOSE
THROUGH TRANSFORMATIVE
LEARNING EXPERIENCES.**

OUR VISION

**TO REDEFINE THE WAY
OUR NATION IS TAUGHT,
ONE STUDENT, ONE TEACHER,
AND ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME.**

**AUTHENTICITY
COLLABORATION
COMPASSION
DISCOVERY
TENACITY**

OUR VALUES

At the heart of Groves Academy is a community where students, families, faculty, and staff are engaged with a sense of belonging, sharing, and support. As a *community, integrity* and *respect* are intrinsic in everything we do.

