



Thetford Academy Strategic Plan

2019-2024



Thetford
ACADEMY



***An independent
school with a
public purpose***

***A supportive and
caring community***

***Dedicated teachers
who inspire***

***Students who live
what they learn***



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The background of the page features a faded, light-colored photograph. On the left side, a group of people, likely students, are standing in a line in a snowy field. In the center and right, a large, multi-story building with a prominent steeple, identified as Thetford Academy, is visible. The overall scene is set in a winter environment with snow on the ground and bare trees.

About Thetford Academy

For nearly 200 years, Thetford Academy (TA) has served as a co-educational "independent school with a public purpose" for the town of Thetford, Vermont, and surrounding areas.

Today, students come from more than a dozen towns in Vermont and New Hampshire and from countries around the world to become a part of our close-knit educational community.

At TA, our teachers are recognized for their innovative approaches to teaching and learning. They are passionate about engaging every student in a culture of learning. The TA curriculum aspires to be flexible and accessible to all.

Thetford Academy embraces a diverse community of students with a wide range of academic aspirations and learning styles. It asks both teachers and students to experiment, to stretch their boundaries, and to take risks as members of a learning community.

It is in this environment - where diversity is acknowledged, respected, and celebrated - that TA students become empathetic, resilient, and outstanding citizens.



Our Mission

Thetford Academy is an independent school with a public purpose.

Thetford Academy celebrates the unique worth of all students, nurtures their strengths, and challenges them to fulfill their potential.

Thetford Academy is committed to investing in each student's path to academic excellence and personal growth.



Our Core Values

EXCELLENCE

We set high expectations. We challenge all members of the school community to reach their highest potential.

COMMITMENT

We value initiative, courage and dedication. We take personal responsibility for the goals we set and work hard to achieve them.

COOPERATION

We work and learn together. We see teachers as coaches, students as team members, and families as partners.

CARING

We provide individuals with personalized support and guidance.
We care about each other and about the larger community.

RESPECTING DIFFERENCE

We respect diversity in our school, community, and world.
We welcome the contribution of different perspectives and experiences to create a rich and inclusive culture of learning at our school.



OUR ACADEMICS

The strength, breadth, and challenge of our academic program is at the heart of Thetford Academy.

We provide individualized courses of study that prepare individuals to become confident citizens, leaders, and scholars as they pursue their unique goals and interests.

GOAL

Support our students' academic curiosity, engagement, grit, and determination in a community of learning and excellence

ACTIONS

1. Assess the scope and sequence of TA's accredited curriculum to ensure we are always meeting the needs of all students, including those applying to college and those choosing alternative postgraduate paths.
2. Continue to challenge and engage all learners with strategies such as in-class differentiation, multiple entry points into challenging course sequences, embedded honors opportunities, and self-directed studies.
3. Create sample course plans for the middle and upper schools that highlight core course offerings and the breadth of choices available to students; make course planning options public and easily accessible online for all students and families.
4. Empower all students to take full advantage of experiential education offerings at TA, both curricular and co-curricular. These include service learning, business internships, semesters away, coursework at Dartmouth College or nearby technical schools, and hands-on learning opportunities in our woodshop, theater, library, greenhouse, and adjacent Thetford Hill State Forest.
5. Continue ongoing process of integrating and aligning TA with State of Vermont Education Quality Standards (EQS), ensuring the use of user-friendly reporting systems for student progress and proficiency.
6. Continue to invest in forward-thinking technology and equipment plans that support a program of instruction in 21st century computing skills for students while ensuring access to high-speed technologies and communication systems.



OUR STUDENTS

Thetford Academy is proud to be recognized throughout Vermont and New England as a school that prioritizes its caring, inclusive and supportive community.

We strive to ensure that each student feels respected, confident, and comfortable with their authentic selves, supporting their unique paths and ideas.

GOAL

Continually invest in the physical and social well-being of every student and nurture a caring, inclusive, and respectful culture of learning for all

ACTIONS

1. Empower students to take responsibility for sustaining TA's positive and inclusive spirit and culture --as now happens with student leadership of school assemblies-- and help students develop their skills in leadership, empathy, and civility.
2. Continue to empower students to individually advocate for their own intellectual, emotional, and social growth, both at TA and in their lives outside of campus.
3. Continue to create formal and informal spaces and opportunities for positive campus interactions outside of the classroom between students, faculty, administrators, and staff.
4. Ensure that each student can identify at least one adult on campus who provides them with individual guidance, support, and mentorship.
5. Continue to invest in the inclusive and historic traditions of TA that bring us all together and celebrate our school, our community, and our TA pride, including Founders' Day, Mountain Day, and Operation Days Work (ODW), among others.
6. Continue to invest in activities and programs that promote personal wellness, healthy behaviors, and responsible decision-making opportunities.



OUR FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATION

Our Thetford Academy faculty, staff, and administration share their educational expertise with students every day, both inside and outside of the classroom.

We are proud to recruit and retain the best education professionals who are committed to supporting students, families, and community.

GOAL

Provide faculty, staff, and administrators with the resources, support, and tools they need for educational excellence and for addressing the diverse needs of our students and community



ACTIONS

1. Continue to support and sustain faculty, staff, and administrator investments in TA's positive and inclusive spirit and culture.
2. Continue empowering TA faculty, staff, and administrators to advocate for their intellectual, emotional, and social well-being at TA as part of a caring and supportive community of educators and learners.
3. Clarify the decision-making processes and ensure administrators regularly consult and engage with faculty and staff expertise.
4. Continue to retain, support, and recruit the highest quality TA faculty, staff, and administration by fostering their professional commitments to providing excellence in educational excellence to all students.
5. Continue to provide members of the faculty, staff, and administration access to high quality professional development opportunities each year, including support for more personalized and differentiated instruction, curriculum mapping and development, and other added value programs.[1]
6. Using best practices in human resources, revisit the faculty evaluation system to ensure better understanding, by all parties, of the expected schedule and formal process for reviews by supervisors.[1]
7. Support a system of peer mentoring and peer observations for faculty and staff to learn from one another and share ideas and innovation.
8. Strengthen processes for recognizing ongoing staff contributions to the TA community, many of whom may be less visible on campus during the daily schedule of classes and events.

[1] = May require formal discussions of Master Agreement language



OUR CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

Our historic and beautiful school sits atop Thetford Hill, overlooking the Connecticut River Valley and the White Mountains.

Our campus inspires student learning, reflection, and growth with state-of-the-art athletic and theater facilities, a professional woodshop, and groomed hiking, running, and skiing trails throughout the surrounding forest.

GOAL

Provide the **best facilities and grounds** possible in support of an open culture of learning a vibrant and interactive campus community

ACTIONS

1. Regularly assess how our campus supports and welcomes a diversity of learners and community members to TA buildings and grounds, becoming a model of accessibility and inclusivity.
2. Work to ensure the campus follows best practice protocols for sustainable and environmentally-conscious use of resources.
3. Explore opportunities to open TA campus facilities and grounds over the summer as a venue for community events, meetings, summer education programs, and as a host to events in the music and arts.
4. Regularly assess the efficacy of campus-wide safety and security protocols and measures; ensure that administrators, faculty, staff, students and parents are educated and informed about updated systems and protocols.

AND THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.



OUR BOARD

Thetford Academy's Board of Trustees is made up of parents, alumni, and community members who are elected to help lead the school and advance the TA mission.

The Board provides fiduciary oversight and advice to the Head of School, and larger TA community.

GOAL

Ensure the **Board of Trustees** continues to uphold the values of the school and create a sustainable, efficient, and well-managed financial environment that meets the diverse needs of students, faculty, and our community.

ACTIONS

1. Support and guide the TA community's transition to a new Head of School. Collaborate with administrators, faculty, staff, and students to provide the best platform for new leadership success.
2. As recommended by the NEASC Review Team in 2018: prioritize the development of a strategic and sustainable financial model for TA.
3. Support ongoing work with TA leadership to prioritize resource allocations and decision-making that provide the highest quality education pathways for all students and invest in our excellent faculty and staff.
4. Continue to support TA leadership in refining and reviewing the communications and outreach plans for the TA school choice "brand" and ongoing student recruitment initiatives.
5. Ensure Board establishes processes for ongoing reviews of progress towards the goals and priorities of the TA Strategic Plan and the Campus Master Plan.
6. Work with Head of School to promote community dialogue around timely topics such as the future of education, sustainability, equality, civility, and the value of youth and under-represented voices in decision-making.



OUR FUTURE

In 2019, Thetford Academy will celebrate its 200th year as Vermont's oldest secondary school.

TA will use this celebration to recommit to its historic mission of inclusivity and focus on growing our endowment to ensure long-term financial stability for our students and school.



GOAL

Ensure TA develops solid strategic plans for positive enrollment management and long-term financial sustainability

ACTIONS

1. Prioritize the development of a multi-year enrollment strategy that identifies local, statewide, and regional demographic trends and includes the energy and ideas of TA faculty, staff, and students in all recruitment strategies.
2. Launch the Thetford Academy Bicentennial Annual Fund with (i) a fundraising goal of \$200,000, and (ii) clear intention to grow the endowment, increase financial sustainability, and increase the culture of giving throughout the TA community of alumni, parents, community interests, and other supporters of the school.
3. In coordination with Head of School: develop a multiyear, intensive fundraising campaign for 2019-2024 that builds upon the 2018-19 Bicentennial Annual Fund program and invests in long-term financial sustainability and strategic initiatives critical to future of TA.
4. Revisit the design and purpose of the TA website, making it even more of an engaging and inspiring site for prospective parents and students. This may include prominently and proudly displaying our many institutional and student awards (e.g., as were listed in the HOS search document for Fall 2018).



2018 Thetford Academy Strategic Plan Task Force

**Melody Brown Burkins (Chair)
Ann Bumpus
Joseph Deffner
Therese Linehan
Tom Yurkosky
Derek Burkins
Casey Huling
Marc Chabot
Curtis Richardson
Leif LaWhite
Ben Williams
Kelly Welsh
Donna Steinberg**

**Linda Lanteigne Magoon
Kristen Downey
Robin Junker-Boyce
Stephanie Daniels
Owen Deffner
Douglas Moody
Patty McIlvaine
Kathleen Cuneen
Mary Daum
Jane Chambers
Natalie Smith**

Photo Acknowledgements

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Thank you to all of our contributing Panther photographers!





Thetford
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www.thetfordacademy.org

