What a roller coaster the 2020–21 school year was. We began the year at home and ended on our beautiful unified campus. In between, there were myriad ups and downs, but throughout, our community banded together to support each other and, most importantly, support our students and teachers. In conversations with school leaders around the country, it became clear that 2020–21 was the most challenging school year any of us had ever faced.

It was a year that required relentless flexibility, becoming “experts” in the ever-changing COVID landscape, an acknowledgment of the impact the past year would have on our children’s socialization and our school community’s mental health, and endless amounts of patience. We felt not only a tremendous sense of relief as the school year ended, but also a sense of joy and pride in the resilience of our GDS community. We learned to value our connections with each other and our community more than ever.

This report highlights the impact of your generosity in the 2020–21 year. By investing in technology and innovation, we were able to deliver on our commitment to academic excellence—even in a most extraordinary year. Your gift to The Hopper Fund allowed us to deliver on the strongest academic program possible and to continue to evolve our 21st-century curriculum.

Your philanthropic support allowed us to navigate this extraordinary year and nimbly adjust our plans to meet the challenges in front of us, and I am extraordinarily grateful. I am proud to present the Report on Philanthropy for the 2020–21 school year. Thank you for your continued support of our community; it is more important now than ever.

Russell Shaw
Head of School

I write this as a bit of normalcy has returned to our lives, and we can really begin to see the promise of our unified campus fulfilled. Our kids are back in school full time, they're competing on our pair of athletic fields, and they're using all of the specialized rooms in the new LMS building as they were intended to be used (art, music, library, dance). High School kids are jumping out of buses in the morning, donning “Hopper Helper” badges, and helping the youngest kids out of cars. Students, teachers, and administrators are getting to campus on foot, by bike, bus, Metro, and even electric skateboards—and the number of cars coming to campus is dropping. I can see the day—not too far off, I hope—that interdivisional and whole-school activities can begin. It may not be the way we expected to get to know our new campus, but it is really happening. Slowly, we’re getting back together as a community.

I’m pleased to report to you that, even as we were separated and each of us was challenged to find new ways of doing routine things, the work of managing GDS and its finances went on, such that the school’s financial condition is strong. The school maintains adequate reserves, runs a balanced budget, and regularly receives clean financial audits. The endowment, while still modest for a school of GDS’s size, is invested wisely, used judiciously, and is growing. The unified campus project was completed within budget, and the MacArthur campus sale to DC Public School system was completed. As a result, debt was paid down and the balance sheet of the school

Impact of Philanthropy at GDS: The Power of Individual Giving in Our Community

When we reflect on the 2020–21 school year, it’s easy to focus on what we missed. As we reweave the fabric of our community and transition to living in our new reality, we at GDS are choosing to focus on what we gained (see “What We Learned From COVID-19,” page 58). As we Zoomed in from home, we gained a renewed appreciation for our faculty and their relentless commitment to our students. We realized the importance of simply connecting in the hallway or the dining hall. We saw the fortitude in our students as they transitioned back into a classroom that looked quite different from the one they had left months earlier. The 2020–21 school year saw our first virtual Grandparents and Special Friends Day, our first All-School Senior Walk on our unified campus, our first Virtual Welcome Back Assembly, an in-person Graduation Ceremony on our unified campus. More than 300 students participated in our cross-divisional Buddy Program, meeting both virtually and in person. And none of it would have been possible without your philanthropic support. Thank you for your support of our students, our community, and our mission this year. We simply couldn’t do it without you.
de-leveraged ahead of the original plan laid out when the unified campus project was conceived.

Of course, none of this could have happened without you! Your support of The Hopper Fund, the One GDS Campaign, One GDS Community Crisis Fund, and gifts to support financial aid all contribute to the success of the School. Each and every gift, large and small, makes a difference. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank all of you who gave (and that’s most of you)!

When approving the annual operating budget, the Board prioritizes financial aid in order to support and expand access to GDS by students across a wide range of socioeconomic means. Today, 24% of our students receive financial aid, with an average award of just over $30,000. In all, GDS awarded $7,430,635 in financial aid for the 2020–21 school year. Providing this level of financial aid takes a real commitment, since tuition covers just 89% of the cost of educating each student. The difference is largely funded by generous donations to The Hopper Fund, gifts to financial aid, and an annual draw on GDS’s modest endowment.

The unified campus is a reality, the buses are running, the cafeteria is cooking, and the School’s finances are in order and running according to plan. Most importantly, our kids are learning from the fabulous GDS faculty, and the School’s future is bright. The mission lives on, and the hard work continues.

It is an extraordinary pleasure to work with the talented and dedicated professionals who guide the operations of Georgetown Day School. Together with the full Board of Trustees, we are committed to ensuring the health, efficiency, and mission alignment of the institution’s finances.

A sincere thank-you to each and every one of you for your generous support in that effort.

Sincerely,

Jeff Blum
Board Treasurer (2020–21 school year)

P.S. - This letter marks my last act as Board treasurer. The job now rests in the talented hands of Parent-Trustee Ciera Ashley.

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**Total Cash Received 2020–21:**

$7,147,106

- **Financial Aid:** $3,104,260
- **Hopper Fund:** $1,143,595
- **One GDS Community Crisis Fund:** $153,275
- **Pledge payments:** $574,183
- **Building Fund:** $153,275
- **Other:** $2,171,793

**Total Numbers of Donors 2020–21:**

1,516

- **Number of Hopper Fund Leadership Donors:** 288
- **Number of New Donors:** 124
The Hopper Fund is critical to GDS’s ability to provide an educational experience grounded in academic excellence, social justice, and the unparalleled bond between our exceptional faculty and students. GDS believes that the educational development of the whole person requires comprehensive study of academic subjects, in-depth exposure to the arts, regular opportunities for physical education and athletics, and involvement in extracurricular activities and community service. As a school, we seek to cultivate a program aligned with our founding mission, principles, and values while also staying current with best practices for teaching and learning. We know we must continually learn and grow in order to best serve our students and school. As part of our ongoing commitment to academic excellence, in 2020–21, we developed an all-school document, “Vision for Teaching: Philosophy and Descriptions of Mission-Fit Practice”, to guide our faculty through professional growth and to honor the complexities of teaching and learning through our attention to both the art and science of each. Your support of The Hopper Fund makes that possible.

We became a GDS family in 2014, when our son Maceo enrolled in Nichelle and Barbara’s PK/K class. After considering several other DC independent schools, we landed firmly on GDS. GDS’s commitment to creating a supportive, diverse school community and its focus on lifelong learning, critical thinking, social justice, and student agency made our choice obvious. Maceo’s deep enthusiasm for GDS after his PK playdate cinched our decision. Although we later learned that a bright red truck heavily influenced our son’s thinking, his instincts were perfect. Eight years in, Maceo loves his school! The Hopper Fund is a philanthropic priority for our family. We want to do our part to help ensure that GDS is affordable and accessible to a socioeconomically diverse mix of families. The wonderful experiences and opportunities that GDS offers should not be limited to the wealthy.

— Sharon and Marc Lindsey, Current Parents

GDS is the village that helped me raise my son—it will always be on the top of my charitable giving list. My commitment to GDS is only surpassed by its commitment to excellence and diversity in education, in curriculum, extracurricular activities, and its student population, and I will continue to support GDS. I knew in 1990 that GDS was a great place when I first went through the front door. Seeing so many children going through the hallways—smiling, talking, laughing, engaging—told me that GDS was a vibrant educational environment where I wanted my son to be. I will always support GDS so other children can experience this remarkable place!

— Linda Jackson, Parent of Alumni and Former Trustee
TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Investment in technology was a critical priority in the 2020–21 school year, ensuring that students had equitable access to technology and that faculty had the resources necessary to navigate Virtual Campus, HyFlex, and in-person learning. Three major areas of investment in 2020–21 were student devices and connectivity, outfitting classrooms, and teacher training.

STUDENT DEVICES AND CONNECTIVITY

Prior to the pandemic, GDS provided personal devices to each 3rd through 8th grader, with a “shared device” environment in grades PK through 2nd. With the necessary pivot to distance learning, it was immediately clear that we needed to consider grades PK through 2nd and 9th through 12th, to ensure that every student had the equipment they needed to learn remotely. Resources provided by The Hopper Fund produced two fast and clear results: 1) We purchased an iPad and accessories for each PK through 2nd-grade student, and 2) We provided support to families in the High School by subsidizing computer purchases pro rata with their existing financial aid awards for tuition. This was the first time in the school’s history that we were able to say for certain that each student had consistent and dedicated access to a computer at home.

Equitable device distribution was a huge institutional priority and wouldn’t have been possible without your generosity or without the herculean efforts of the Technology team and the Transportation team. The Technology team procured and configured these devices in record time, and the Transportation team delivered hundreds of devices to doorsteps in the days leading up to the 2020–21 school year. It was an all-hands effort that epitomized the flexibility, creativity, and hard work that were the hallmarks of the 2020–21 school year.

Students with laptops needed viable and robust internet connections to fully participate in Virtual Campus, and your support also allowed the School to provide LTE hot spots (wireless broadband connection points) to families in need and cover the monthly service charges to keep them connected throughout the school year.

OUTFITTING CLASSROOMS

As we began to bring students back into the buildings, the prospect of making HyFlex teaching a reality, with some students at home while some students were in the classroom, was daunting. Our teaching spaces hadn’t been designed to function in a hybrid instructional environment. Once again, thanks to your support, we were able to transform 89 classrooms into fully hybrid learning spaces, as well as nearly 20 other spaces not previously designed as classrooms (gymnasiums, fitness rooms, etc.). This work included installing ceiling-mounted microphones, webcams, and control systems for the equipment in each classroom, as well as preparing instructional materials and training sessions so that our teachers would be able to use this equipment seamlessly.

TEACHER TRAINING

The roles of our LMS Innovation and Computer Science teachers evolved significantly during 2020–21, taking on the task of developing myriad in-house professional development learning opportunities for GDS teachers and staff so everyone could engage, work, and stay connected during distance learning and working and hybrid instruction. Many of these training materials were captured on a website built to be a one-stop shop for learning resources.
COVID-19 SAFETY AND THE RETURN TO SCHOOL

The Hopper Fund provided critical resources necessary to bring students, faculty, and staff safely back to campus throughout the 2020–21 school year. From upgraded ventilation and air purifiers in each room to weekly testing and lots and lots of hand sanitizer, your support made the return to in-person learning possible. The Hopper Fund also allowed GDS to hire additional staff to accommodate smaller cohorts and class sizes.

Our Anti-Racist Work

In addition to the incredible adaptability and tireless efforts on behalf of teachers to continue learning how to teach in a HyFlex environment, the entire GDS staff leaned into the anti-racist work with a joint read of The Racial Healing Handbook and welcomed inspiring educators at our opening days and in-service days throughout the year, including Dena Simmons, Bettina Love, Gholdy Muhammad, Ki, Eddie Moore Jr., John Igwebuike, and Anneliese Singh.

Each of these sessions inspired us to reconnect even more deeply with our anti-racist school roots, listen and care for each other and our students in more intentional ways, and push ourselves on the path of continuous improvement even while managing during a pandemic. Throughout the 2020–21 school year, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team worked in close partnership with our counselors and wellness teams, led by Assistant Head of School Laura Yee and Director of Student Life and Wellness Bobby Asher, to develop much of our anti-racist programming for faculty, staff, students, and parents.

From the development of new affinity groups to the launch of our schoolwide DEI audit and powerful keynote speakers during in-service days, this renewed commitment to anti-racism was a critical priority as our community, navigated last year. Our journey continues as we work to become a more just and inclusive community and your gift to The Hopper Fund helped make this critical work possible.

AT GDS WE CURRENTLY HAVE THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF AFFINITY GROUPS:

- 3 Faculty/Staff Groups
- 7 Parent Groups
- 2 MS Student Groups
- 15 HS Student Groups
COVID-19 SPENDING IN 2020-21:
$1,144,557

CLEANING SUPPLIES, PPE, BUILDING SIGNAGE:
$131,195

COVID-19 TESTING AND HEALTH SCREENING:
$445,835

LOWER/MIDDLE SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT:
$275,197

We love the teachers and other staff who work together and with us to educate and care for our son. Their flexibility, resourcefulness, and responsiveness have provided peace of mind about our son’s present and deep optimism about his future.

— Sue Liu and Raul Gonzalez, Current Parents

I choose to support GDS as a way to honor my father’s memory and thank him for introducing me to GDS and the amazing people I’ve met there. Thanks to GDS, I’ve known and stayed connected to my dearest friend, Dari Malloy, for 50 years.

— Cordenia Paige ’83, Alumni Board President

GDS has given back to me in many ways throughout my life, shaping the person I am and the way I show up in the world. Its legacy lives on in every student it has educated, many of whom are effectuating major change in our country and around the world.

— Samantha Holloway ’99
Support for The Hopper Fund gave faculty the resources to design 14 new courses as we continue expansion of our dynamic High School course offerings. A sample of new High School courses designed in 2020–21 includes:

**AutoCad:** AutoCad is a computer-aided design program that is the industry standard for architecture, engineering, and theater design, as well as many other professions.

**Identity, Art & Resistance:** This is a multimedia course that focuses on important historical movements of the 20th and 21st centuries and how artists and musicians such as Grace Jones, David Bowie, Keith Haring, Billy Porter, Billie Eilish, Ai Wei Wei, Lady Gaga, and Beyoncé have expressed their creativity in response to race, gender, identity, and politics. Beginning with the Harlem Renaissance and spanning more than 100 years of American and world history, the course covers the 1969 Stonewall Riots, Woodstock, the AIDS crisis, the Berlin Wall, and La Movida as well as the present-day LGBTQ, Black Lives Matter, and #MeToo movements.

**The Empire Writes Back: Hybridity Within the Postcolonial World:** “If a lion does not tell their story,” a Nigerian proverb states, “the hunter will always be glorified.” Which stories have been falsely told? What mysteries connect hospitals in Algeria to universal pre-kindergarten in DC; Haitian food traditions to hunger strikes in Ireland? By exploring the colonial pasts of countries such as Nigeria, Haiti, and Ireland, students will become familiar with the complicated and fractured histories that exist in these geographically and culturally diverse locations.

**Hip-Hop and Social Justice:** This course places at its core the dismantling of White supremacy and all other forms of discrimination as they are represented through individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural forms of oppression. This course will highlight the strategies of resistance used by hip-hop performers in order to provide prominent examples for our students to emulate and build upon.
Energy and Resources: Science, Technology, and Culture: This course explores how humans have harnessed energy and resources throughout history and how cultures have developed around their use.

My husband, Roger, and I give to GDS because—through its extraordinary teachers, faculty, and community—GDS has given our three children the intellectual rigor and emotional and social support they have needed to develop and thrive. We also give to GDS because of its unwavering commitment to diversity and inclusion. Giving to GDS allows us to play a role in enabling future generations to benefit from the GDS community and mission.

— Lisa Fairfax
President, Board of Trustees
Support for financial aid continues to be a mission-critical priority for the School. In the 2020–21 school year, GDS provided $7,430,635 in financial aid support to 24% of our students. The average award amount has grown to $30,645. Thanks to the philanthropic support of our community and excellent stewardship of resources by our Board of Trustees, we have been able to increase the amount of financial aid awarded at GDS by nearly $5 million in the last decade. Your gift to financial aid at GDS has made that possible and has an impact beyond just the students receiving financial aid.

This increased commitment to financial aid has made a GDS education more accessible to families while also increasing the economic diversity of our student body. The growing heterogeneity of our school community catalyzes richer experiences for faculty and students engaging in intellectual pursuits. Leveraging our resources to support financial aid strengthens and benefits GDS as it helps families access all that our school has to offer.

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Our Report on Philanthropy provides a glimpse into what your generosity helps us accomplish, this year and beyond. We are deeply grateful to the alumni, parents, Trustees, parents of alumni, grandparents, faculty, staff, and friends whose generosity makes our mission possible for generations of GDS students.
THE POWER OF PHILANTHROPY

We recognize with gratitude the donors who made our mission possible in 2020-21, listed in alphabetical order. We are deeply grateful for your support and for the role you play in strengthening the philanthropic spirit of the Georgetown Day School community.

The following lists donors to any fund between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021. The Advancement Office strives to ensure the listing of donors’ names in this report is accurate and complete. If there are errors or omissions, please accept our apologies and contact Miriam Liang, Advancement Systems and Data Reports Manager at mliang@gds.org or (202) 295-6238.

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