ANNUAL REPORT TO DONORS 2021-2022

4th Grade Living Museum

ADVANCEMENT AT WOODLAND

Like most independent schools, Woodland depends on the generosity of current families, grandparents, alumni and friends to carry out our mission. Together, contributions of all sizes support academic excellence today and maintain the long-term financial health of the school.

ANNUAL FUND

Each Fall, we launch our Annual Fund campaign, which finances 8% of the annual operating budget and closes the gap between tuition and the full cost of a Woodland education.

GALA AND AUCTION

In Spring, the Gala and Auction bring our community together to celebrate and to raise funds for faculty professional development, campus improvements and strategic academic priorities.

CAPITAL INITIATIVES

Capital initiatives fund specific objectives identified by the Board of Trustees and the school's leadership, including new construction, major renovation of existing facilities and initiatives arising from long-range strategic planning.



A letter from our HEAD OF SCHOOL | Jennifer Warren, Ed.D., Head of School

The 2021-2022 academic year was one of progress across many dimensions. Although COVID-19 continued to provide more challenges than expected, our community worked whole-heartedly to restore and renew beloved Woodland traditions while keeping our community safe and pursuing key priorities.



Thanks to COVID-19 protocols, we continued to flex and evolve as the year progressed, moving beyond the stable cohort model we observed in 2020-2021 to an environment where students could mix far more freely academically, socially, athletically and in community. Although wildfire smoke and COVID-19 surges led to more pivots, masks, antigen tests and adaptations than expected, we were able to launch the year with an inperson celebration of our 40th anniversary and restore many of the important traditions that Woodland developed over those years. Welcoming families back to campus for Santa Lucia, Bingo Night, Grandparent and Special Friend Day and other beloved events offered renewal for our community.

Resuming student experiences such as fullfledged House Cup Games, field trips, Outdoor Education, SCI-CON, the Middle School and Lower School Musicals and the Early Childhood Learning Showcase was not only great fun, but

also highlighted the well-rounded learning opportunities that are hallmarks of a Woodland education.

Underpinning all of this were the firm commitment of our dedicated faculty and staff, the unwavering leadership of our Board of Trustees and the financial backing of our generous community. The Annual Fund provided the strongest showing in the school's history and once again closed the gap between tuition and the full cost of a Woodland education – and, additionally, enabled Woodland to invest in new resources for students and teachers that are detailed in the pages that follow.

Our first in-person Gala and Auction in three years not only brought our community together in celebration, but also resulted in a recordbreaking Fund A Need to support new initiatives that promote the mental and physical well being of our students. Just as important, families generously sponsored auction packages that will provide nearly 40 additional opportunities for children and adults to connect and celebrate throughout the year.

Woodland's financial health was further strengthened by overall growth in enrollment and the sound management of the board's finance committee. The letter from our treasurer, James Brundage, details investments Woodland made in the student experience, faculty compensation and development, and our facilities. In a significant financial accomplishment, Woodland closed out the 2021-2022 school year by making a \$1.55 million payment toward the long-term debt we undertook to build the gym in 2014.

I am truly grateful for the many acts of volunteer service, financial support, expertise and advice."

Looking ahead, Woodland is well positioned to launch strategic planning this fall. The letter from long-time parent and incoming Board Chair, Sharon Chang, provides further information about this process and ways for our community to get involved in this vital undertaking. To borrow from our 2021 Annual Fund theme, strategic planning will enable Woodland to envision our future and chart a path going forward.

As we do so, it is also fitting to extend sincere gratitude to the leadership that guided Woodland to this point. I am grateful for the extraordinary counsel of Michelle Gabriel, who served as Board Chair for three years and continues her service as a trustee.

In closing, I want to acknowledge the collective contributions and service of our entire community. Day in and day out, our community demonstrates the commitment to our students, to our extraordinary faculty, and to one another that makes the accomplishments described in this report possible. I am truly grateful for the many acts of volunteer service, financial support, expertise and advice extended in support of our school.

A message from the BOARD CHAIR | Michelle Gabriel, 2021-2022 Board Chair

Although I'll continue to serve on the Board of Trustees, my service as Board Chair concluded with the 2021-2022 academic year. As I step down from this role, I'd like to share some reflections.

When I joined the board, our son Aiden was in second grade and is now a sophomore in high school. Our youngest child, Kyle, had yet to begin his Woodland journey and is poised to graduate in the spring of 2024. Aiden has shot past me in height and Kyle is well on his way!

Woodland, too, has grown and evolved over these years. Assemblies, which were primarily led by eighth grade students, now include a wide range of opportunities for students across grades to play meaningful roles and develop their strength of voice. Faculty professional development, always a priority at Woodland, has expanded to include individual courses and conferences that teachers identify as well as intensive, on-site programs that align with strategic school priorities such as last year's integrated curriculum workshop and this year's **RULER** Institute focusing on Social Emotional Learning. Investment in our campus spans new initiatives, like the creative play spaces installed this summer, restoration of critical infrastructure like our roof and field, and new commitments to sustainability including our installation of all-LED lighting last year.

The past year also included Woodland articulating our statement of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice. Approved by the Board of Trustees in February, the statement reflects the work of the board's DEIJ task force in collaboration with faculty, staff, students and parents. The statement will serve as a guide when strategic planning launches this fall, grounded in our collective commitment to a community where all are welcome.

This commitment to community helped drive the renewal in 2021-2022 of events and traditions that had been sorely missed during the height of the pandemic. Thanks to protocols developed and refined since Woodland returned to on-campus learning in 2020, families were able to gather in person for beloved community events and students could again experience the full range of academic and co-curricular activities. As the year progressed, assemblies and performances reopened to parent attendance and we were delighted to welcome extended families and friends to graduation.

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For students, this also meant renewed opportunities for the unique Woodland experiences that develop each individual's voice, intellect and character. From the second grade immigration play to the sixth grade exploration of Egyptian gods and the culminating eighth grade Capstone experience, students at Woodland learn to speak about a subject matter and parents get to witness how students' strength of voice develops over time.

At this juncture, it is wonderful to see trustee and longtime parent Sharon Chang assume the role of Board Chair. Sharon brings perspective from her many years at the school, experience from her tenure on the board, commitment to inclusivity from her work on the DEIJ task force, and a solutions orientation grounded in humility. As we undertake strategic planning under her leadership, I am excited to see what the next chapter brings for Woodland.

A message from the incoming BOARD CHAIR | sharon Chang, Incoming Board Chair

After ten years as a Woodland parent and two years on the Board of Trustees, I look forward to my first year as Board Chair. It is an honor to lead the dedicated team of trustees that serves the school and to partner with Dr. Warren as we plan for the new academic year and set longterm goals.

First, I would like to share a few words of introduction. My husband, Alec DeCherney, and I are proud parents of current students and of a Woodland alumna. Our daughter Natalie graduated in 2021, our daughter Juliet will graduate this year after beginning at Woodland as an Early Childhood student, and our son, William, is in first grade. Alec and I are thrilled to be a part of this community and grateful that our experience as Lower School, Middle School and alumni parents offers us a diverse range of perspectives.

Serving as Board Chair will offer yet another perspective and an opportunity to get to know the Woodland community in a new way. In fact, all of us are getting to know-or getting reacquainted with-Woodland in new ways. We're grateful that Woodland worked aggressively to resume in-person learning in a phased process with layered protocols to support student, employee and family safety.

This meant that many long-standing Woodland traditions either paused or were adapted. This not only impacted beloved events that build our community, but also the small daily experiences like waving to kindergarten students as they walked to their classrooms, catching a glimpse of your kids with their friends, seeing eighth grade students lead assembly, enjoying Friday morning classroom visits, or having impromptu conversations with other parents at extended care pickups. Over the past year and continuing into the year ahead, we're being very intentional to bring back many of these traditions and experiences, as COVID-19 permits, and invite you to get to know the school and other Woodland families in this new, old way.



As Board Chair, I look forward to engaging with our community as we create the strategic plan that will guide Woodland School for the next five years."

As Board Chair, I also look forward to engaging with our community as we create the strategic plan that will guide Woodland School for the next five years. You will hear more this fall about the strategic planning process and how you can participate. Together, we have the opportunity to define the next phase for Woodland that best reflects the kind of education we want for our children. Please consider responding to a survey, participating in a focus group, or engaging with our planning committee individually.

I look forward to building on the strong foundation of Michelle Gabriel's tenure as Board Chair and Dr. Warren's commitments as Head of School. Woodland is fortunate to enjoy a dedicated governing board, experienced management, and a strong financial position. These are the solid building blocks on which we can optimize the student experience in the coming year and also lay the foundation for the future.

A message from the TREASURER | James Brundage, Treasurer

On behalf of the finance committee of the Board of Trustees, I'm pleased to provide this summary for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Continued overall growth in enrollment, record fundraising results, and shrewd management of a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan put Woodland in a strong financial position again this year. As we reach capacity in more classes and grades, it not only strengthens our finances but also increases the number of families we serve and the investments we can make in our faculty and students.



Particularly noteworthy in the 2021-2022 fiscal year were Woodland's investments in faculty compensation and professional development. In recognition of the outstanding work of our educators, and to strengthen our position in the competitive Bay Area market for teaching talent, the board approved a 6.5% increase in the faculty compensation pool for the 2022-2023 academic year. Woodland also continued its tradition of robust support for faculty professional development and renewed its commitment to providing stipends for on-campus training that takes place outside the regular academic calendar.

Thanks to overall growth in both earned and contributed revenue, we continue to upgrade our campus in ways that enhance the teaching and learning environment at Woodland. For the second year, increased funding for our PPRRSM (provision for plant replacement, renewal and special maintenance) account enabled Woodland to undertake deferred maintenance priorities identified by the board's facilities committee.

G Woodland is well positioned for priorities arising from strategic planning the school will undertake this year."

This summer, those priorities included roofing and paving projects to improve school safety. Summer also saw upgrades to flooring, furniture and cabinetry in our fourth grade classrooms, completing a multi-year set of improvements that touched every Early Childhood and Lower School homeroom. Thanks to generous capital donors, Woodland students enjoy renovated restrooms and shade structures in the amphitheater and gym patio that provide protection from sun.

Thanks to extraordinary generosity at our first in-person Gala and Auction in three years, Woodland undertook an ambitious Outdoor Optimization Plan. Students returned to campus this fall to renovations that included a competition quality U-11 sports field, aeration and reseeding of the surrounding lawn, and a host of creative play areas that optimize natural features of the 12-acre campus that is one of our key differentiators as a school.

In addition to these substantial investments, Woodland further strengthened our financial picture by making a \$1.55 million payment toward long-term debt incurred to build the gym in 2014. This significant first step toward removing that debt, along with additional payments planned in coming years, positions Woodland well for priorities arising from strategic planning the school will undertake this year.

While these are all significant accomplishments, strong financial management will be vital to Woodland's ongoing fiscal health. As changing dynamics affect the broader economic environment, the school is well served by its conservative approach to budgeting. The finance committee will continue to monitor conditions closely, steward our resources thoughtfully, and partner with our community to ensure we maintain and build upon the gains we have achieved in recent years.

2021-2022 FINANCIALS



Unaudited financials. Audited financials will be available in October.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING:

After two challenging, pandemic-affected years, The National Center for School Mental Health states, "Schools need to invest now in the mental health and well-being of our kids in a broad and comprehensive way."

Generosity to both the Annual Fund and Fund A Need provided the financial support for Woodland to make substantial investments in social emotional learning (SEL).

At Woodland, that investment began with the addition of a full-time counselor and SEL teacher to our faculty in the 2021-2022 school year. In biweekly lessons, Lower School students learned to name emotions, sort them into "comfortable" and "uncomfortable" categories, and become "emotion detectives" who use both language and physical clues to spot a wide range of feelings.

Middle school students developed "teenage toolkits" to identify coping





skills, map personal connections including trusted adults, analyze social situations for conflict escalators, and develop strategies to combat negative self-talk.

More than 300 individual student meetings took place during counselor corner time. Often initiated by students but also taking place in response to teacher and parent observations, these meetings gave students space to process and share happenings in their lives.

Woodland also embraced the CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) principle that "SEL can be a powerful lever for creating caring, just, inclusive, and healthy communities that support all individuals in reaching their fullest potential" and took active steps to integrate our SEL and DEIJ (diversity, equity, inclusion and justice) work.

As one example, Woodland teachers gathered in January 2022 for a whole-school inservice focused on building relationships and school culture, exploring the robust and healthy relationships that are critical to positive and inclusive learning experiences for students.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, the library added 136 new SEL/DEIJ titles to its collection and deepened student

learning with author visits for selected titles including *Starfish*, which explores bullying based on body size, *Efren Divided*, which depicts a family of undocumented immigrants who live in fear of deportation, and *When Stars Are Scattered*, a fictionalized account of the author and his developmentally challenged brother who flee their war-torn nation and live in a refugee camp for many years. Through sharing their stories with our students, these authors made connections that helped build empathy and understanding of different life experiences.

Woodland's Early Childhood team participated in a training module from the Center for Optimal Brain Integration specifically designed for early childhood educators. The training introduced a range of responsive and resilience building teaching strategies that early childhood programs can use to create strengthbased environments that support children's health, healing and resiliency. Woodland also sponsored attendance at this summer's Institute for Social Emotional Learning, where coursework included an evidence-based framework for implementing and sustaining equity-rooted SEL throughout a school. Finally, Woodland conducted its own week-long summer workshop on RULER, a CASEL SELect program developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, to establish consistent SEL language and practices across faculty and staff. Further information about RULER can be found on pages 12-13.







The Impact of YOUR SUPPORT

Annual Fund

Woodland is proud and grateful to report a record-setting 2021 Annual Fund. Families, faculty, staff and corporate matching gifts came together to contribute \$915,772, the most ever, from a record 265 donors and 85% parent participation. The cornerstone of advancement at Woodland, the Annual Fund provides 8% of the operating budget and supports all the things that make a Woodland education so special, including investment in our outstanding faculty, maintaining a low student-teacher ratio even with overall enrollment growth, and continuing our commitment to a high quality, student-centered education for all families.

The Annual Fund also enables Woodland to make new investments in academic excellence and the student experience. In the 2021-2022 year, gifts to the Annual Fund helped Woodland raise our faculty compensation pool by 6.5%, increasing our ability to attract and retain exceptional educators.

The Annual Fund also supported the work of our new school counselor and SEL teacher, Maddie Wright, whose bi-weekly lessons in grades K-4 and advisory lessons in grades 5-8 helped students gain skills and enhance competencies in self awareness, self management, responsible decision making, social awareness and relationship building.

Throughout the year, students across all three divisions experienced 13 newly created, multidisciplinary projects. Developed during the Integrated Curriculum Workshop attended by 30 teachers last summer, these experiences ranged from a project that used mathematics to analyze athletic performance to an exploration of Greek mythology where students not only acted out the mythic stories, but also set them to music! By helping students draw tangible correlations across subject matter, these multidisciplinary projects enhanced the scope and depth of student learning.

Students bought in to the lesson more because it was taught in different ways in several of their classes."

Additional investments in the 2021-2022 academic year included 3D printers in the iLab and innovative tools in the Lower School Design Lab to spark student creativity, foster design thinking and develop iterative problem-solving skills. Finally, the need continued for COVID-19 investments such as testing, air filtration, and refreshed PPE supplies.



Fund A Need

Each year, proceeds from the auction and Fund A Need provide the financial backing for new priorities at Woodland. For the 2022 Fund A Need, Woodland identified two priorities to educate the whole child with intention and purpose, the Outdoor Optimization Plan and bringing the RULER program to Woodland.

Outdoor Optimization Plan

Developed in collaboration with our facilities team, faculty, and landscape designers—and after observing how students interact with our outdoor ecosystem—the Outdoor Optimization plan included:

- A competition-quality field to support after-school athletics, Physical Education classes and recess.
 Reseeding the surrounding lawn provides a welcoming area for fans at league games Woodland can once again host.
- Regrading, improved drainage and underground mesh for gopher control to enhance safety during games, practices and classes.
- A rock-lined dry creek with three fountains and a recirculating waterfall to promote mud play.
- A discovery circle where kids can meditate, perform, play make believe or learn in outdoor classes.
- A boulder play area that encourages students to actively jump, balance or create new types of tag games.

RULER | Optimizing Social Emotional Learning

While Woodland has had great success with its SEL program, we are committed to taking social emotional learning to the next level by bringing RULER to Woodland. A CASEL SELect Program, RULER is an evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.

After completing RULER training, team leads designed and directed a one-week onsite summer workshop to develop RULER fluency and expertise throughout the school. Generous Fund A Need support underwrote RULER training for team leads, the onsite workshop, and stipends for faculty attending this added week of training outside the regular academic calendar.



WOODLAND GALA 2022

On May 14, nearly 200 guests gathered for Woodland's first in-person Gala and Auction in three years. With a roaring twenties theme, celebrants made the most of the opportunity to "speak easy and bid hard" in support of Woodland.

The evening featured long-time traditions including the wine draw and jewelry game, and introduced some new twists. Twenty-two families vied for the chance to win Head of School for a Day, which was offered as a drawing this year. The live auction also featured a chance to ditch school and travel to Disneyland with Dr. Warren, as well as the first-ever Kids' Carpentry custom party offered by student favorite Mr. Tust.

In all, more than 80 donors put together innovative live and silent auction packages, families placed more than 700 bids,

and nearly 40 Get Togethers for kids and adults were offered through the auction, providing additional opportunities for our community to connect and celebrate throughout the year.

Auction Committee

Leana Fowler Kristine Griffith Laurie Hassett Kiran Kamboj Melissa Mason Crystal Matye Rich Prest Katie Randall Sandra Schofield Lisa Wallgren



As a result, Woodland raised more than \$530,000 in auction proceeds and Fund A Need donations, led by the generosity of donors who offered \$200,000 in matching funds.

Reflecting the remarkable generosity of our community, these results are a new record and fully funded two meaningful priorities for Woodland:

- Making our successful social emotional learning program even stronger with RULER professional development for faculty and staff.
- An Outdoor Optimization Plan for our field and adjacent woods to enhance athletics, Physical Education and creative play.









THANK YOU Volunteers!



Community makes Woodland a special place and through the commitment of our volunteers, community is achieved. Thank you for your hours of planning, creating, thinking, re-imagining, calling, emailing, meeting, calling again, and emailing again which resulted in a year's worth of successful events and endeavors. Your commitment to Woodland is commendable. **THANK YOU!**

Listed below are parents who have volunteered in classrooms, at events, as trustees, ambassadors, committee members, and coordinators. This key indicates yearlong and/or extended service. TRUSTEES * WSPA BOARD # ROOM PARENTS © PARENT AMBASSADORS \$ ANNUAL FUND AMBASSADORS \$ AUVIAL FUND AMBASSADORS \$ AUV

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Menlo-Atherton High School Menlo School Mercy High School, Burlingame Notre Dame High School, Belmont Pacific Ridge School

Pinewood School St. Francis High School Woodside High School Woodside Priory School





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WOODLAND by the Numbers

ANNUAL FUND total | \$915,772

