



BUILDING UPON A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023



THE
RUMSON
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Our Mission remains at the heart of our plan.

Mission Statement

The Rumson Country Day School, founded in 1926 as an independent educational institution, seeks:

- to provide students from all communities with a dynamic, challenging academic experience in a safe and supportive environment;
- to nourish academic excellence, individual and social responsibility, civic awareness, and leadership skills;
- to inspire our graduates to become life-long learners able to thrive, contribute, and excel in a demanding secondary school environment and in today's global society.

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The Strategic Planning Process

As The Rumson Country Day School prepares to embark on its second century, our School is flourishing. We embrace our traditions and are grateful for the rich history that has placed the school in a position of strength today. RCDS believes in educating the whole child by offering a rigorous academic program, diverse extracurricular activities, and myriad opportunities to nourish character, creativity, time management, resilience, and self-advocacy, all while instilling our Four Pillars: Kind, Honest, Responsible, and Respectful. As the visiting team from the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools (NJ AIS) wrote in their report approving RCDS's 10-year NJ AIS accreditation, "The alignment among mission, values, actions, and outcomes confirms a high degree of institutional integrity at The Rumson Country Day School."

This strategic plan ensures that we continue to provide an educational foundation that will serve our students for a lifetime by building on our many strengths while retaining the core tenets of an RCDS education that have served generations of our alumni well. The School's Strategic Planning Committee consisted of Trustees, current and past parents, teachers, and administrators led by Carney, Sandoe & Associates, a leading educational consulting firm. This plan is reflective of our community's collective aspirations to preserve and enhance RCDS, to elevate the experience for our students, to ensure that our resources are thoughtfully directed, and to make certain that our community continues to flourish.



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Building Upon a Legacy of Excellence

1. Educational Program

2. Faculty and Staff

3. Community and Relationships

4. Financial Goals and Resources

5. Facilities

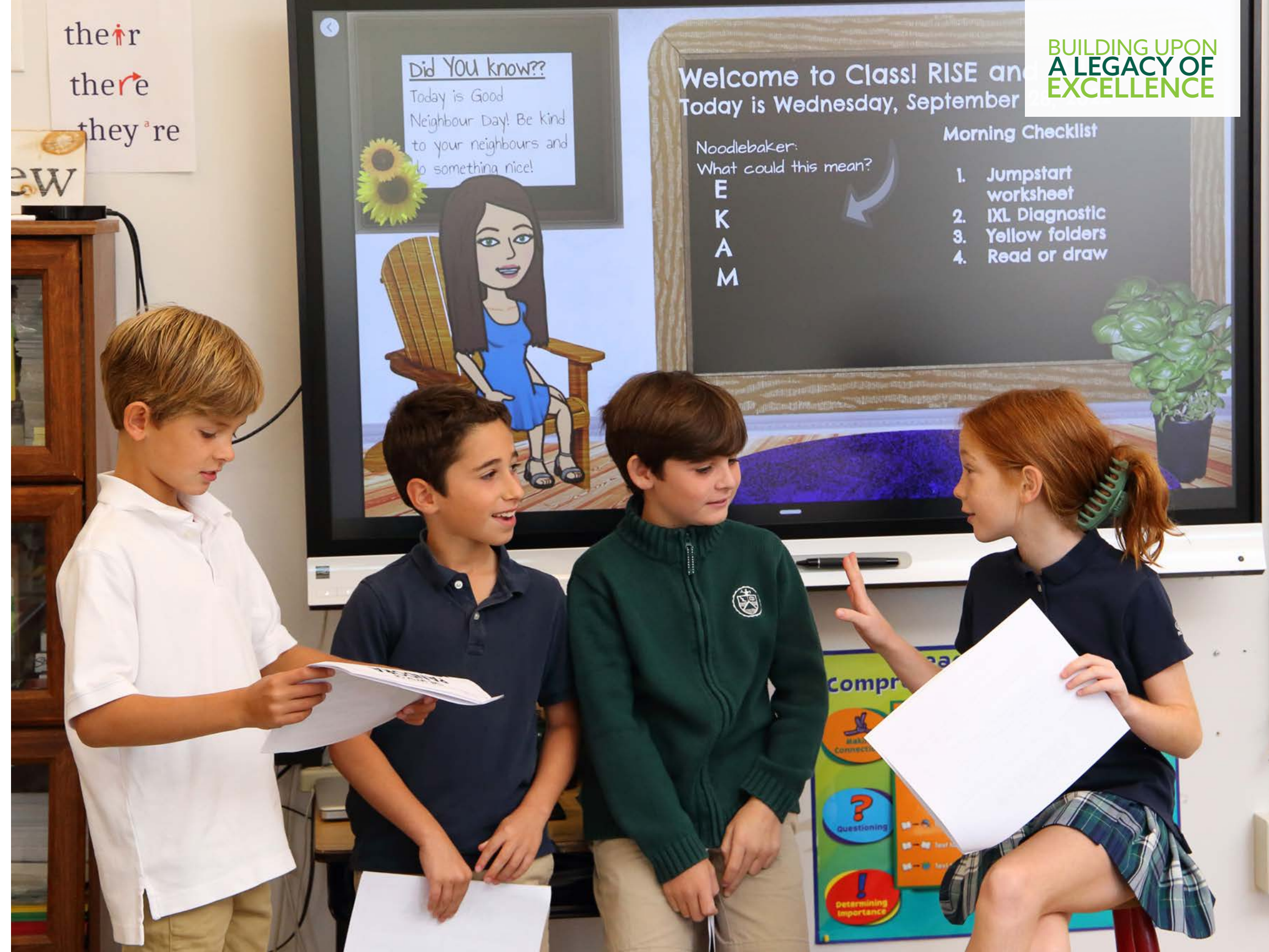
6. Governance

Educational Program

We will preserve our rigorous, traditional academic program while providing to our graduates the skills to succeed in the complex and changing environment beyond RCDS.

Selected Action Steps:

- Ensure that RCDS is the best N - 8 educational option in the area by strengthening the curriculum in all disciplines, maintaining the School's focus on traditional skills - including writing, reading, critical thinking, and public speaking - while also promoting modern skills needed for success in the 21st Century, such as collaboration, creativity, and problem solving. Develop a portrait of a graduate that sets forth the competencies that each RCDS graduate shall possess.
- Continue to prepare our graduates to thrive in their schools of choice following graduation from RCDS by emphasizing excellence in the core disciplines - math, English, science, history, and foreign languages - and offer to interested and qualified students opportunities for accelerated programs of study in math and foreign language.
- Evaluate the School's use of educational technology in support of the mission, curriculum, and program.
- Identify ways to leverage the Carmody School/Faculty expertise in teaching executive functioning, student planning and organization, and academic support for all students as a value-added feature of RCDS.



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Faculty and Staff

We will retain and attract the highest quality faculty while supporting and advancing excellence in teaching.

Selected Action Steps:

- Ensure competitive, holistic compensation of faculty and staff to aid in recruitment and retention. Study and benchmark faculty salaries, with the goal of increasing the School's competitiveness.
- Review current processes for supervision and professional growth and seek recommendations for improvement to the current system of faculty and staff evaluation.
- Support the many roles that faculty members play at RCDS and further develop and strengthen their ability to serve not only as teachers, advisors, and coaches, but also as role models, student advocates, and mentors.



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Community and Relationships

We will widely promote the Four Pillars and remain a school focused on community and family.

Selected Action Steps:

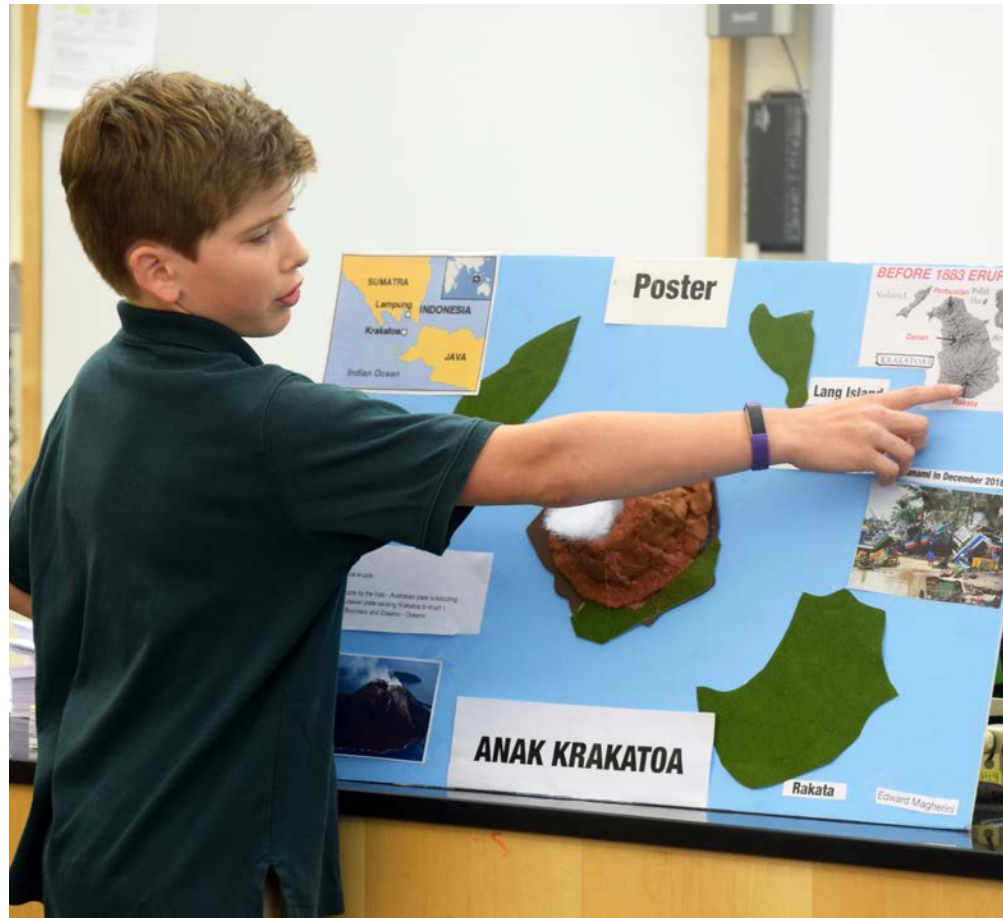
- Engage all constituencies in defining ways in which RCDS can enhance its prized sense of community and become more kind, honest, responsible, and respectful.
- Develop a school-wide philosophy and program around community service, and promote the School's long-standing relationship with Horizons Jersey Shore.
- Advance school diversity efforts through professional development and training for faculty and staff; curricular review to ensure accurate representation of all cultures and backgrounds; and identifying ways in which the School can become more diverse - socioeconomically, culturally, and/or geographically - in the short and long term.
- Identify and implement specific ways to further open the RCDS community and facilities to the external community through means such as after-school activities; educational speaker series; tutoring/test prep offerings; and professional development programs taught by RCDS faculty (e.g. Carmody program experts).

Financial Goals and Resources

We will ensure the long-term financial viability and sustainability of the School.

Selected Action Steps:

- Conduct a comparative review of tuition and other financial markers with that of similar schools, utilizing NJAIS/NAIS resources.
- Encourage a culture of philanthropy and improve communication with current families on how independent schools are financed, tuition is determined, and the importance of funds raised through our annual giving campaign and endowment.
- Assess the use of financial aid as a means to increase enrollment and subsequent financial ramifications.
- Explore ways to expand the School's geographical catchment area.
- Develop a timeline to launch a capital campaign culminating around the School's 100th anniversary in 2026.



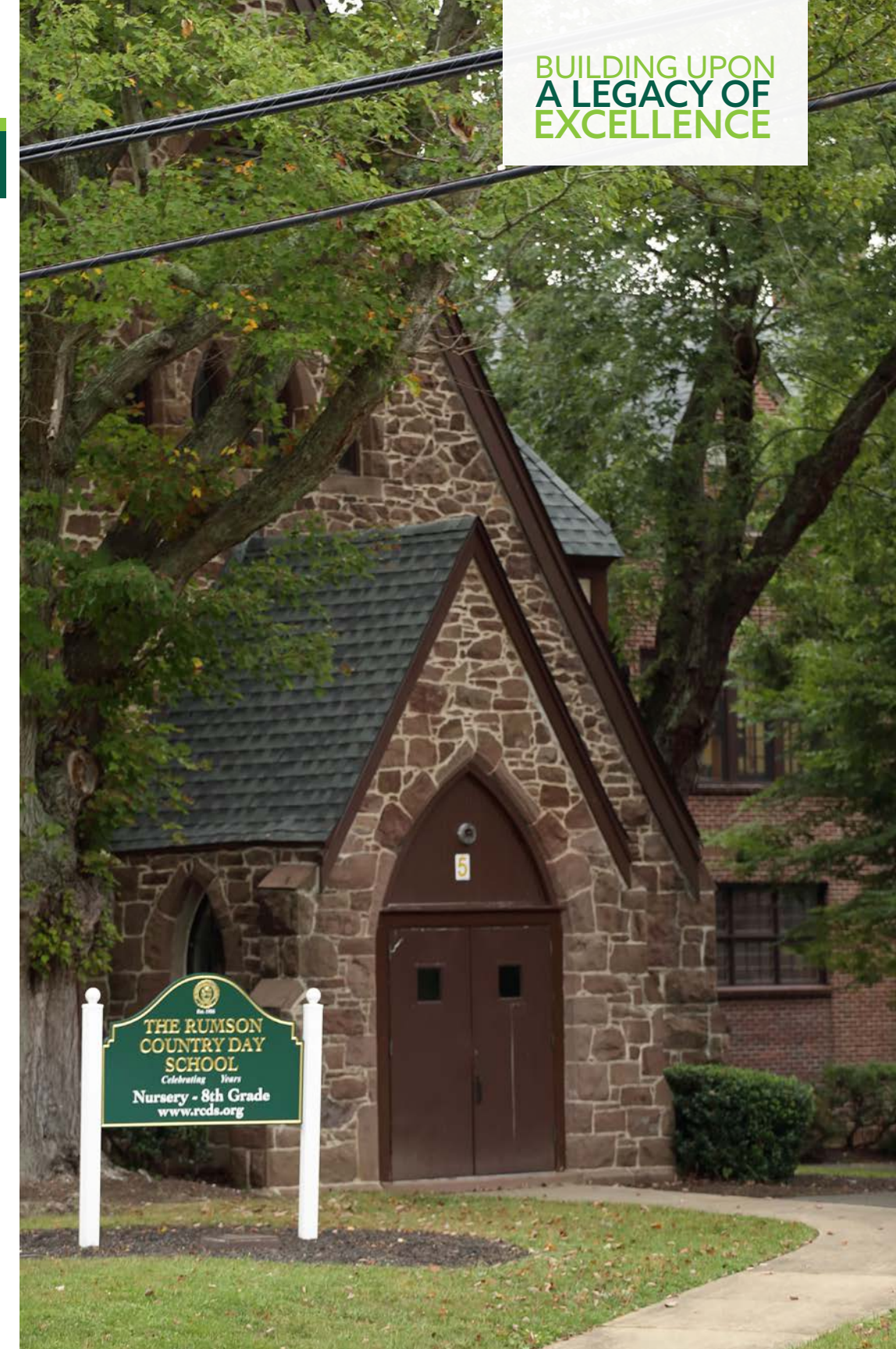
Facilities

We will develop our physical plant to serve our students and further our mission.

Selected Action Steps:

- Review and update our existing Master Plan to address the functionality, modernization of our campus and enhancement of our technology infrastructure.
- Create an RFP for architectural services with the goal of developing a project portfolio of needed maintenance and capital work.
- Consider facilities enhancements in areas including the Upper School and Blake Gym, with the goals of supporting our academic and extracurricular program and strengthening our sense of community.

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Governance

We will continue our tradition of energetic and positive Board of Trustees leadership.

Selected Action Steps:

- Increase board professional development and training, keeping its focus on strategy and policy rather than operational concerns.
- Develop essential criteria for new Board members based on the needs of the School and the Board of Trustees.
- Increase communications between the Board of Trustees and all members of the RCDS community regarding our purpose and work.



Board of Trustees

Carson Smith, Head of School
Kristen Masserio, President
Greg Melconian, Vice-President
Terry Stankovits, Vice-President
Nikki Alpert, Secretary
Todd Whitenack, Treasurer
Jesse Spector '95, Assistant Treasurer

Trustees

Jeffrey Cruz
Matthew Haddad '97
J. Ryan Kelly
Meghann Marturano
Rich McHugh
Debra Menkowitz
Greg Mitsch

Kelli O'Brien
Carrie Page
Adrienne Raphalian
Shawn Reynolds
Shawn Rubin
Siran Sahakian
Michael Walker

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