

2022 School Committee Report to IYMC

Looking ahead—it has been many years, long before Covid, since we've felt the luxury to use the phrase "looking ahead". Both Scattergood and the School Committee have begun the shift from reactive to proactive modes, thanks to the dedication and problem-solving actions of the school and its Head. As some pre-pandemic elements have been reintroduced, we strive to keep that which we love as well as evolve and rebuild, utilizing what we have learned during this time.

Part of our optimism this year comes from two major financial achievements: 1) the Annual Fund fundraising goal of \$280,000 was successfully reached, and 2) the school ended the year with no deficit, all without the help of the forgiven PPP loans or using our line of credit. These are significant accomplishments and we are grateful for the staff, development and business offices, and our Head of School for their creativity and hard work, and for the generosity of our donors. Though managing cash-flow can be a challenge during certain months and enrollment numbers need continuing attention, we are in a stronger place than we were a few years ago. It is encouraging to see the school begin to tackle projects that had been deferred during the leaner years---things like payroll increases, a front entry counter in the Main, housing improvements, and investigating a shift to solar power.

Two years ago, the school began the process of adopting rolling 5-year planning models, one for financial forecasting and another for strategic goals. These models have improved our ability to consider future expectations and have broadened our perspective for the school's potential. These tools have especially complimented John Zimmerman's strengths: seeing Big Picture innovations as well as fostering stability and growth—all of which help us to stay grounded while creating the path forward. A significant part of the plan for the next few years will focus on the Comprehensive Campaign and involves fundraising for, and then construction work on, the dorm and campus improvements. If all goes well, we hope to launch the public phase of the fundraising campaign at an on-campus reunion in August of 2023, and to begin construction work in the summer of 2024.

The Middle School, now two years into its manifestation, continues to mature. It has been especially successful in expanding our local exposure and bringing active local families into the Scattergood community. Many thanks to Jamie Newton and Dana Foster for their dedication to the program. Our seven-year accreditation cycle with the Independent School Association of Central States (ISACS) has begun with a self-study phase, and next year Friends Council on Education (FCE) will launch a new and more robust accreditation process for Quaker Schools and we will be one of the first to participate.

In the fall of 2020, an ad hoc Healing and Boundaries Committee began a process to listen and learn from challenging stories from the school's past, specifically concerning inappropriate or hurtful behaviors. Hopefully this project gave opportunities for some healing, and we are considering other ways to address the past. Though John's follow-up letter was recently sent to the entire Scattergood community, he will continue being available to listen if people are seeking to be heard. For the present-day campus, the focus has been to ensure more safety around

personal boundaries, and the school has been updating their reporting procedures along with expanding the ongoing training for both staff and students.

Looking inward—The School Committee is trying to navigate the hurdles of hybrid meetings, where some of us are on campus and some are online. Though it is challenging, we will continue to improve on this, especially as we seek out new and needed School Committee members. Internally we've been working with Chi Achebe of Chicago and devoting time to cultivate a better understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within our group. We recognize the enormity of the task of our ongoing inner growth. Part of the greater work includes considering the makeup of the members of the School Committee, how that affects the school, and how we might welcome greater diversity into our governing body. We also acknowledge that if we invite in more diverse voices, we need to be ready to listen. This work must become part of our culture within the committee and not just an occasional training.

Over the years it has come to our attention that the School and the Yearly Meeting, operating as the same corporation with the same tax ID number, is a complicated structure. A major concern with this model is that there is no legal firewall between Scattergood and IYMC, and if anything should happen resulting in legal action against the school it would come directly to the Yearly Meeting, its Trustees, and its assets. Embracing the relationship between the two entities, we have been asking ourselves how we might set up ways to protect the Yearly Meeting, *and* allow the school and its mission to thrive as we look ahead 10, 20, 30 years and more. An option to consider would be to research what is called a 'spin-off corporation', which would create a separate non-profit for the school but its ties to the Yearly Meeting would continue. More information and conversation will be needed, including an 'interest group' during Annual Session. In addition to the Yearly Meeting's internal discernment process, perhaps we could schedule a Question & Answer session with an entity familiar with these kinds of structures to help us better understand the possibilities.

In closing, as we take in what is happening around us, it can be easy to feel crushed by the world these days from so much that is out of our control and which shakes us to our core. With the ravages of war, attacks on our government and judicial system, the empowerment of extremist beliefs, and the lingering effects of the Covid pandemic, it is no wonder that the mental health of our nation, especially our youth, is suffering. We believe that Scattergood is a catalyst for hope in these times. Now, more than ever, not only do we need this school, but the greater community and the world need it as well. We are grateful for all who have contributed to the Scattergood experience in a myriad of ways over time. Our appreciation for the current staff and administrative team is deep: because of their determination, passion and commitment, our hope is shifting to optimism. We are also grateful that IYMC has provided us the opportunity to be a part of this journey that is Scattergood, which nurtures our connection to the Spirit, and inspires us to give even more of ourselves. Although the future remains uncertain, we hold to the feeling of hope and renewal of and for the school, and that is our true blessing.

For the School Committee,
Ruth Hampton, clerk and Roy Helm, assistant clerk