



The Graham School

encounter the world, engage the mind

2016-17 Annual Report to the Community

The Graham School

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Co-Superintendent, CEO - Eileen Meers, PhD

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Dean – Evan Rulong

Dean – Amy Vickroy

Fiscal Agent – Brian G. Adams MBA, CMA, CFM, CrFA, CGFM; Ohio Community School Consultants, Ltd.

School Year the School Opened – 2000-2001

Number of Students - 254

Grade Levels Served – 9, 10, 11, 12

Percentage of Students on IEP's – 36%

Percentage of Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch – 54%

Student demographic percentages – 52% Caucasian, 33% African American, 9% Hispanic, 5% multiracial, 1% Asian/American Indian

Percentage of Students for whom English is their second language – 4%

Governing Authority

The Graham School (TGS) is chartered by the state of Ohio and as such, is overseen by the Ohio Department of Education. Our sponsor is the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio (ESCCO). The Graham School Board of Directors provides governance, meeting a minimum of six times per year. A schedule of meeting dates and times, as well as a record of actions taken, are kept in the school's office and are available for review by the public. Board members in 2016-17 included: **Steve Gussler**, President; **George Norris**, Vice President and Treasurer; **Kim Gulyassy**, Secretary; **Bill Dawson**, **Jill Lugo**, and **Mirria Martin**. TGS partners with EL Education, national experts in effective educational practice using an expeditionary model.

The Graham School Mission

The Graham School has a particular mission to urban students in Central Ohio preparing them for lifelong learning and informed citizenship through real-world experiences and rigorous academics. Fostering ownership and responsibility for their education prepares our students to be successful in college, the workplace, and other endeavors they undertake upon leaving The Graham School.

The Graham School Vision

The Graham School:

- Treats all students humanely and individually;
- Enlivens the human spirit via the concerned and positive ways mature, wise adults interact with teenagers and serve as role models for them;
- Causes students to become more thoughtful, inquisitive people particularly in core literacy areas including: science, math, the arts, communication through literature, writing, oral presentation, technology, social studies, languages and cultural studies, and community engagement;

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- Respects the need for students to establish their own independence while at the same time developing in them a sense of commitment to their community;
- Is a place where adults working at the school always exhibit respect toward students and other adults;
- Serves every child equally who desires this kind of experiential education.

Special Accomplishments and Achievements

Walkabout students further their goals: A student worked as a public relations intern for State Representative Kathleen Clyde- writing a number of her press releases; a student interned at 614 Magazine and became a published writer; a student became a member of the Columbus Idea Foundry- starting as a janitor and working his way up to becoming a card carrying member, having access to the facilities and organizing tours for other school groups; and a student worked in self-publishing and created her own children's book.

May Days is a month long academic expedition course in which students focus in-depth study in one course. This course provides ample opportunity for fieldwork, hands-on learning, group participation, and individual challenge in academic areas. 2017 May Days included courses such as: CSI Graham, in which students took on the role of either a forensic scientist or detective to investigate and solve a fictional murder at TGS; Feeding the Community, in which students learned about the principles of permaculture and how to design, plant, maintain, and harvest produce in a garden; Pan-African Connections, in which students engaged in a comprehensive unit on Ghanaian culture, as well as a general Pan Africanism curriculum; Women in History and Society, in which students studied the significant historical contributions from women in the United States and elsewhere over the past 250 years; and many more exciting courses.

“We are crew, not passengers” is an essential core belief at TGS. Students meet daily in small groups (Crews) to establish relationships, build community, focus on character goals, literacy, and academic challenges.

Honors/Recognitions/Special Occasions

The Graham School presents several awards each year in June to students who exhibit achievement and leadership in a variety of categories. In 2016-2017 the following students were honored:

Subject Awards	Student
Cultural Studies	Caleb Potter
English	Elinor Haffner
Fine Arts	Haru Troper
Foreign Language	Kelson McLuen
Health/PE	Esai Garcia
Math	Emma Campbell
Music	Jacob Lamp
Science	Bibisha Veliyeva
Social Studies	Zach Held
Technology	Micah Phillips-Gary

Experiential & Habit Awards	Student
Adventure & Risk 9	Zach Held
Adventure & Risk 10	Jackie Mendoza
Adventure & Risk 11	Emma Campbell
Adventure & Risk 11	Kaylee Russell
Adventure & Risk 12	Nia Faircloth
Perseverance 9	Harper Yorka
Perseverance 10	Jasmine Ramirez
Perseverance 11	Noa Miller
Perseverance 11	Mitchell Ulibarri
Perseverance 12	Mia Johnson
Self Direction 9	Laila Kale
Self Direction 10	Kaya Gordon

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Self Direction 11	Cleo Featherstone
Self Direction 12	Maleaka Barber
Service & Stewardship 9	Madison Runkle
Service & Stewardship 10	Caleb Potter
Service & Stewardship 11	Madeleine Henderson
Service & Stewardship 12	Christina Nunez
Teamwork & Collaboration 9	Aaryn Roberts
Teamwork & Collaboration 10	Mallory Thompson
Teamwork & Collaboration 11	Josh Quehl
Teamwork & Collaboration 12	Tyler Hogans
Service Learning 9	Christian Fouts
Service Learning 10	Nia Richardson
Service Learning 11	Noah Henault
Service Learning 11	Anna Cook
Service Learning 12	Alex Rhinehart
Cultural Exchange	Bibisha Veliyeva
Cultural Exchange	Nil Ivanov
Peer Mediator Red Dragons	Peer Mediators

Recognition Awards	Student
Salutatorian Award	Janeel Maharaj
Valedictorian Award	Micah Phillips-Gary
Outstanding Senior Award	Micah Phillips-Gary
Senior Spirit Award	Juan Talley
Reaching for the Stars	Alyah Tavai
Dean's Award of Courage	Cheyenne Dodge
Dean's Award of Leadership	Hannah Moi
True Dragon	Da'Shawn Lowery

Celebrating Our Work Together

The school has many events that celebrate our work together including: Open House, ice cream social and buddy event, May Days presentation night, Prom, Alumni Reunion, Community Presentation Days, Walkabout presentations, and of course, the commencement ceremony. Many individuals and groups made these celebrations possible including Student Board, the Parent Guardian Community, TGS staff and students as a whole, alumni, friends of the school, and all families who work hard to support these students and the school. All affiliated with TGS are grateful to the many individuals dedicated to the work of the school in support of educating students through our academic and experiential programs.

Graduation: Another Class of Life-Long Learners

The Graham School commencement ceremonies for the class of 2017 were held on Saturday, May 27th at the Northland Performing Arts Center. Parents, families, friends, board members, community partners, and staff celebrated with our students as they graduated. Before the ceremony, graduates gave presentations to the community on their individual Walkabouts, the culminating experience of their high school careers. As we ended another year at The Graham School we added 46 students to our list of graduates, which now totals more than 585 over the last seventeen years. Graham graduates have gone on to universities outside Ohio including: Bennington College, Boston University, Columbia University, DePaul University, Knox College, and Reed College, and universities within Ohio including: Antioch College, Bowling Green University, Capital University, Columbus College of Art and Design, Columbus State Community College, Heidelberg College, Hiram College, Muskingum University, Ohio Dominican University, Ohio Northern University, The Ohio State University, Ohio University, Ohio Wesleyan University, Shawnee State University, University of Cincinnati, Warren Wilson, Wittenberg University, and others. Graduates also have gone on to serve in the military.

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2017 graduates of The Graham School included:

Maleaka Barber, Devin Barney, Nora (Ed) Bell, Bradlee Carr, Damon Combs, Brayden Connolly, Dorothy Coxson, Ryan Cabbage, Diane D'Aula, Cheyanne Dodge, Jordan Duty, James Evans, Nia Faircloth, Nathan Farner, Colin Fisher, Taya Fulks, Esai Garcia, Dakota Golden, Aidan Hayes, Noah Hensinger, Zoe Hickman, Tyler Hogans, David Howson, Mia Johnson, Da'Shawn Lowery, Janeel Maharaj, Christopher McCord, Hannah Moi, Debrayes Neal, Tuesday Nichols, Connor O'Neil, Micah Phillips-Gary, Alexander Rhinehart, Rodney Roggen, Tedra Sanders, Hunter Seel, Charles Simmons, Henry Stout, Juan Jose Talley, Alyah Tavai, Elijah Vottero, Elijah Walton, Jada West, Courtney Wiese, and Jack Wilsbach.

TGS Parent Guardian Community (PGC);

Working in conjunction with staff at TGS, parents facilitate communication; build community; support teachers, staff and families; organize events; and enhance educational opportunities for students. They meet monthly and are open to input from Graham families and staff. They communicate through; Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GrahamPGC>, Twitter @GrahamPGC, and Email at grahampgc@gmail.com. Any parent, guardian or family member of a Graham student may join in the PGC. There are many ways to be an active member of the PGC. Attend meetings for information and community, help with new and ongoing programs and projects or participate in fundraising.

Parent volunteers donated time, food, and energy to a variety of events supporting both staff and students. Members of the parent group also supported Have a Heart, a fundraiser for all of TGFS entities. The Graham School is indebted to the ongoing support of all its families, and is particularly grateful for the work of the PGC.

Staff Members

The full-time and part-time staff roster in the 2016-17 school year included: Connie Adams, Debbie Addison, Genevieve Adkins, Naki Akrobettoe, Brett Bachman, Cathy Baney, Harmony Barnett, Pam Boseker, Greg Brown, Jessica Butsko, Randi Channel, Mackenzie Cook, Sarai Correa, Derrick Creque, Kevin Elliott, Susan Frank, Zachary Franklin, Cynthia Gavagan, Johnny Ginter, Lauren Greenspan, Megan Grunewald, Mathew Halfond, Hope Harrington, RJ Larry, Jamie Lenzo, Kathryn Livingston, Katie Logan, Cheryl Long, Sarah Lopienski, Megan McCormack, Kathryn McDaniel, Eileen Meers, Myra Molnar, Evan Rulong, Gheon Selemon, Andy Shields, Mary Slaback, Zach Steinberger, Sarah Tucker, Amy Vickroy, Jennifer Waddell, Laurel Wakeley, Jeanne Weinberg, Rachel Widmer, and Jeff Wiseman.

Names of Assessments Given at the School and the Results

The effort to individualize each student's educational experience at The Graham School is captured in our unique approach to curriculum designed to meet the needs of all of our students within fully integrated multi-grade level classes. Students with disabilities are involved in all classroom lectures, laboratory activities, and experiential opportunities.

The Graham School is an active participant in the College Credit Plus (CCP) programs available through Columbus State Community College and The Ohio State University. Students are encouraged in their third and fourth year to take at least one CCP class prior to graduation from TGS.

College readiness assessments, including the PSAT, ACT and SAT are available to students who attend TGS. The PSAT was administered to 10th and 11th grade students at TGS in October. The SAT was administered at TGS to 53 students with 864 being the average score.

The performance standards by which the success of the school was evaluated by the sponsor (ESCCO) during the 2016-2017 school year:

A state graduation requirement in Ohio for all students entering 9th grade after July 2014 is taking Ohio's State Tests. Graham administered these assessments in Spring 2017 for Biology, American Government, American History, English Language Arts I, English Language Arts II, Algebra, and Geometry.

86 - Graham students took the Biology assessment and 30% scored proficient or higher. 75 – Graham students took the American History assessment and 39% scored proficient or higher. 31 – Graham students took the American Government assessment and 32% scored proficient or higher. 117 – Graham students took the Algebra I assessment and 20% scored proficient or higher. 78 – Graham students took the Geometry assessment and 17% scored proficient or higher. 103 – Graham students took the ELA I assessment and 40% scored proficient of higher. 82 – Graham students took the ELA II assessment and 32% scored proficient or higher.

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This year's report card rating for TGS included a D in Progress, which measures the growth that all students are making based on their past performances. TGS received a F in Achievement, which measures the number of students who passed the state tests and how well they performed on them. TGS received a F in Gap Closing, which shows how the school is meeting the performance expectations for the most vulnerable populations of students in English language arts, math and graduation. TGS received a F in Prepared for Success, which shows the progress in preparing students for a technical field, work, college, and all future opportunities. TGS received a F in Graduation Rate, which looks at the percentage of students who successfully finish high school with a diploma in four or five years.

Our scores on this year's report card are in general lower than last years, as are virtually every school's and district's across the state. This is the third consecutive year the state tests have changed, and there were no preparatory materials available to schools to get ready for them, nor any previous exact tests with which to compare them. Also, the bar for passing was greatly increased at the same time so, scores naturally dropped. This is more a reflection on these changes than on the teaching and learning that has occurred in our and other classrooms. However, we absolutely support the raising of standards in a way that supports our students growing in their learning and intend to work hard to raise these scores in the years ahead. TGS is committed to ongoing improvement, and will continue to work hard every day on behalf of our students. The State Report Card is but one indicator of a school's work, and we take it seriously.

Compared with the State of Ohio, The Graham School has an above average percentage of teachers with a bachelor's degree and an equivalent percentage of teachers with a master's degree. The Graham School teachers are 100% certified and highly qualified.

A state graduation requirement in Ohio for all students who entered 9th grade before July 2014 is passage of all five parts (Reading, Mathematics, Writing, Science, and Social Studies) of the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT), which is given for the first time in 10th grade.

Graham 10th grade participation numbers were: 1 student tested in Reading; 1 student tested in Mathematics; 0 students tested in Writing; 0 students tested in Science; and 1 student tested in Social Studies.

Graham 10th grade passing rates were: Reading, 100 percent; Mathematics, 100 percent; Writing, 0 percent; Science, 0 percent; and, Social Studies, 100 percent.

Graham 11th grade participation numbers were: 0 students tested in Reading; 1 students tested in Mathematics; 1 students tested in Writing; 3 students tested in Science; and 2 students tested in Social Studies.

Graham 11th grade passing rates were: Reading, 0 percent; Mathematics, 0 percent; Writing 0 percent; Science 0 percent; and Social Studies 100 percent.

The method of measurement that was used by the sponsor (ESCCO) to determine progress toward those goals during the 2016-2017 school year

The sponsor has established a rubric with which it evaluates its schools annually which includes evaluating the annual state report card, MAP other measures. The sponsor attends board meetings and initiates site visits during the school year.

The school's activities toward and progress in meeting those contractually stated academic goals during the 2016-2017 school year.

The Graham School, founded in the year 2000, is dedicated to preparing students to be life-long learners through rigorous academics and experiential learning. Academics at TGS integrate standards based course work that provides coverage and mastery of required content with perspectives and skills that are designed to make them effective participants in the world outside the classroom. In the 2016-2017 school year The Graham School continued its mission to educate students who seek significant learning through focused academics, self-directed learning, and meaningful internships throughout Columbus.

As a brief review of our initiatives to address our improvement needs, we have:

- Hired a Director of Educational Data Analysis to make best use of the various data points we create and collect, and to help us with more intentional, targeted teaching strategies.

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- Hired a Director of Social and Emotional Learning to help us understand better our students non-academic needs that impact directly their ability to learn, and to design strategies that help our students become more aware of their own needs and resources.
- Created a focused program around ninth grade transition, with a current staff member coordinating this work.
- Instituted focused programming for our ninth grades at each high school, with staff at each school guiding and leading this effort.
- Signed an agreement with Learning Circle, a Columbus-based organization, designed to collect metrics on our students' academic work, behaviors and attendance, and provide early information about students' progress. Learning Circle works with Columbus City Schools, and a few other select charter organizations.
- Instituted work in all our schools around restorative practice, helping us find new ways to address school culture and student behavior that's the most instructive for a child's growth.
- Begun a focus around understanding the impact of trauma on children and their learning. Much new research in this area has been very helpful to understanding this impact on a child's brain and his or her ability to learn.

The Graham School academic curriculum fully incorporates Ohio and Common Core Standards. Interim and end of course exams are part of our model. Experiential curriculum is measured by a specific rubric built to evaluate achievement in each grade level program. The Graham School is a member of an OAPCS Consortium that received a 5 year Straight A grant to fund the use of Illuminate, an IIS system enabling teachers to collect and use classroom data efficiently and effectively. Staff meets in weekly data teams.

EL Education

The Graham School completed the second year of its partnership with EL Education in 2016-2017. EL Education is one of the nation's leading K-12 education organizations committed to creating classrooms where teachers can fulfill their highest aspirations and where students can achieve more than they think possible. For more than 20 years, EL affiliated schools have striven for a vision of student success that joins academic achievement, character, and high-quality work. EL's approach is grounded in respect for teachers and school leaders as creative agents in their classrooms. Stakeholders build their capacity to ignite each student's motivation, persistence, and compassion so that they become active contributors to building a better world and succeed in school, college, career, and life.

The Expeditionary Learning model is characterized by:

- Active instructional and student-engaged assessment practices that build academic skills and students' ownership of their learning
- Rigorous academic projects connected to real-world issues that meet Federal and other state standards
- A culture of learning that builds persistence, collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and independence in every student

TGS staff collaborated to develop Habits of Learning, a combination of relational and performance character traits that prepare students to navigate the challenges of school and life. The TGS Habits of Learning are: Self-Direction, Perseverance, Teamwork & Collaboration, Service & Stewardship, and Adventure & Risk.

Experiential Education Curriculum

TGS experiential program combined with college preparatory academic courses allow for student growth through service learning and engagement with mentors and organizations that provide practical experiential learning opportunities. TGS freshmen participated in the Screen Time and the Brain, and How Societies Change expeditions and the sophomores participated in the Statistics of Energy, Immortality and Technology, Statistics of Inequality, and Ethical vs. Just: A Personal Narrative expeditions. Juniors participated in individualized local internships two days per week.

In Spring of 2017, 45 seniors participated in The Graham School's culminating experiential internship: Walkabout. Walkabout provides students with the opportunity to participate in two eight-week, 30 hour per week internships. The objective of Walkabout is to provide seniors with significant internships that help students mature in the responsibilities of self-direction.

Experiential Partners

The Graham School is grateful to have partnered with the following organizations during the 2016-2017 school year:

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3-C Body Shop, Boss Display, Bretzel, Cap City Diner, Cynthia Minnich, CHA, Columbus Historical Society, D and R Motors, Donato's, ECLC, Garcia's Auto Care, Global Gifts, Indianola Children's Center, Kafe Kerouac, Kobalt Studio, Ohio State School for the Blind, Krazy Kennys Computer Warehouse, Laughing Ogre, Liberty Farms, Mad Metal Welding and Fabrication, Magnolia Record Shop, Meadow Park, Midwest Bayless, Mobile Mikes Auto Electric Service, Mozart's Cafe and Bakery, Mrs. Goodman's Bakery, North Broadway Children's Center, North Market Poultry and Game, Omega Bakery, Parapsychological Association, Pets without Parents, Weiland's, Red Velvet Café, Robbie's Hobbies, Sharon Woods Metro Park, St. Stephens Community House, Strickland for Senate Campaign, Sunrise of Worthington, Trendline Salon, United Methodist Church for all People, Whetstone Library, and Wildwood Village.

Academic Curriculum Requirements

The Graham School staff creates classroom work in traditional and non-traditional courses in order to help students acquire conceptual and factual knowledge and to develop our students' study habits, self-discipline, research skills, and teamwork. The Graham School curriculum includes courses in all required academic areas as designated by the State of Ohio for graduation. Students must progress experientially and academically in order to meet the requirements for graduation. Academic requirements include: 4 credits in English, 4 credits in mathematics, 3 credits in science, 3 credits in social studies, 2 credits in foreign language/cultural studies, 1 credit in fine arts, 1 credit in technology, 0.5 credits in health, 0.5 credits in physical education, and financial literacy. Between 1.5 and 4.5 credits are required in experiential education depending on how many years the student has been attending The Graham School. All students graduating in the class of 2014 and beyond are required to fulfill the CORE graduation requirements established by the Ohio Department of Education. Approximately 75 different courses were offered over the school year in all academic areas.

School-wide Title Program

TGS is designated as a School-wide Title program, enabling us to receive Federal Funds to ensure that all of our students receive the support they need to reach and exceed grade level goals in reading and math.

Financial Status

In fiscal year 2016-17 the school received \$2,439,312 in state funds. The school also received \$376,439 in federal funds and \$146,251 in development funds, among other separated categories. Sources of income totaled \$7,503,613. In fiscal year 2016-17 the school paid \$7,064,256 in employee salaries and benefits, including payroll taxes and retirement; and \$122,822 in mortgage and loan payments on the purchase of the building. Uses, including the aforementioned items along with classroom support expenses, utilities, insurance and assorted services to and purchases for the school, totaled \$8,029,146. When the current cash in bank was added to the sources, the year-end adjusted cash balance was \$531,831 to be carried over to 2017-18. The school conducts its own on-going internal financial audit under the direction of its Board Audit Committee and treasurer Brian Adams, MBA, CMA, CFM, CGFM. Finances also were audited by the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio, the school's sponsor. And, the school is audited annually by the State of Ohio Auditor's Office. All found the finances to be accurately and appropriately accounted for.