Update on the State of the School

In February of 2003, the Rector presented a *State of the School* report to the Board of Trustees. Based on the Strategic Plan of the School, the report covered five years in the life of the School, and included a report on administrative practices. The Trustees found it useful, and in June of that year distributed to all constituents of the School an executive summary. In that summary, they said they would ask for annual updates, and School people have indeed provided the relevant information for the 2003-2004 school year. We thought we would share with all of you some of the highlights from last year. Following the construct of the Strategic Plan, we offer comments on *People, Programs, and Place*, and then on the *Financial Health of the School*.

PEOPLE

Admissions: St. Paul’s is today perhaps the most selective boarding school in the country, and last year’s admissions cycle saw the following achievements:

- The past admissions year was one of the strongest in the School’s history.
- Applications remained high from an increasingly diverse and talented applicant pool.
- 85% of incoming students had an A average at their previous school.
- 45% of these new students came from public school backgrounds.
- The yield of boarding students of 63% is the highest among our peer schools.
- Students report choosing the School because it is Challenging (95%); Academic (88%); Intellectual (87%); Prestigious (85%) and Friendly (84%).
- Average standardized test scores from this increasingly diverse population remained near 90%.
- Selectivity of 23% is the lowest in recent history, and we think the best of any boarding school in the country.
- Average financial aid (now called “tuition assistance”) grants rose to $25,500, and the total allocation rose to $4.5 million. One third of our students receive such support.

College Placement: SPS graduates continued to find favorable treatment in the college process, particularly with the most competitive schools:

- SAT averages for all Form of 2004 students were: Verbal 669; Math 675.
- One third of the graduates were accepted at an Ivy League school.

Faculty and Staff: Once again the School has been able to attract excellent candidates to work with our students, and they join a talented and experienced group of dedicated professionals; the School has been able to support them with increased professional development opportunities:

- During the academic year 2003-2004, the School awarded approximately $97,000 in professional development resources to fifty-eight different faculty members.
- Faculty salaries and benefits remained at or near the top when compared to all peer groups.
Fifteen faculty members were honored for five years of service to the School with summer travel grants.

The generous travel grants encouraged these faculty members to take a break from the demanding boarding school life and explore such places as Italy, Switzerland, France, Mexico, Scotland, Japan, Canada, Maine, Florida, and South Carolina.

These visits provided wonderful opportunities for rest, rejuvenation, and enrichment for our faculty.

Staff members were sent to conferences, seminars, and classes that further their knowledge and skills in the jobs they perform.

Contributions to the cost of tuition for Staff who have chosen to pursue educational and self-improvement programs were made by the School.

A management-training program for supervisory Staff has been developed.

For promotional opportunities we encourage and look to current Staff.

Staff and Faculty are very involved in leadership and service activities
  o Church choirs and church committee chairmanships
  o Fundraising chair for graduating class of Mount Holyoke College
  o Fundraising coordinator for the National Outdoor Leadership School Advisory Council
  o Admissions representative for Colorado College
  o Shriners
  o Friendly Kitchen
  o Soup Kitchen
  o Girls INC
  o Quilts for Aids Babies
  o Work with the blind
  o Nursing home volunteers
  o Community theater
  o Walks for the Animals to support SPCA
  o Parent Teacher Group volunteers
  o Concord Regional Crimeline Board of Directors
  o Hospice
  o Boys and Girls Club
  o New Hampshire Humanities Council

Several faculty members are active in, and provide leadership for, their professional organizations.

PROGRAMS

Academic Technology:
  o Completed the second year of a three-year faculty laptop program.
  o Upgraded all technologies in Moore Math building this year.
  o Upgraded the academic technologies in another three Humanities classrooms.
  o Increased wireless technologies in the library, Moore Building, Schoolhouse classrooms and the faculty room in the Schoolhouse.
• Added JSTOR, a powerful research tool, to the library for faculty and students.

Community Service: SPS students participate in the following outreach programs:
• Boys and Girls Club After School Program
• Girls Inc.
• Tutoring:
  o Rumford Elementary School
  o Rundlett Middle School
  o Kimball Elementary School (Spanish Club)
• Working with the Elderly
  o Granite Ledges (Grandparent Connection)
  o The Birches (Musical Renditions)
• SPCA of Concord
• The Dame School
• Concord Hospital
• Missionary Society
• March of Dimes
• American Red Cross Blood Drive
• Granite Ledges Earth Day Project
• Audubon Society

International Programs: SPS now has exchange programs with, or a formal relationship with, and/or SPS students and/or faculty have traveled to:
• Ghana
• India
• Chile
• China
• Japan
• France
• Germany
• Greece
• England
• Sweden
• Denmark
• Italy
• Spain

Wellness: The following wellness opportunities were offered to the School community:
• Nutrition talks to all our athletic spring teams – Clark House in collaboration with the Athletic department.
• Wellness Fair
• Center of Health Promotion – Smoking Cessation
• Wellness survey for all our staff and faculty
• Lunch and Learn sessions on relevant health topics throughout the school year
• Aerobics, tai chi and yoga classes during the school year to our entire community free of charge.

**Robotics:** new program building on Artificial Intelligence course.

- Full year course called FIRST Robotics.
- Robotics Club and adult volunteers will participate in FIRST Robotics Competition, a national event.
- Team will have eight weeks, beginning in the new year, to design, manufacture, and test a robotics system for Northeast Regional competition.
- The robots must be autonomous (self-controlled) for the first fifteen seconds, and then are controlled with joysticks.
- Last year the robots were required to herd basketballs, climb stairs, and finish by pulling themselves up stairs
- Last year the robots were allowed to be up to 5 feet tall, and could weigh up to 130 lbs.

**Astronomy**

- Installed new .7 meter (or approximately 26 inches) telescope in the past year.
- Five advanced astronomy students will work with this sophisticated new instrument this year, along with astronomy faculty.
- A research grade instrument of this caliber offers extraordinary opportunities to obtain digital images of very dim, deep space objects.
- Plans are underway to connect individual students with professional astronomers who also use instruments such as this.

**PLACE:** Since 2001 the School has worked aggressively to correct deferred maintenance needs while addressing facilities and grounds needs as stated in the master plan for grounds and buildings. The following has been accomplished:

- Completely updated its entire steam generation and distribution system at a cost of more than $7 million.
- Built new White Farm building for facilities maintenance staff needs.
- Replaced several bridges, did road and drainage work, and several grounds projects.
- In past year alone
  - Moved forward with strategic goal of bringing all faculty to core grounds by building three new faculty homes (completed), with one more home under construction.
  - Funded these faculty homes from sale of property not contiguous to School grounds.
  - Completed construction of a new Athletic and Fitness Center, to include renovations to the Cage.
Moved the ITG department into the Schoolhouse and the server room to Payson.
Completed all deferred maintenance on the roof and exterior of the Post Office.
Purchased and installed a backup electrical transformer.
Added one bathroom and renovated the existing bathroom in Moore.
Repainted the black box theater.
Installed a new dance floor.
Installed cipher locks on the exterior doors of each dormitory.
Installed air conditioning in the dish room at the Upper.
Renovated the “Pit” into the “Lowest” dining room in order to accommodate more faculty at seated meal.
Renovated Scudder both inside and out.
Completed recarpeting projects in Ohrstrom Library.
Renovated three more classrooms in the Schoolhouse.
Completed the usual cycle of roofs, painting, appliances, dorm carpeting, furniture replacements, and other cyclical activities.

Financial Health/Stewardship: Attending to the physical, financial, and human assets of the School is critical. Comments above under “people” and “place” address steps taken in the past year to preserve physical and human. To assure financial health, the School has for three years managed to a five-year financial plan adopted by the Board of Trustees. Here are some facts:

- Between 1997 and 2001, the total operating costs of the School increased by about 38%.
- Between 2002 and 2005 (current year’s budget), total-operating costs remained flat at approximately $33 million.
  - Over the past three years these total operating costs for administration, personnel/staffing, and clerical support have been reduced by approximately $3 million.
  - Added to the operating budget were costs previously funded by separate withdrawals from the endowment (for example, debt service and capital campaign type costs totaling nearly $2.5 million in previous years are now included in the “all in” budget where they used to be outside of operating and funded by separate draws.)
  - Since 1997, financial aid has more than doubled to its current $4.5 million level. Financial aid expenditures are not part of the operating costs of $33 million listed above.
- Reliance on the endowment has decreased from approximately $20.6 million authorized for FY 2002 total operating costs to approximately $16.5 million authorized for the FY 05 budget.
- This is in keeping with the Board’s commitment to reduce reliance on the endowment by $5 million between 2002 and 2007.
- Revenues have increased while costs have been reduced. Fundraising results in annual giving have been key:
FY ‘04 saw continued and significant growth in the Parents and Alumni Funds.
 Parents Fund had 71% participation and totaled over $1.1 million.
 Alumni Fund had 52% participation and totaled approximately $2 million.

- Tuition and fee increases have kept pace with those of sister schools.
- Endowment listed at approximately $323.5 million on June 30, 2004.
- Rate of return for FY 2004 was 13.9%.
- The approved spending policy percentage dropped from 5.4% in 2000 to 4.8% in 2004.
- Over the past three years, a combination of cost reductions and revenue enhancements has meant less reliance on the endowment. The endowment, which funded 55% of total operating costs five years ago, now covers 48% of total operating costs.