

To fully appreciate the 1999-2000 academic year, it is necessary to look back to the opening faculty meetings held in September of 1999. During our five days together as an entire faculty, a theme emerged that would change the course of the year (and perhaps the school) so dramatically that even in retrospect it is difficult to fully appreciate. We decided that one of our highest priorities heading into the new year would be to foster and build an even greater sense of community at Eagle Hill School. We believed that through this unified effort would come greater clarity in continuing to strengthen our school and fulfill the mission with which we have been entrusted.

We were very fortunate in that we were able to build on a foundation that was already very solid. We were in the enviable position of retaining nearly 90% of our faculty from the previous year. Moreover, with the attrition rate of our underclassmen at near zero and admission applications at an all-time high, we enrolled a new class of students whose needs once again reflected our mission. The addition of the new library, classroom complex, as well as the new computer network, ensured that we had the infrastructure to support the needs of all of our students.

To further fuel this cycle of strength, we focused on introducing a number of new community enriching programs. The first, and perhaps most important program in terms of the future of the school, was the advent of the Annual Giving Fund. Led by the dedicated parents of the Annual Giving Fund Steering Committee and with the help of the parent phonathon volunteers, we raised funds to improve faculty compensation. The community spoke definitively about their belief in the faculty by surpassing all of our participation and dollar goals. Even more satisfying was the sense of pride, excitement, and ownership we all felt from participating in the first-ever Annual Giving Fund Campaign.

I can safely say that our inaugural Family Weekend was also a resounding success. With 92% of our families represented, we hosted a four-day community extravaganza where parents, siblings, grandparents, and friends were treated to a weekend chock-full of fun events, fine food, and great entertainment. The highlight of Family Weekend was Saturday night's Harvest Dinner where over 300 people enjoyed a rousing performance by Yale University's *a cappella* group, *The Dukes Men*. A great feeling of community was felt by all that weekend!

We also looked within to build our community. There were two new programs that I believe truly reflected our goal of building community. First, in April of last year nearly 25% of our student body and four of our faculty embarked on a cultural tour of Scotland and England. The experience was so positive that we have decided to make it an annual event. Registration for this year's trip to Ireland is already completely booked. Secondly, the senior class of 2000 left a gift that had both an immediate effect and lasting legacy. Their decision to start a music program on campus was met with excitement from students and faculty alike.

As you read through the *Compendium*, I hope that you will consider your involvement in the EHS community. As one parent recently said, "The more you invest of yourself into this community, the greater the personal return." As a proud member of this faculty, I could not have said it any better.