

Thetford Academy Strategic Plan

2019-2024



Thetford
ACADEMY



***An independent school with a public purpose.
A supportive and caring community.
Dedicated teachers who inspire.
Students who live what they learn.***

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About Thetford Academy

For 200 years, Thetford Academy has served as a co-educational “independent school with a public purpose” for the town of Thetford, VT and surrounding areas.

Today, students come from more than a dozen towns in Vermont and New Hampshire and from countries around the world to become a part of our close-knit educational community.

At TA, our teachers are recognized for their innovative approaches to teaching and learning. They are passionate about engaging every student in a culture of learning. The TA curriculum aspires to be flexible and accessible to all.

Thetford Academy embraces a diverse community of students. We ask teachers and students to experiment, to stretch their boundaries, and to connect with one another as members of a learning community.

It is in this environment - where diversity is acknowledged, respected, and celebrated - that TA students become empathetic, resilient, and outstanding citizens.



Our Mission

Thetford Academy is an independent school with a public purpose.

Thetford Academy celebrates the unique worth of all students, nurtures their strengths, and challenges them to fulfill their potential.

Thetford Academy is committed to investing in each student's path to academic excellence and personal growth.



Our Core Values

EXCELLENCE

We set high expectations. We challenge all members of the school community to reach their highest potential.

COMMITMENT

We value initiative, courage, and dedication. We take personal responsibility for the goals we set and work hard to achieve them.

COOPERATION

We work and learn together. We see teachers as coaches, students as team members, and families as partners.

CARING

We provide individuals with personalized support and guidance.
We care about each other and about the larger community.

DIVERSITY

We respect diversity in our school, community, and world.
We welcome the contribution of different perspectives and experiences to create a rich and inclusive culture of learning at our school.



PRIORITY AREA 1: ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

The strength, breadth, and challenge of our academic program is at the heart of Thetford Academy.

We provide rigorous and varied courses of study that prepare individuals to become confident citizens, leaders, and scholars as they pursue their unique goals and interests.

GOAL 1

Support our students' academic curiosity, engagement, and determination in a community of learning and excellence that provides flexible pathways toward graduation.

ACTIONS

- Assess the scope and sequence of TA's curriculum and implement intentional differentiation strategies school-wide to challenge and engage all students, including those applying to college and those choosing alternative postgraduate paths.
- Create and publish sample course plans that highlight the breadth and depth of offerings available at TA and illustrate potential pathways toward graduation.
- Integrate more deeply the use of campus facilities and resources, such as outdoor classrooms, woodshop, theater, library, greenhouse, and surrounding trails and acreage into learning across the curriculum.
- Continue the process of aligning with Vermont's Education Quality Standards (EQS) and proficiency reporting.
- Empower all students to explore extended offerings that take them into the community and the world, such as service learning, internships, semesters away, courses at Dartmouth College, and regional technical programs.
- Invest in technology resources, learning programs and platforms, and infrastructure that enhance TA's program and priorities.



PRIORITY AREA 2: STUDENT WELL-BEING

Thetford Academy is proud to be recognized throughout Vermont and New England as a school that prioritizes its caring, inclusive, and supportive community.

We strive to ensure that each student feels respected, confident, and comfortable with their authentic selves, supporting their unique paths and ideas.



GOAL 2

Continually invest in the physical and social well-being of every student and nurture a caring, inclusive, and respectful community of learners.

ACTIONS

- Provide opportunities and support students to advocate for their own intellectual, emotional, and social growth.
- Develop activities and programs that promote personal wellness, healthy behaviors, and responsible decision making.
- Strengthen the advisory program and ensure that each student can identify at least one adult on campus who provides them with individual guidance and mentorship.
- Continue to create formal and informal spaces and opportunities for positive campus interactions outside of the classroom between students, faculty, administrators, and staff.
- Develop students' capacities for leadership empathy, and civility; and include students in leadership roles to sustain TA's positive culture and in decision-making roles regarding school change initiatives.
- Continue to invest in school-wide traditions and activities that bring us together to honor our school's history, build a strong sense of community, and celebrate our TA pride.



PRIORITY AREA 3: EDUCATOR EXCELLENCE

Our Thetford Academy faculty, staff, and administration share their educational expertise with students every day, both inside and outside of the classroom.

We are proud to recruit and retain the best education professionals who are committed to supporting students, families, and community.

ACTIONS

GOAL 3

Provide faculty, staff, and administrators with the resources, support, and tools they need to achieve educational excellence, lead change, and meet the diverse needs of our students and community.

- Recruit and retain the highest quality TA faculty, staff, and administration.
- Support faculty, staff, and administrators in the pursuit of their intellectual, emotional, and social well-being at TA.
- Lead decision-making and school-change processes in ways that model collaboration and transparency and thoughtful use of data and employee input.
- Provide members of the faculty, staff, and administration access to high quality professional development opportunities that lead to both individual and collective professional growth.
- Develop a system of peer mentoring and observations for faculty and staff to learn from one another and share innovative practices.
- Create a new faculty evaluation process that is informed by best practices in human resources and teacher professional growth and consistent with TA's academic priorities and administrative capacity.



PRIORITY AREA 4: A COMMUNITY CAMPUS

Our historic and beautiful school sits atop Thetford Hill, overlooking the Connecticut River Valley and the White Mountains.

Our campus inspires student learning, reflection, and growth with state-of-the-art athletic and theater facilities, a professional woodshop, and groomed trails throughout the surrounding forest.



GOAL 4

Offer the best facilities and grounds possible in support of an open culture of learning and a vibrant and interactive campus community.

ACTIONS

- Address accessibility challenges on the TA campus to better accommodate people of all physical capabilities.
- Develop TA to be a model site for environmental education and sustainable practices, including environmentally-conscious use of resources throughout campus.
- Expand opportunities for the TA campus (during non-school time) to be a venue for mission-aligned programming that engages the community, broadens the school's reach, and generates revenue.
- Assess the efficacy of campus-wide safety and security protocols and measures; ensure that stakeholders are informed and trained.
- Draw on the campus master plan and 2024 strategic plan to identify priorities for capital improvements to take place in the next decade (2020-2030).
- Develop a longer-term operational sustainability plan for land that TA owns and state land that TA stewards.



PRIORITY AREA 5: BOARD LEADERSHIP

Thetford Academy's Board of Trustees is the school's governing body comprised of community leaders representing TA's many stakeholders.

The Board provides fiduciary oversight and strategic guidance to advance the TA mission and ensure the school's excellence into the future.

ACTIONS

GOAL 5

Ensure the Board of Trustees provides strong fiscal and governance leadership, focused on managing a healthy financial environment and upholding the mission and values of the school.

- Support and guide the TA community's transition to a new Head of School.
- Prioritize the development of a strategic and sustainable financial model for TA in collaboration with other stakeholders, including TAEA.
- Support ongoing work with TA leadership to prioritize resource allocations and decision-making that provide the highest quality education pathways for all students and invest in our excellent faculty and staff.
- Update and develop key governance functions, including the trustee orientation program, board succession planning, and policy review.
- Establish processes to review progress toward and maintain momentum for the priorities of the 2024 Strategic Plan.
- Position TA as an institution that hosts and promotes community dialogue on timely topics such as education innovation, sustainability, equality, civility, and youth voice.



PRIORITY AREA 6: A VITAL FUTURE

In 2019, Thetford Academy celebrates its 200th year as Vermont's oldest secondary school.

We will leverage this milestone to recommit to TA's unique role as a town academy and its historic mission of inclusivity and strive to grow the TA endowment as an investment in the school's third century.

GOAL 6

Ensure a vital and financially sustainable future for Thetford Academy.

ACTIONS

- Develop a data-driven, multi-year recruitment and enrollment strategy for regional and international students, informed by demographic trends, town tuitioning programs, and market competitors.
- Elevate TA's profile with consistent and inspiring coverage of our awards and unique programs in TA's publications and online venues and in external media sources.
- Launch the Thetford Academy Bicentennial Annual Fund with the short-term goal to raise \$200,000 and the longer-term goal to increase the culture of giving throughout the TA community.
- Develop a multi-year fundraising campaign that invests in the strategic initiatives outlined in the 2024 strategic plan.
- Revise investment and endowment policies and practices with the goal of maximizing and leveraging resources.
- Develop and foster strategic partnerships that further the TA mission, provide financial and operational benefit, deepen curricular offerings, and positively impact student enrollment.



**PHOTO
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

All photos used with permission. A big thank you to our community of Panther photographers!



Thetford ACADEMY



www.thetfordacademy.org