



Friends' For Life
BUILDING A LEGACY

PROSPECTUS





Overview

In 1987, three mothers founded Friends' School with a vision of creating a model school where the whole child would be educated – head, hand, and heart – and where all students would be honored and respected for their unique challenges and gifts. Today, their vision has been realized in a thriving educational community that educates and nurtures 170 students in preschool through fifth grade.

More than twenty years later, Friends' has grown from a tiny house on Marine Street to a three-acre campus that includes a preschool and an elementary school building. The faculty has expanded from six to eleven classroom teachers, plus specialists in Spanish, art, music, math, library, learning support and physical education. In addition, Friends' leads a successful program to train teacher candidates in the philosophy

and methods of individualized, experiential education. While much has changed, the school remains committed to the founders' vision of educating the whole child. Our challenge is to preserve and expand that mission for future generations of students.

We have accomplished a great deal; now it is time for Friends' School to move to a new level of excellence. Even in these uncertain economic times, we are proud to say Friends' has remained strong. We have shown focus and dedication to our mission, have increased amounts raised through our annual fund campaigns, and have demonstrated financial stability year in and year out. Our classrooms are full. What better time to build on that stability and community strength through a \$1.1 million Friends' for Life endowment campaign.

Friends' School has a history and it's time to provide for its future.



Our plan

Friends' for Life will build an endowment that allows our school leaders to focus on the future, on supporting an outstanding faculty, and on strengthening our academic programs and teaching methods. Friends' remains committed to the Founder's vision of being a model school and, thus, to continually seek innovation, and to challenge the ordinary. The school must be willing to change and to provide current best practices in early childhood and elementary education.

The goal of **Friends' for Life** is to preserve our mission while encouraging progressive thinking and creativity. All dollars raised remain intact in perpetuity and are carefully invested to earn income that is used to support the school. An endowment helps us secure current endeavors while allowing teachers and school leaders to look forward. Each year there is ever more competition from area schools; we want to continue to set ourselves apart. We are endowing excellence.

A successful **Friends' for Life** campaign ensures that Friends' will continue to provide an exceptional primary education, with a diversity of curricular and enrichment programs; attract and retain a faculty of highly qualified and committed educators; and make

future investments in the school, while maintaining a reliable and predictable source of operating income.

Our Community Board identifies establishing an endowment as one of the highest priorities for the school. **Friends' for Life** will provide the long-term, stable revenue source necessary to fund strategic initiatives that support the head, hand and heart of the school. It will act as a safety net during uncertain times and at other times as a source of secure, dependable income.

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Use of funds

Program Growth

The strengths and advantages of a Friends' School education lie in its small class size, its teacher-training program, and its model curriculum. Friends' School supports its eager, individual learners. These young minds are, literally, the "head" of the school – the social, emotional and academic growth of each child is the culmination of our mission.

A Friends' School education provides a rich diversity of learning experiences and environments – inside and outside the classroom. Students are unique and active participants in the educational process. Instruction goes beyond the boundaries of the classroom and into the community through service learning projects and various intra- and extra-curricular activities. *Friends' for Life* will strengthen the curriculum by investing in enrichment programs, such as:

- foreign language classes,
- technology-based classroom learning
- subject-area specialists
- multiple field trips
- artists-in-residence and
- guest speakers from diverse backgrounds.

In an age of budget cuts and "teaching to the test," Friends' philosophy of educating the whole child is almost an anachronism, but *Friends' for Life* will help preserve our core beliefs. Our students excel academically in our Association of Colorado Independent Schools accredited program. But they also move on to middle school, high school, college and beyond with something more: they develop creative expression, social responsibility, and respect for themselves and others. They become joyful, lifelong learners who give talent and energy back to their communities.

Friends' School graduates are still relatively young, but they are accomplished in ways that reflect the variety of their interests and abilities. They carry their heads, hands and hearts into the world in local venues and in far away adventures, making impressive showings in the arts, in sports, in their academic careers, in volunteer efforts, in medicine and engineering, and in other fields as well.

Friends' graduates have lent their talents to live stage performances, creative work in visual art, vocal and

instrumental music, and documentary film. They focus their athletic prowess in track, gymnastics, biking and basketball. They have volunteered on projects in Costa Rica, Argentina and other countries.

Friends' graduates attend diverse universities and colleges throughout the United States, and abroad as well including Lewis and Clark College, Washington University, Oberlin College, William Paterson University, The Culinary Institute of America, Cornell University, Arizona State University, University of California at Santa Barbara, University of California at Berkeley, Lawrence Academy, the United States Air Force Academy, Kenyon College, the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, the Lorenzo Medici School in Florence, and the University of British Columbia, Canada.

As a model school, Friends' is unique among those that "set the standard" for elementary education, leading the way in best practices and serving as a valuable educational resource for current and future educators in our community. Friends' has expanded its teacher-training program ensuring that it has become an integral part of the school. The benefits of this program are numerous – allowing more individualized classroom instruction through a small student-teacher ratio, providing mentoring and growth opportunities for our current teachers, and strengthening Friends' reputation as a leader in early childhood education in the broader community, to name a few. *Friends' for Life* will ensure growth of this model program by earmarking funds each year to support it.

Faculty Support

A school is only as strong as its teachers and the quality of the teaching staff defines a child's educational experience. Attracting and retaining high caliber, experienced educators by offering competitive salaries and benefits to our faculty is a top priority for Friends' School.

Teachers are the "hands" that make learning happen every day in every classroom. Professionals who are excited and engaged in their own learning process translate that enthusiasm to their students. Enriching the classroom environment and supporting faculty professional development remain among our highest priorities. Through *Friends' for Life* we will invest in our teachers by endowing competitive salaries and professional development training.

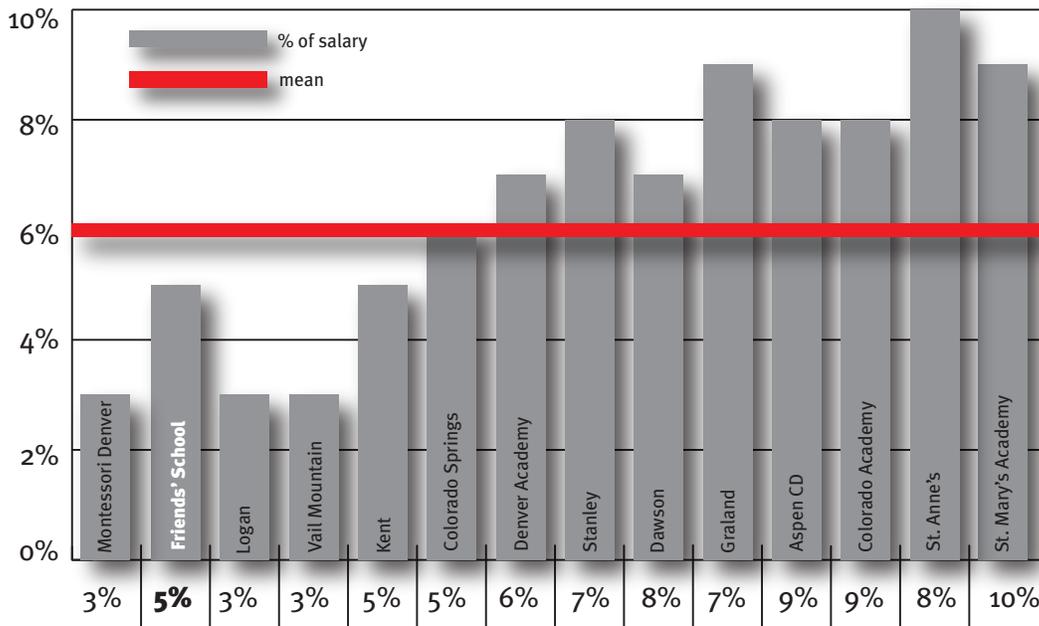


Uses of funds *continued*

Competitive Compensation

The base salary for entry-level teachers at Friends' is comparable to that of other independent schools and to the public system. However, our total compensation package, especially for experienced teachers, is twenty percent – or more – below the mean for other local schools (figure 1.)

Figure 1. School contribution to retirement, as % of teacher salary



Professional Development

One of many keys to attracting and retaining the best teachers is offering ongoing opportunities for professional development. We believe this type of support keeps teachers motivated to renew their contracts each year and remain longer with the school. *Friends' for Life* will augment professional development funds as follows:

1. **Individual enrichment:** Our teachers will hone their skills and refine their areas of expertise through participation in workshops/seminars, travel, pursuit of more extensive research and graduate study, with increased time and financial support for teaching and writing projects.
2. **Mentor training:** Training our teachers to participate in the model school program and educational outreach efforts will give our “master teachers” new professional development opportunities as advisors and mentors. These teachers will become

Friends' School's ambassadors to the educational community, establishing Friends' as a model school for best teaching practices in early childhood education. Faculty involved as mentors will benefit from ongoing training in child development and learning methods, present workshops at educational conferences, and develop and implement new curricular units. *Friends' For Life* will ensure a steady stream of annual funding for our faculty.

Supporting our teachers translates into more exciting classrooms, solid curriculum and, ultimately, stronger students.



Why now?

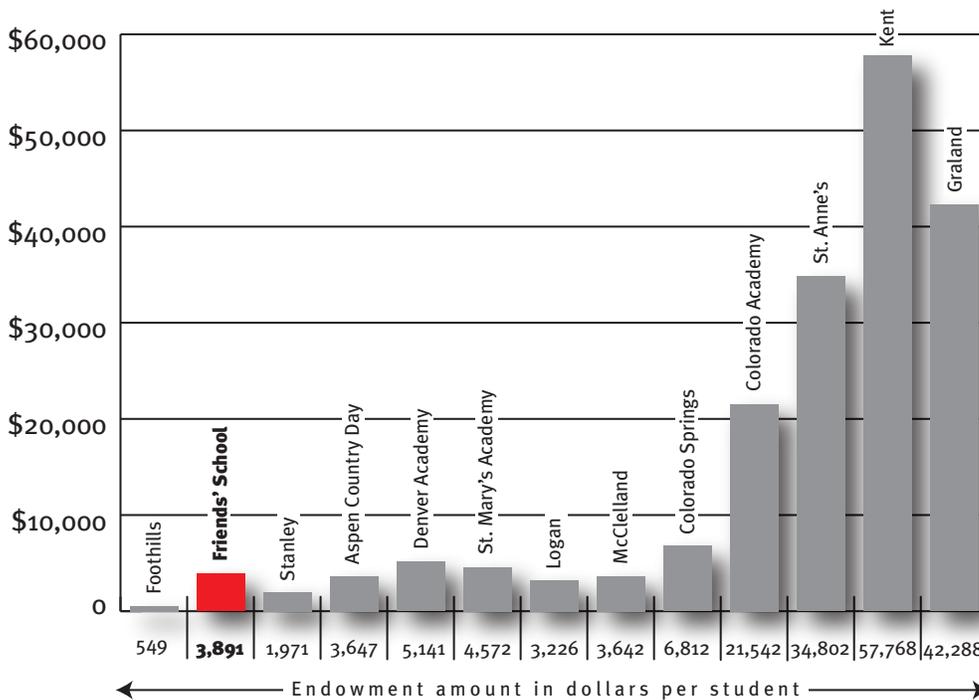
Friends' School has developed and matured over the past twenty years; our mission is firmly established. Through *Friends' for Life*, we can be confident that our founding vision will endure for all students – today and tomorrow. Since 1987 Friends' has built a tradition of generosity from its families and from the broader community. Nearly 100 percent of current parents and teachers participate in our Annual Fund and these same parents contribute thousands of volunteer hours of time and talent each year. The support of our extended community is truly the “heart” that keeps the school thriving and growing.

Our successful Annual Fund helps us close the gap each year between tuition revenues and yearly operating costs. The Annual Fund, however, is about

the present. A well-funded endowment will enable us to grow the principal amount, while simultaneously underwriting key strategic initiatives through generated income. It will allow us to maintain our “nest egg” while buffering the school from unforeseen economic or market events in the future. It is time to focus on the future.

Friends' School is ready to take the next step and join several other local independent schools that have established endowments or are in the process of raising endowment funds. Figure 2 below shows the current total endowment per student at several of our benchmark schools. The total endowment value at this group of schools ranges from \$107,000 to \$38 million. The mean endowment amount is \$8.2 million.

Figure 2. Endowment per student at benchmark schools



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Building a legacy – how you can help

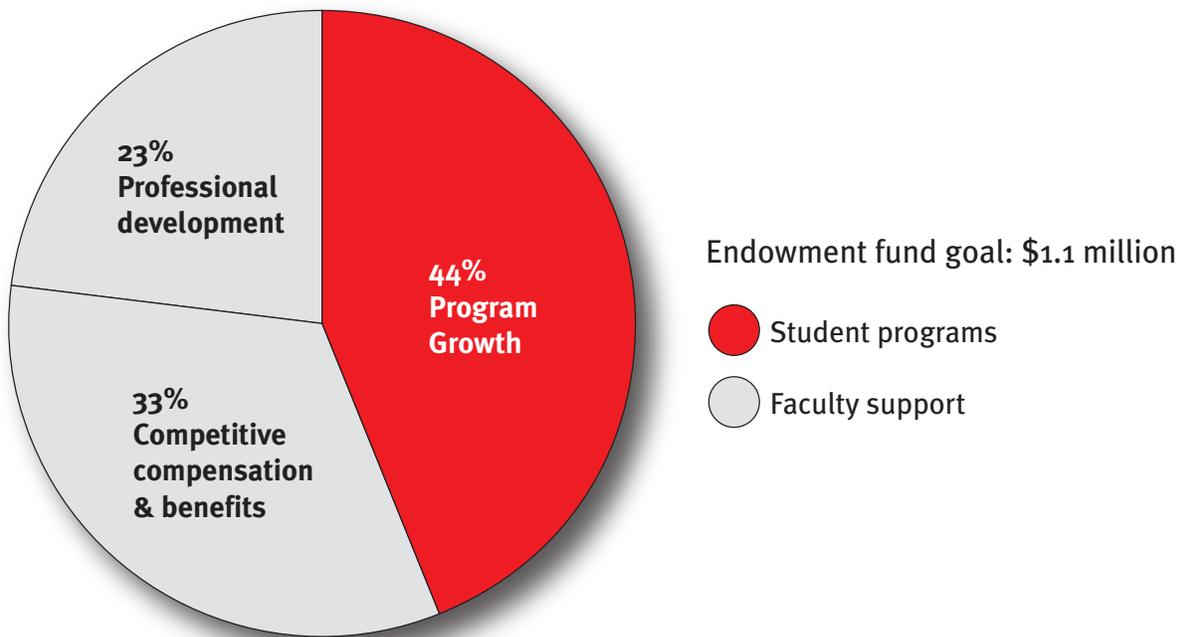
Our endowment is small now, but our future is tied to its growth. Imagine the ripple effect of the additional income to enrich our students' educational experience and to support our teachers. The *Friends' for Life* campaign will assure that today – and into the future – Friends' will be able to provide children with the strong foundation they need to achieve their full potential as learners – head, hand and heart.

We can not meet this challenge alone. We are asking you to help us to build our endowment. By supporting the school you love, as those before you have also

done, you'll have the satisfaction of making a lasting impact on the education of your child and many children to come.

By supporting *Friends' for Life* you are making an investment in your child's future, the school's future and, perhaps more importantly, in the future of the Boulder community at large. We are asking you to make a meaningful gift to *Friends' for Life* and be a part of this legacy. Think about it. Isn't that what you'd want your child to do?

Figure 3. Summary of distribution from endowment funds



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Friends' School Mission

Friends' School is a supportive, dynamic community committed to educating the whole child - head, hand, and heart.

Our students acquire a strong academic foundation while developing social responsibility, and respect for diversity and the individual.

We challenge students and teachers to reach their full potential as engaged, life-long learners.

Friends' School



Educating The Whole Child
Head, Hand & Heart

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