

# State of the School Address

Susie Golbiw  
President of the Board of Trustees  
December 8, 2020

Greetings to you, our Japhet family. My name is Susie Golbiw and I have the distinct honor of serving as President of the Japhet Board of Trustees. This is my 15th year as a Japhet parent and my 9th as a Trustee. On behalf of our Vice-President Susan Ellithorpe, Treasurer Joe Mohan, and Secretary Dan Commer, as well as our entire Trustee Board, I want to thank you all for being a part of the Japhet family. We truly believe that our school can help make the world a better place, and we hope the Japhet experience is as rewarding for you as it was, and is, for all of us.

To give you a little background on what the Board of Trustees does, as an Independent School Japhet is governed by the Board, who holds the mission of the school in trust, defines and maintains the philosophical policy, provides financial resources, and hires the Head of School. We are so pleased with the dedicated work of our Head of School, Kerri Vizena, and her team, and we are grateful to see the seamless transition between in school and remote learning implemented by our outstanding faculty and staff. Kerri created a safe and academically solid On-campus Learning Plan that has assured students, parents, and faculty and staff of the value and compassion of Japhet School. As we have just pivoted for a brief period of online learning, it is evident that Japhet has the resources, technology, acumen, and leadership to provide the Japhet education despite the circumstance. The Board cannot express its gratitude enough for this leadership as well as the confidence and trust of our families.

We are pleased to let you know that the state of the school is strong. In the eighth year in our own building, we are continuing to bring excellence in leadership, academics, and character. We will work

tirelessly to prepare and graduate our young student leaders for the high schools of their choice. Many classrooms have room to grow, so we encourage you to help us share and spread the Japhet story whenever you can. Word of mouth is the best way for us to bring the Japhet difference to as many young people as possible. While we currently have some limitation in increasing admissions due to social distancing and safety protocols, the interest in Japhet's character and academic curriculum is stronger than ever. We hope to see an increase in admissions next fall as a result of our Japhet family sharing their experiences.

You may already be aware that tuition only covers about 70% to 75% of the costs required to educate your children and we (along with everyone else!) are particularly challenged in 2020. We are extremely fortunate that Japhet has made such a difference in people's lives that we receive support from current and former parents, alumni, business people, and others who have gotten to know the children and the story of Japhet, inspiring them to help continue to make Japhet possible. We also could not be happier that after only six years in our own building, we eliminated our mortgage -- a debt that was more than \$1 million -- allowing more financial flexibility than at any time in our past. In October, we kicked off our annual 18 Reasons for Hope campaign virtually! As we couldn't meet in person, we developed a series of online "snapshots" of what makes Japhet unique, valuable, and mighty. We reached out in many different ways and had a remarkable show of support from our community - over \$80,000 raised so far! Thank you for your support. We are very grateful.

Japhet School is an accredited school through ISACS, the Independent Schools Association of the Central States. Accreditation is a seven-year cycle, and we completed our accreditation review in 2019. We are pleased to report that we have received full re-accreditation from ISACS.

We are so delighted you have chosen to be a part of the Japhet family. It is only through the efforts of all stakeholders that Japhet can be truly successful. As can be seen by the closure of some of the other small private schools in the area in the recent past, this is not an easy task. But Japhet is financially sound, and your faculty and staff are

dedicated, talented, and energized towards the mission to provide your children with the best character, academic and leadership education available anywhere at any price.

Thank you for sharing your exceptional children with us on this incomparable journey building confident, intelligent, strong young people, ready to face the increasing challenges today's world throws at them. I've seen firsthand the difference Japhet has made for my children and also what other families have experienced in just one year here. I'm so excited you've joined us on this path. We, the Board of Trustees, will be constantly working to make this unique school the best it can be. And we will try to make ourselves as available as possible to you, as we are all in this together. Thank you for placing your trust in Japhet School and blessings to you and yours for a safe and joyous Holiday Season.