

## State of the School Address

Susie Golbiw  
President of the Board of Trustees  
November 1, 2022

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. I am a parent of two Japhet “lifer” alums and this is my 11th year 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. This year we are proud to be celebrating our 50th Anniversary! Japhet has been touching student’s lives with outstanding academic, leadership, and character education since 1973. Scores of alumni testify to Japhet’s long reaching influence on their educational foundation and life success. We are small but mighty and our unique mission to see every child as inherently good, capable, and respected has spread its blessings throughout our community and even the world.

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 we are grateful that students are learning each day with our outstanding faculty and staff. Kerri has created a safe and flexible learning environment that has assured students, parents, and faculty and staff of the value and compassion of Japhet School. The Board cannot express its gratitude enough for this leadership as well as the confidence and trust of our families. The strength of the partnership between parents and Japhet School is felt on every level and the

continuing atmosphere of trust and unity has been the foundation of our students' success.

We are pleased to let you know that the state of the school is strong. In the tenth year in our own building, we are continuing to bring excellence in leadership, academics, and character education. 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. As area schools continue to face challenges, 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!) have been particularly challenged these last few years. 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 ten 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. Donations directed toward our capital campaign will work to eliminate the bridge loan that remains. We appreciate your support of our current 18 Reasons for Hope campaign and thank you for your continuing generosity. 18 Reasons echoes our 18 character qualities and is our primary development campaign. It's success is vital to Japhet's day to day operations and supports the academic environment. We are grateful for you, our Japhet family, for helping to make it a success.

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.

Recently, Japhet “pivoted” again, reconfiguring classrooms and reorganizing learning levels. Our Pre-K program was strengthened and our Middle School program transitioned to a more integrated learning environment allowing for greater flexibility and a stronger academic experience. The addition of our new STEM lab provides a hands on approach to science, technology, engineering, and math. We are confident that these adjustments will have a big impact - elevating academic opportunities and preparing students for high school and beyond.

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, 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 but 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. In today's world, the soundness, spirit of unity, character, family, and continued trust that is so apparent within the Japhet community is a beacon of hope.