

susan odell taylor school

# Annual Report

2009-2010

PENCILS  
PAINT BRUSHES  
POSSIBILITIES



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## HEAD OF SCHOOL MESSAGE

This fall, my son scored the winning goal for his soccer team less than 30 seconds before the end of the game. That goal meant not only that they had won the game but the division championship for the season. As his face lit up with joy and his teammates rushed forth to join in the celebration, an almost indescribable feeling came over me – the one that a parent has when they see their child reach for something and succeed.

Happily, that feeling is not reserved just for parents. Every day at the Taylor school, we (as faculty and staff) celebrate seeing the children challenge themselves and reach their goals. It could be the first time they put on their coat independently, read a book to their teacher, or stand up in Morning Meeting to share a project. Our students learn to challenge themselves every day, knowing that we will support them and celebrate with them when they succeed. It can sometimes be hard to watch as a child struggles to do something new but that feeling you get when they "get it" makes it worth the effort.

Over the 12 years the school has been in existence, we have watched our alumni as they have graduated from the school to take on their next educational adventure. Our oldest alumni are now almost through college. We consistently see that our alumni are confident, competent learners. They feel comfortable asking tough questions of themselves and others. They are skilled at working with others, listening to ideas, compromising, and leading groups to achieve mutual goals. We are so proud of them!

As you read this report, you will see many of the wonderful learning opportunities the students of the Taylor School had last year. We certainly enjoy sharing them with you.

This report also serves to thank all of you who have supported the school in so many ways this year. We certainly could not do it without you!

If you have not already, I invite you to tour the school and watch our future leaders in action!



Wendy A. Pattison  
Head of School

Susan  
Odell  
Taylor  
School

A row of colorful pencils in various colors (black, brown, blue, purple, red, orange, yellow) and a paintbrush with a red handle and a white brush head with a red tip, all pointing downwards.

## *INNOVATE AND CREATE CELEBRATION DINNER: A CELEBRATION OF SCIENCE*

The children of the Susan Odell Taylor School are inquisitive and curious students. Constantly seeking new opportunities for growth and development, our children are anything but timid in the face of innovation. We firmly believe that this courageous sense of self is a product of our strong and stable community. The reach of our community extends far beyond the classroom walls and into the hearts and minds of the universities and businesses, cities and towns, nonprofits and community organizations that lend their involvement and support.

On May 15, 2010, the community came together to celebrate the innovative and creative sparks that light up the minds of our children, every day. We recognized the Children's Museum of Science and Technology and their President/CEO John Graydon Smith for providing children access to science and technology in the Greater Capital Region. We enjoyed some science fun provided by the museum and a fabulous slide show of our students involved in science activities all year long.

We also recognized and thanked the Association Development Group, Inc. and the Van de Loo family for all of the marketing and communications support they have given to the Taylor School over the years. They continue to help get the word out about the success of the Taylor School and the exceptional education we provide to our students.

Please join us on April 30, 2011 for the Susan Odell Taylor School "Pencils, Paint Brushes and Possibilities" Celebration Dinner and Art Auction. We are recognizing The Arts Center of the Capital Region and their President, Amy Williams for providing children and families in our community access to the arts. We will also honor our art teacher, Ellen Crane, for her many years of wonderful work with the students.



# EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

## MULTI-AGE PROJECTS IN ACTION

A special part of the Taylor School is the interaction of the children across the grades. Each week, "reading buddies" in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade read together. At Morning Meeting, the children sing together and share their learning with each other. We also join once a month for a school-wide, multi-age art project. In October, the children celebrated Halloween and reading with a special project – "Literary Pumpkins." On the first day of the project, the children were assigned a partner (one older child and one younger child). Together, they chose a book, read it, and planned how to make an ordinary pumpkin look like a character from their book. On another day, the children painted and decorated the pumpkins, bringing their pumpkin characters to life. The collaborative process of designing, planning, and sharing artistic talents to create something is a valuable experience for children of all ages. Important problem-solving and interpersonal communication skills were being developed as the children worked through the process of completing their project. Most important of all, the children love working together and are very proud of their pumpkins!



## COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING

In October, the 5/6 students visited each classroom to give a presentation about UNICEF, highlighting the way this organization supports children all over the world. Many of our students participated in Trick or Treat for UNICEF, raising \$355.26. The change collected provided a number of learning activities from sorting change to calculating totals to problem-solving about what the money could purchase for children in need. In another project, the fourth graders engaged the Taylor School in a "Pennies for Peace" collection. This initiative is based on Greg Mortenson's (*Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace*) experience in Pakistan. Mr. Mortenson encountered children who did not have a school or access to a regular teacher. This motivated him to promote world peace, by building one school at a time. We collected pennies all year long and were able to donate over \$100 to the mission.

In June, the 5/6 class coordinated a very successful all-school community service learning project. Their Craft/Bake Sale and Ice Cream Social earned over \$625. The pre-school class made candy, the pre-kindergarten class made dog biscuits, the kindergarten class made banana bread, the 1/2 class tie-dyed tee shirts, the 3/4 class made bird feeders, and the 5/6 class made sure that orders were filled accurately, and tabulated the proceeds. The money was donated in honor of Ms. Ticcioni's kindergarten class to HelpHaitiNow, which is an organization dedicated to helping children and their families recover from the earthquake.



## TAYLOR SCHOOL STUDENTS WIN ART COMPETITION

On June 12, 2010, our third and fourth graders received second place in a statewide art competition sponsored by the Catskill Mountain Foundation. Mrs. Crane, our art teacher, worked with the children to create our submission to the competition. The school received a \$2,500 award for their "Paint Your Town" entry.

The goal of the competition was for students to create a piece of art that conveyed their view, opinion, concept, and impression of what they felt were the best aspects of their town. The students drew brownstones of actual Troy buildings and put them together in a collage of a city street. Their favorite places included the Arts Center, Market Block Books, and The Music Hall.

We extend our appreciation and thanks to Mrs. Crane for the way she inspires our students to do their best! We plan to use the proceeds to help pay for a new kiln for the school.



## SUMMER PROGRAM

This summer we completely redesigned our summer learning opportunities. The Susan Odell Taylor School now offers one of the Capital Region's most unique summer enrichment programs. Open to Taylor School students and the greater community, this weekly theme-based summer program offers something for children 3 years old to 8 years old. Throughout the camp, campers discovered that learning is fun!

Our certified elementary school teachers design and manage the program. As with the Taylor School itself, each child moves at his or her own pace in a safe, structured environment. Add our in-ground pool to our afternoon fun and you have the makings of a happy summer in the shining sun.

Our older children were able to participate in 2 weeks of "transition camp" with a community outreach approach. Campers were able to visit some cultural hot spots in the area as well as participate by volunteering at various sites in the region.

Our summer skills program (for grades K-6) continued from last year and provided students the opportunity to grow in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. The continuation of the summer skills program as well as our new enrichment program demonstrate the Taylor School's on-going commitment in supporting academic progress year round.



# REPORT OF GIVING 2009-2010

There are many ways to support to the Taylor School and we are grateful for our generous community. Whether it is a donation to the Financial Aid Fund, the Annual Fund, or the Celebration Dinner, be assured that your contributions are essential to our curriculum and our day-to-day operations. Every little bit really does make a difference. Your contribution of time and financial support: volunteering and or attending school events, donating books, serving on committees, and sharing the story of the Taylor School helps our school community to thrive. Thank you!

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*Continued on the sidebar on the next page*

# WAYS TO GIVE TO THE TAYLOR SCHOOL

## CASH GIFTS

The school gratefully accepts donations in the form of cash, check, credit cards (VISA/MasterCard) and stocks. We now have online donation capabilities, please visit [www.taylorsschool.org](http://www.taylorsschool.org) and click on the Giving to Taylor box on the front page.

## MAJOR GIFTS

A list of larger needs for our school can be found on our website at [www.taylorsschool.org](http://www.taylorsschool.org), click on the Giving to Taylor box on the front page and then the Current Needs box (on the left sidebar menu).

## PLANNED GIFTS

Please think about including the Taylor School in your estate plans.

## DINNER CELEBRATION AUCTION ITEMS

In-kind donations given to the school are especially helpful for our annual auction.

For more information, please contact Wendy Pattison or Liz Coleman at 518-274-4994.

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