



March 2021

To Members of the Easthampton Community,

During this past year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have all faced challenges we could not have imagined. However, one bright spot has been the outstanding collaboration between the Williston Northampton School and the City of Easthampton, which has been mutually beneficial in so many ways. For example, in the current year, the city and the school have been working together for regular COVID-19 testing of all city and school employees; one of many notable ways in which the municipality and the school support one another.

Williston takes its civic responsibilities very seriously, as one of the largest employers in the city. The school has focused its charitable endeavors, more than ever, to meet needs specifically in Easthampton. In order to keep the general community updated, the school presents this annual letter, which provides detailed information regarding the various ways Williston aids activities in Easthampton and other local communities in the past twelve months and on an ongoing basis.

Like most nonprofit organizations, Williston needs to maintain a balanced and sustainable annual operating budget. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting budget pressures on the school, our administration and Board of Trustees remain committed to offering financial assistance to local groups and to making the school's facilities available to local organizations, while following local health guidelines.

Significant building projects continued at Williston with the construction of a new dormitory, even through the early stages of the pandemic. These efforts were done safely with no COVID-19 issues. This helped employ many local people and provided business to local vendors. Permitting and fees for this and other projects contributed around \$100,000 to the city.

Williston worked in close cooperation with the city to provide land needed for the roundabout at the current new school project in exchange for Brewster Avenue. This was a great example of working together to accomplish a win-win situation, providing greater safety in both locations for Easthampton and Williston students.

For the 2019-20 school year, Williston served the educational needs of 428 high school students (grades 9-12) and 64 middle school students (grades 7-8) for a total of 492 students. The school provided jobs for 191 full-time employees and 78 part-time employees, including tutors, specialized music teachers, and coaches. With such an extensive operation, the economic impact on Easthampton and the surrounding area is significant. For example:

- ◆ In the 2019-20 fiscal year, Williston had a total payroll of approximately \$11,674,970. Of that amount, 63% (\$7,324,038) went to Easthampton residents.
- ◆ During the last fiscal year, Williston's regular operations purchased approximately \$1,121,749 in goods and services from businesses in the City of Easthampton, and the towns of Southampton and Westhampton.



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- ◆ In 2019-20, 56 Williston high school and middle school students lived in Easthampton, Southampton, and Westhampton. That group received financial aid awards totaling \$1,478,714. By comparison, six students from families that reside on the Williston campus avail themselves of the public-school system.
- ◆ The school paid approximately \$134,131 for water bills and sewer charges.
- ◆ As noted previously, with the extensive new construction, Williston paid fees and permits to the city in excess of \$100,000 over the last several years.
- ◆ Williston employees who reside on campus pay excise taxes to the City of Easthampton on approximately 92 vehicles.
- ◆ Under normal circumstances, families of students, Board of Trustees members, and other visitors to campus attend regular campus events. However, given the COVID-19 pandemic, these activities have been more limited. These groups regularly support the local economy with their patronage of Easthampton businesses.
- ◆ The Williston Northampton Sammy Card is now accepted at numerous restaurants and stores in Easthampton, generating significant additional business. During the 2019-20 school year, Williston students spent an additional \$84,428 on the Sammy Card in local Easthampton restaurants. This does not count the other purchases made by students using a personal card or cash.
- ◆ Williston's Children's Center currently enrolls a total of 39 children; 19 are from Easthampton. The remaining 20 children are from Southampton, Northampton, Florence, Hatfield, Williamsburg, Huntington, Whately, Hatfield and Feeding Hills. Additionally:
 - The Children's Center accepts vouchers from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care to make early childhood education more affordable. We currently have one family who use a voucher to pay for childcare.
 - We employ 14 educators—six are graduates of Easthampton High School and Hampshire Regional High School. We also currently employ one Greenfield Community College student in a field placement program.
 - Together with the families, the Center typically hosts a community day of service each year, in conjunction with the Easthampton city-wide clean-up day to clean a section of the bike path. This was suspended this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - We continue to help organize an early childhood teachers' cohort to support the needs of early childhood educators in Easthampton and the surrounding area.
 - The Children's Center Director is a part of the Western MA Director's Group—a group of Early Childhood Program Directors who meet monthly to work on advocacy, problem solving, and collaboration for the field.
 - The Children's Center Director has also been part of a state-wide advocacy group for the field of early childhood education and care. In this effort, she has been in a group who met with Mayor LaChapelle to work on issues around early education and care during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Williston's administration consistently strives to stay in contact with local groups to assess community needs and contribute time, services, facilities, and funds when appropriate. Here is a listing of the various forms of support provided by Williston to the local community:

- ◆ Williston contributed \$10,000 to the City of Easthampton Mayor's Office to provide professional development opportunities for six city employees in 2020.
- ◆ Additionally, in previous years:
 - ◆ Williston donated a 14' Defender soft-sided inflatable, hard bottom rescue boat, fully equipped with rescue gear for 6 police/fire personnel in 2017.
 - ◆ Williston donated \$10,000 to the city's Police and Fire Departments to aid in the purchase of "Active Shooter" equipment in 2018.
 - ◆ Williston donated \$10,000 to the Easthampton Park and Rec Department, in 2019.
- ◆ Williston made donations to The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts equivalent to providing 720 meals for neighbors seeking food assistance throughout the four counties of Western Massachusetts.
- ◆ Over the last 14 years, Williston has aided the city in its support of the Emily Williston Library with contributions totaling \$180,000. This year, ten copies of the book *White Fragility* were also donated to the Emily Williston Library.
- ◆ In response to the pandemic, Williston donated approximately 500 masks, the use of sanitizing equipment, and other personal protective equipment to the City of Easthampton.
- ◆ Last year, Williston provided the use of a van to the Community Center, as well as the cost of the gas to run that van. The van was needed to deliver food to those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. This van was completely at the disposal of the Community Center to address the overwhelming needs of the community.
- ◆ Williston is proud of its continuing cooperative efforts in helping to establish the Easthampton Learning Foundation (ELF). Over the past two decades, the school has contributed more than \$50,000 to the Foundation.
- ◆ Working with the city, Williston created and continues to maintain the public park on Railroad Street that features original artwork by local and national artists.
- ◆ From July 2019 – March 2020, Easthampton Parks & Recreation Department received a discount of 3,190 for 22 hours of ice time for public skating, and Easthampton High School received a discount of \$2,250 for 50 hours of ice time. Also, the Easthampton Police Department received 31 hours of free ice time at an overall value of \$7,595. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, these spaces were closed and not available for a large portion of this year.
- ◆ In the previous school year, Williston students raised \$6,408, representing 5% of proceeds earned at the Student Café (StuBop) and donated \$3,330 to Riverside Industries and \$3,188 to the Easthampton Community Center.
- ◆ Working with the city, Williston paid for and installed solar School Zone Blinker Speed Limit signs on Park Street and Payson Avenue. Both Williston and city officials have



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readily acknowledged the positive impact these signs have had in helping to slow the traffic on that very busy street.

- ◆ On the school's website and in our admission view book distributed to alumni and parents, Williston promotes Easthampton as a great place to visit, enjoy the many restaurants and shop.
- ◆ In the past, the school has also made contributions to the following local groups/organizations:
 - Easthampton City Arts
 - Easthampton High School "We The People" trip to Washington D.C.
 - Distinguished Young Women of Easthampton
 - Welcome to Easthampton Sign Fund
 - The Easthampton Community Center
 - The Easthampton Rotary and Lions Club
 - The Easthampton EDIC Annual May Clean-Up Day
 - The Easthampton Winter Fest
 - Easthampton Police Department
 - Easthampton Fire Department
 - The Hampshire Community United Way
 - The Easthampton Toy Fund
 - Easthampton Holiday Lighting Fund
 - The Easthampton Rod & Gun Club for Children's Fishing Derby
 - The Easthampton Basketball Association
 - The Easthampton High School Parents' Council
 - The Easthampton High School Diversity Club
 - Easthampton "Give 'Em the Bird" road race
 - Easthampton High School Hockey Team
 - Easthampton Youth Soccer
 - Easthampton Citizen's Scholarship
 - William E. Norris School, Southampton
 - Easthampton Little League
 - Friends of the Manhan Rail Trail
 - Hampshire Regional Chamber of Commerce
 - The Garden: A Center for Grieving Children and Teens
 - Riverside Industries Annual Taste the Arts Silent & Live Auction
 - Pascommuck Conservation Trust
 - The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
- ◆ With the exception of this pandemic year, Williston's facilities (dining commons, meeting rooms, swimming pool, gymnasium, playing fields, track, tennis courts, parking lots and hockey rink) are used by many local groups. In all instances, fees that would normally be charged were either waived or significantly reduced for local groups. The following is only a partial list of local groups that have used Williston's facilities:
 - Easthampton Public Schools
 - Easthampton Helping Hand Society
 - Easthampton Basketball Association Suburban League
 - Easthampton Youth Soccer



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- Easthampton Little League
 - Mickey Mantle Youth Baseball
 - Cal Ripken Youth Baseball
 - Easthampton Park & Recreation Department
 - Easthampton Police Department
 - Easthampton Fire Department
 - Easthampton Big Rig Day
 - Hampshire County Sheriff's Department
 - The Red Cross for annual blood drives
 - Special Olympics of Massachusetts
 - Northampton Community Rowing
 - Easthampton Chamber Annual Forum
 - St. Phillips Episcopal Church
- ◆ Williston employees serve on committees and volunteer their time for a variety of civic and charitable entities including the Easthampton Learning Foundation, Easthampton Little League Board, Suburban Youth Basketball, Easthampton Youth Soccer, and the Emily Williston Library.
 - ◆ Since the closing of the Whitebrook Middle School swimming pool fourteen years ago, the Williston swimming pool has been used for practices and home swim meets for the Easthampton High School swim team at no cost to the city.
 - ◆ Working with the Greater Easthampton Chamber of Commerce, Williston initiated, and now hosts and fully funds, an annual breakfast event each June. We hope that after the pandemic this event will be reinstated.
 - ◆ Williston is a contributor to the "Thunder in the Valley Festival & Easthampton Fireworks" at Millside Park, whose proceeds benefit the Children's Miracle Network at Baystate Children's Hospital.
 - ◆ For 15 years Williston offered the center campus quad as the destination and gathering place for the city's annual Rag Shag Parade. This effort helped to promote safety and eliminate traffic congestion at the rotary in the city center. If, in the future, there is a desire to once again use the campus for this event, the school stands ready to help.
 - ◆ Throughout the year, the school provides art gallery exhibits as well as writer and photographer presentations that are free and open to the public, these events draw visitors to campus and the local community.
 - ◆ Williston assists with plowing and policing all of the city roads that run through the campus.
 - ◆ Williston is a contributor to Friends of the Manhan Rail Trail as well as providing upkeep for the Manhan Rail Trail by mowing and cleaning a ¾-mile section of the trail, as well as snow removal in the winter from the school's hockey rink all the way to Ferry Street.
 - ◆ Williston's Phillips Stevens Chapel has been the site of a number of civic events, including the kick-off event for Easthampton's 225th Anniversary Celebration, as well as mayoral debates. This venue is available for important civic events when needed.



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The Williston Northampton School strives to be a responsible, integral member of the City of Easthampton community. This substantive civic support and involvement demonstrates a serious commitment on the part of the Williston Board of Trustees, the administration, and the school's employees. The school understands its efforts are important to many local organizations, the local economy, the City of Easthampton, and immediate region. We are grateful for the community's regular support and insight as Williston and the city continue their mutually supportive partnership.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Hill III
Head of School

Charles B. McCullagh Jr.
Chief Financial Officer