

IDEALS

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REFLECTIONS

about **FINANCIAL AID**

by Head of School Nancy Starmer

Currently, George School's 540 students come from over thirty nations in the world and more than half of the United States. In our classrooms and dormitories students from the Ukraine, Vietnam and Saudi Arabia learn side-by-side with students from Newtown, Trenton, and Dallas. Weekly in the Meeting House, Quakers, Protestants, Catholics, and atheists worship side-by-side with Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu and agnostic students.

When we have polled incoming George School students we've found that after a fine academic program (the most important quality sought by independent school applicants nationwide), the qualities that most attract students to George School are its diversity, its strong sense of community, and its commitment to Friends values.

Many of our students are also attracted to the school, and able to become students here, because of our exceptional financial aid program. Thanks to the dedicated leadership of David Bourns and the success of our Second Century Campaign, George School is currently a leader among independent schools in its overall commitment to financial aid. Approximately 40 percent of our current students receive some amount of aid, with an average grant of \$18,000 (roughly two-thirds of the full boarding tuition). Our ability to offer targeted scholarships to middle income and Quaker students is another important distinction of George School's financial aid program.

Because the cost of financial aid rises in direct relation to the cost of tuition, George School needs to increase funding for financial aid in order to maintain our strong commitment to tuition aid. Tuition (\$30,370 for boarding students and \$22,000 for day students in the 2003-2004 academic year) covers only about three quarters of the cost of educating a student at George School. We need to substantially increase the size of our financial aid by 2008—through gifts of \$5,400,000—if we are to continue to attract talented students from all economic levels.

2003-2004 statistics: 41 percent of students receive \$4.3 million in financial aid; average award is \$19,664; median award is \$18,000