

Our Common Journey

Strategic Priorities for Cushing Academy
2025-2030





FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Cushing Community,

The famous Dutch chess master and mathematician Max Euwe said, “Strategy requires thought, tactics require observation.” As we share *Our Common Journey: Strategic Priorities for Cushing Academy 2025-2030*, we stand guided by this wisdom. Strategy has necessitated careful planning and thought, culminating in a comprehensive roadmap for Cushing’s future. We also acknowledge that the real-life intricacies - the tactics - require constant observation, feedback, and flexibility. In this sense, our new strategic plan is not a static document but a living, breathing commitment to adapt and respond to the ever-changing needs of our student body.

Our recent journey, charted through *Embracing Our Legacy and Positioning for Our Future*, our 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, has been one of immense grit, growth, and collective achievement. Our endowment has grown from \$29 million to over \$80 million; applications for admission have increased 35%; our Annual Fund has leaped from a little over \$500,000 to \$1.8 million; and our campus has witnessed over \$100 million in capital improvements.



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-Max Euwe

We have purposefully positioned our academic leadership to further strengthen our pedagogical approaches, including a key addition of the Director of Teaching and Learning. We have elevated our student support services, especially those related to mental and physical well-being. Our residential boarding population now makes up over 93% of our student body—the highest percentage among independent boarding schools in Massachusetts, and among the highest in the United States.

Most importantly—and reflecting our mission to develop curious, creative, and confident learners and leaders—our students continue to represent an impressive range of talents, interests and aspirations, seen in their contributions to our community and in the wide range of distinguished colleges and universities they attend. Athletically, our teams have garnered 32 postseason appearances and five championships since 2018, a notable increase from the five years prior. We continue to offer renowned visual arts programs that have garnered national awards, and performing arts offerings that showcase the breadth of talent in our student body.

Building on these milestones, *Our Common Journey* is anchored by **six key pillars**:

| | | | |
|----------|--|----------|--|
| 1 | Strengthening Community and Belonging | 4 | Promoting Student Health and Well-Being |
| 2 | Developing Curious Learners | 5 | Ensuring Long-term Sustainability |
| 3 | Developing Confident Leaders | 6 | Celebrating School Culture and Legacy |

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Formed by the collective input of our community, these priorities are designed to be agile. They grant us the latitude to adjust our daily operations tactically, allowing us to be responsive to the dynamic needs and feedback of our students, faculty, and staff.

Throughout this extensive process, we asked essential questions that encouraged the larger school community to reflect on our strengths, areas for improvement, unmet needs, challenges for adolescents of today, and future aspirations. The survey feedback from all our stakeholders - students, families, alumni, faculty and staff - along with many individual conversations and work by the Leadership Team and Board of Trustees, ensured that a variety of perspectives were heard, shaping a plan that embodies our shared commitment to Cushing's improvement and growth.

I extend my deepest thanks to each of you for your contributions to this process. Your perspectives have been invaluable, helping shape a roadmap that genuinely reflects the heart and soul of Cushing Academy.

Now, I ask that we begin *Our Common Journey* together, each of us an important part of a strategy crafted with deep thought for the long-term, and with flexibility to adapt to new opportunities while remaining grounded in the careful observation of our day-to-day needs. Together, we will elevate Cushing Academy to unparalleled excellence, influence, and impact.

I look forward to the journey that awaits!

All my best,



Randy R. Bertin, Ed.D.

Head of School



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Our Common Journey

Strategic Priorities
for Cushing Academy

2025-2030

As we chart our journey forward, we will focus on the following six Strategic Priorities, in continued fulfillment of our mission: **Cushing Academy exists for students and develops curious, creative, and confident learners and leaders.**





Strengthening Community and Belonging

Cushing Academy will:

- Promote a sense of belonging and foster a warm, accepting culture that values the unique contributions of every member, building on the welcoming and community-oriented spirit that is at the heart of Cushing.
- Recognize the impact of every voice and experience in shaping the community's journey, built upon empathy, respect, kindness, and compassion.
- Improve channels of communication and collaboration among students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni to build stronger relationships and enhance active participation in school life, fostered by regular updates, collaborative platforms, and inclusive events that reflect our commitment to mutual respect, positive social habits, and strong interpersonal skills.



I love the community aspect of Cushing, which places a value on the kind of person you are becoming – your values and character – that is so special. The emphasis on learning about emotional well-being really equips kids with the skills they need to thrive.

JILL SARKOZI P'24



Developing Curious Learners



Cushing taught me that each opportunity gives you a whole bunch more opportunities – and it helps me in the bravery of the choices I make today. So it's exponential in how it formed me and who I am.

JOHN CENA '95

Cushing Academy will:

- › Ensure the curriculum fosters an environment that sparks curiosity and joy in learning, challenges students appropriately, and supports the full range of learning styles present within the student body.
- › Enliven the creativity of all students through a continued focus on excellence in Cushing Visual and Performing Arts, as well as through interdisciplinary curricular connections that stimulate creativity in the classroom and beyond.
- › Assist students and families in navigating a changing landscape in college admissions: identifying schools of interest, articulating students' unique stories and perspectives in the application process, and ensuring that students have the tools they need to thrive in their academic, artistic, and athletic pursuits in their education after Cushing.
- › Continually refine and communicate our unique academic value proposition, which draws upon the distinctive strengths of our programs and the talents of our people. We will differentiate Cushing Academy from other independent schools by developing a unique academic identity that resonates with and attracts best-fit students. This will involve promoting innovative teaching methods, specialized programs, and a community-focused educational experience that sets us apart.

Developing Confident Leaders



Cushing Academy will:

- › Cultivate social responsibility and moral courage through service learning, including international trips that provide experiential education.
- › Enhance the proud legacy of Cushing athletics by meeting the diverse needs of all student-athletes and promoting leadership, character development, confidence, and holistic wellness through structured sports and activity programs.
- › Encourage leadership development, collaboration, and teamwork across all areas of student life—in the classroom, in residential settings, and through student activities. This will be supported by integrating our core values with enhanced proctor programs, advisory initiatives, and comprehensive character development offerings.



At Cushing, my daughter developed from a kid who didn't know who she was to a young woman who loves who she is, knows who she is, and is mature and independent and makes good decisions.

CARY MEADOW P'24



4



Promoting Student Health and Well-Being

Cushing Academy will:

- › Through school-wide strategies, develop skills to foster resilience, build self-esteem, and promote mental and physical health, utilizing the new facilities and resources throughout campus.
- › Enhance support systems to proactively address student mental health concerns, such as stress, anxiety, and depression, by integrating accessible resources and structured programs throughout our school environment.
- › Help students develop creative and healthy approaches to the use of technology and social media by weaving these principles throughout the curriculum and enhancing advisory connections, in a multipronged strategy to promote responsible and effective use of digital and social media platforms.



I've grown exponentially at Cushing – personally, socially, and academically. There are so many opportunities, and you're encouraged here to stretch yourself and go for it.

DOROTHY KUWANA '25
STUDENT BODY CO-PRESIDENT



Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability



5

Cushing Academy will:

- › Continue to implement comprehensive strategies for the Academy's sustainability and long-term viability to serve current and future generations of Cushing students, including best practices focused on caring for the buildings and grounds.
- › Foster endowment growth through active fundraising, prudent investment, and strategic financial planning to secure our commitment to excellence in all aspects of the student experience.
- › The Board of Trustees and school leadership will continue to be guided by best governance practices while identifying the Academy's current needs and planning for its long-term strength for generations of students to come.
- › Continue to advance our enrollment strategy by emphasizing growth in target markets, while managing our balance of student demographics. This approach, rooted in the success of recent years, aims to enhance student experiences and reaffirms our commitment to long-term sustainability.



*Cushing is a worthy beneficiary of your investment.
Together, we are achieving new heights and securing a
bright future for this special school and our students.*

JOSEPH MARZILLI
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES



6

Celebrating
School
Culture and
Legacy

Cushing Academy will:

- › Continue to celebrate the Academy’s cherished traditions, reflecting our deep history and sense of community and belonging, while creating new traditions that also preserve the link between Cushing’s past, present, and future students.
- › Nurture and grow the Penguin Pride felt by our alumni, families, students, faculty, and staff through all interactions across the community. This effort is at the core of who we are, fostering a connected and enthusiastic school spirit that enhances involvement at every level.
- › Reinforce the commitment to our Core Values and to our Portrait of a Graduate throughout all aspects of school life, while balancing tradition with change to meet the needs of an evolving world, serving students well into the future.



Curiosity ignites collaboration, communication, and growth—the foundation of our Cushing culture. Here, you learn to embrace every challenge knowing our community will be there to support you.

RYAN WARD '25
STUDENT BODY CO-PRESIDENT

Cushing Academy

exists for students
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and **leaders.**

CUSHING ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT





Cushing Academy is recognized as a unique educational setting whose faculty, staff, and facilities nurture the optimal growth of students with a range of talents, abilities, and interests.



Our community-oriented environment is supportive and diverse, promoting and valuing intellectual challenges and emphasizing the arts, athletics, and cultural competence.

VISION STATEMENT

Core Values

A sense of social responsibility, moral courage, gratitude, integrity, and humility, modeled by trusted mentors and peers, paves the way for becoming an active and contributing member of one's school, community, society, and the world at large.

Cushing Academy believes that:

An education that **sparks curiosity**, provides intellectual challenge, offers adequate support, and hones analytical thinking not only **fosters independence** but also establishes the foundation for a lifetime of learning and the pursuit of excellence.

Creativity must be encouraged and nurtured **in all aspects of school life.**

Working with peers with a **variety of learning styles**, as well as with a range of academic, athletic, and artistic strengths and interests, **enriches the educational experience** for all students.

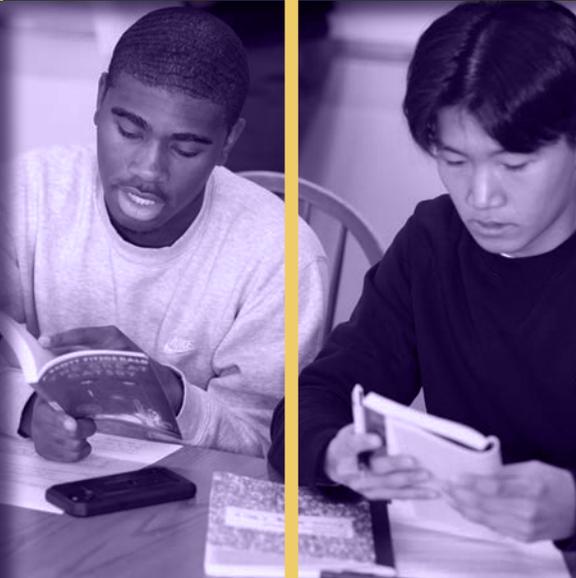


A strong sense of **self-esteem, self-discipline, and self-confidence** allows students to persevere and, thus, to grow through challenges into optimistic, active, and “useful” and “leading” citizens of the world.

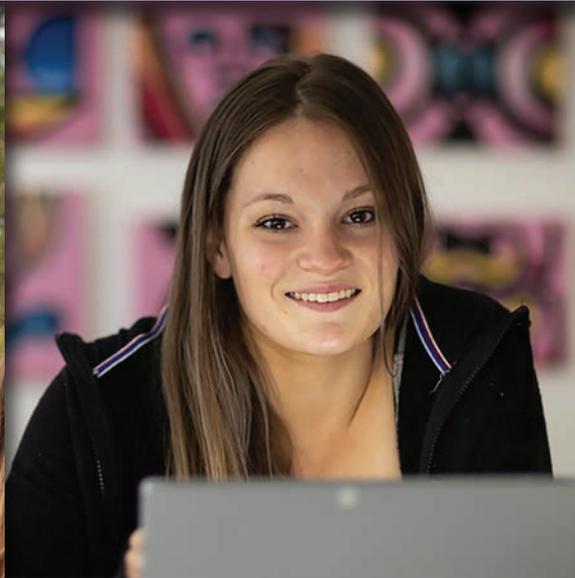
Through athletics, community service, group activities, and **collaboration across disciplines**, students develop valuable social habits and interpersonal skills that will help them become successful, fair-minded, and leading members of society.

Seeking to understand others, as well as **respecting and valuing differences**, is essential for a judicious, meaningful, and fulfilling life.

Learning to make informed choices and to **advocate for oneself** is fundamental to achieving a healthy, balanced lifestyle.



Portrait | of a Graduate





Our Portrait of a Graduate details and supports Cushing’s mission to educate the mind, shape the character, nurture the creativity, and foster the well-being of each student. As a lens through which we examine ourselves and our work, this portrait guides and informs all aspects of school life.

A Cushing graduate
learns, lives, and
leads by these ideals:

PERSONAL JOURNEY

In my personal journey, I:

- › strive to be self-aware, self-disciplined, and self-controlled.
- › take initiative, adapt, and persevere.
- › live with optimism, passion, a sense of humor, and humility.
- › make informed choices for a healthy, balanced life.
- › advocate for myself.
- › pursue excellence in all areas of my life.

COMMUNITY JOURNEY

In my community journey, I:

- › respect, support, and show gratitude.
- › value, engage fully in, and contribute to the diversity of my communities.
- › collaborate with others.
- › understand social systems.
- › serve others as an active citizen.





ETHICAL JOURNEY

In my ethical journey, I:

- › act with empathy and compassion.
- › act with integrity.
- › act with personal and social responsibility.
- › act with courage on behalf of others and myself.

INTELLECTUAL JOURNEY

In my intellectual journey, I:

- › think critically, creatively, and reflectively.
- › listen and communicate actively, thoughtfully, and effectively.
- › take risks and grow through challenges.
- › approach lifelong learning with openness and curiosity.



*As we look to the future of Cushing Academy,
our margin of excellence will be shaped by the
dedication of our community to invest in our mission.*

*This support enables us to innovate, grow,
and solidify Cushing's position as a leader in
education for generations to come.*

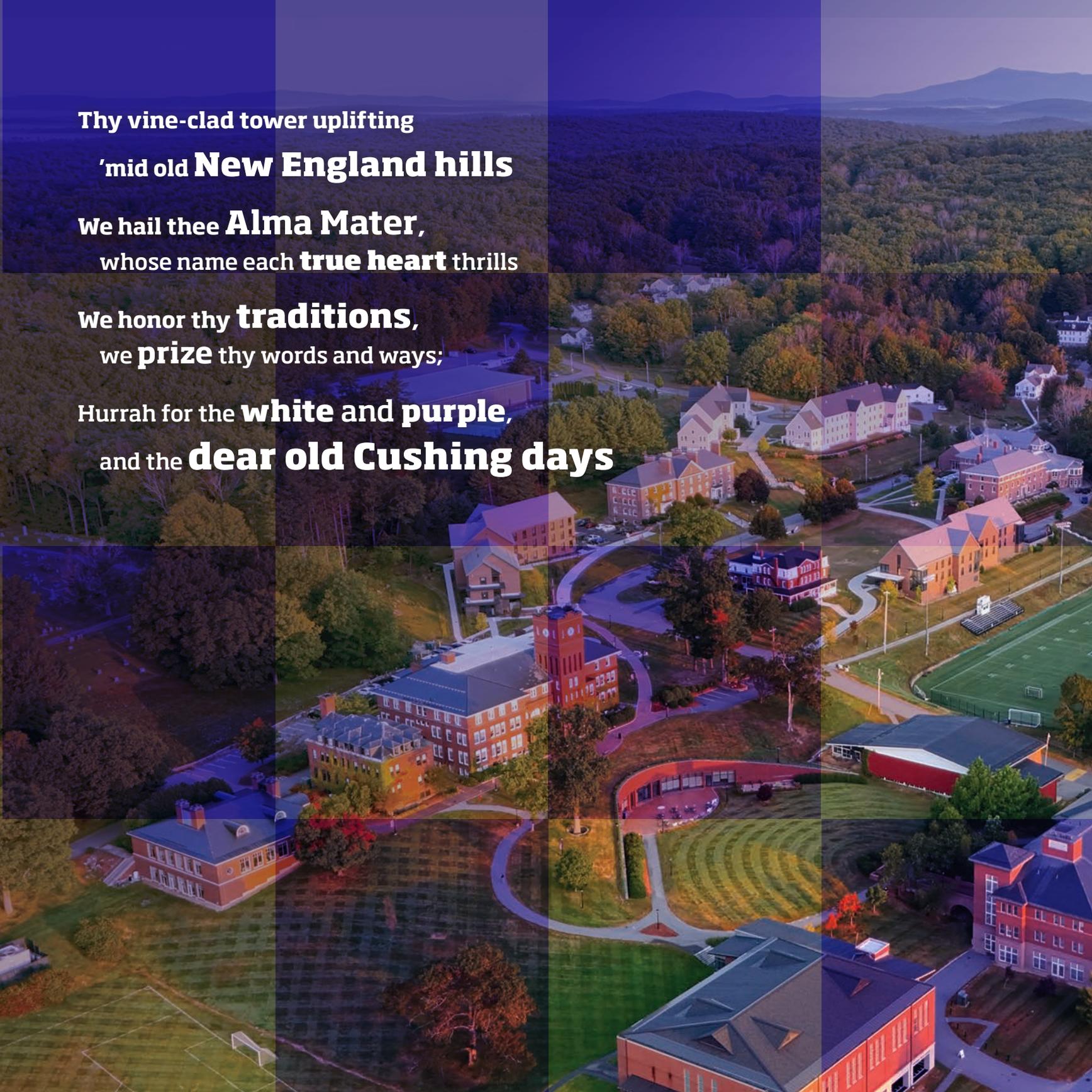


Thy vine-clad tower uplifting
'mid old **New England hills**

We hail thee **Alma Mater**,
whose name each **true heart** thrills

We honor thy **traditions**,
we **prize** thy words and ways;

Hurrah for the **white and purple**,
and the **dear old Cushing days**



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