



Foothills Academy Society

Report to the Community



2019

A Leader in Learning Disabilities Since 1979!

Message from the Executive Co-Directors



During the 2018/19 fiscal year, we began the year-long process of celebrating and recognizing the 40th anniversary of Foothills Academy. This milestone has provided an opportunity to celebrate the founders and their vision, re-connect with alumni and start envisioning the future as we make plans for the next forty years of serving children and families affected by Learning Disabilities. We are proud that we currently have the greatest potential and capacity to deliver outstanding services to the largest segment of the Learning Disabilities community that we have ever had. But, we know that the demand for our programs and services far exceeds our capacity to deliver at this time.

As an organization, we were able to serve over 3,000 individuals this year. We are reaching out to more young people and families through Community Services in Read/Write & Math instruction, Amicus Camp & Recreation, and Psychological Services & Programs than ever before. Additionally, our Professional Development & Parent Education department is continually expanding our high quality in-person and online educational offerings. Our School population remains at capacity at just under 300 students.

We truly appreciate our community of supporters who continue to believe in the work that we are

doing. Careful financial management has allowed us to continue to be in a solid position financially despite the continuing economic downturn and freezes to government funding. However, uncertain potential changes to government funding and our desire to find ways to serve more families while maintaining our financial accessibility means that we are actively exploring additional ways to raise funds to support our current programs and allow them to grow, develop and expand.

Part of our mission is to participate and advocate for the larger community beyond those we serve directly. To that end, we continue to support and advocate for individuals with Learning Disabilities at the local, provincial, and national levels. We each sit on several Boards and committees, including: Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta (LDAA); Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC); Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta (AISCA); the Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada (CADDAC); and the Calgary Regional Service Delivery Collaboration (Calgary RCSD). We are particularly proud that Foothills Academy is a backbone agency leading the Calgary Region LD & ADHD Network; a collective impact group working to help local families find appropriate supports.

We are looking forward to the official celebration of our 40th Anniversary on November 9, 2019. We are reaching out to current parent, former students, parents and supporters to come together and reconnect at our fall gala extravaganza. We are using this opportunity to thank those who contributed to getting Foothills Academy through the past 40 years. And, we are using the opportunity to gather feedback on our proposed four pillars of growth. It is an exciting time at Foothills Academy and envision what the future will bring.

Mr. Simon Williams
Co-Executive Director

Dr. Karen MacMillan
Co-Executive Director

Board of Governors 2018/19

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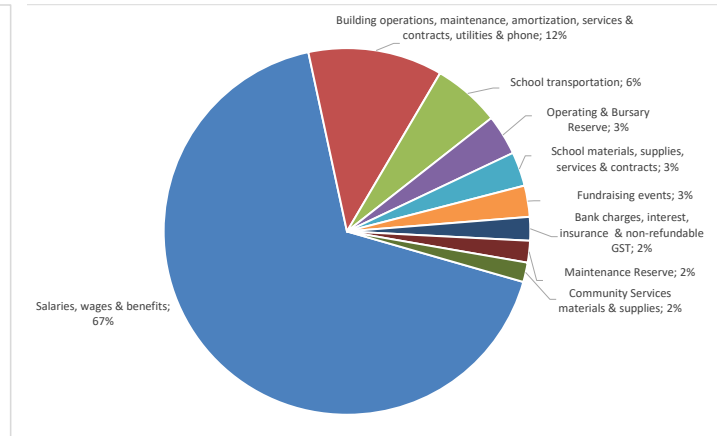
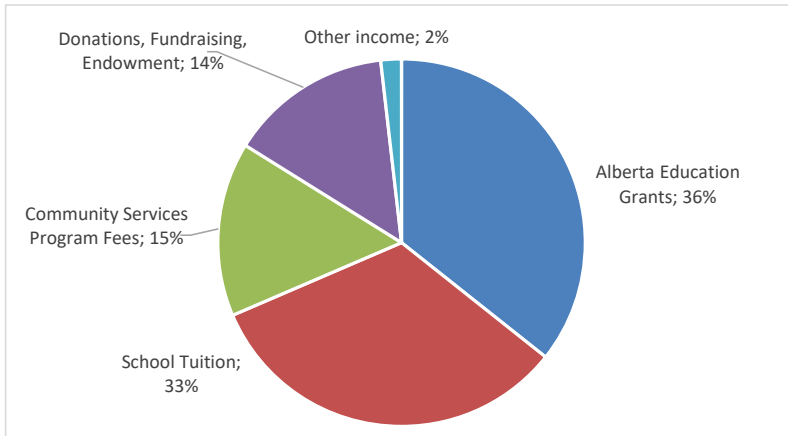
John Krupa, Governor
Penelope Hamilton, Governor
Simon Williams, Executive Co-Director
Karen MacMillan, Executive Co-Director

2018 - 19 Financial Summary

Note: Full Audited Financial Statements available upon request

Revenue: \$10,175,235

Expenses: \$9,686,645



Overall, there have been no major changes in revenue and expenses over the previous year. With the provincial government keeping per student funding at the same rate again, it has essentially meant a cut in revenue for our school program because expenses such as salaries and other costs like bussing continue to climb. In order to recover some of those increased costs, the tuition for the school program was increased by \$300 which brought full tuition for a single student to \$15,600. We continue to look at alternative sources of revenue such as renting out our facility after school hours to bring in extra income. This year, rental income amounted to \$26,000.

We are always grateful for the tremendous community support plus the efforts of parents, staff, board and volunteers to raise much needed funds to support our organization. These fundraising efforts have gone toward supporting our Bursary Fund and allowed us to approve a total of 252 bursaries in 2018/19 for both school and Community Services programs. The economic downturn has led to continued increasing demand for bursary funds. This financial assistance to families accessing our programs is valued in excess of \$1,070,251. This is a 10% increase in dollars and a 6% increase in the number of bursaries provided over 2017/18.

The board directed that \$196,500 be allocated to a building Maintenance Reserve fund as per a building life cycle review conducted by an engineering firm and that \$374,758 be allocated to an Operating & Bursary Program reserve. Capital spending this year included the upgrading of technology - especially Smartboards and the expansion of the parking lot.

Fundraising also allows us to provide extra supports and services to our students such as extensive mental health, Occupational Therapy and Speech/Language Therapy when needed. Foothills Academy also invests resources into supporting a comprehensive Assistive Technology program and post-high school transition programs. In 2018/19, Foothills Academy invested almost \$400,000 into these priority areas. For more details, see the School Program information.



“Many, many thanks to Foothills Academy for providing the exceptional programming that has taught my child how to read, how to write an essay, nurtured analytical and critical thinking skills, allowed her artistic skill to develop, provided a safe and welcoming environment, and most importantly, developed her self-advocacy and perseverance. When she was seven years old she was assessed by an educational psychologist who said in all her years doing these, she had never met a child with such a vehement hatred of school and learning and that this was a high school dropout if I couldn’t turn this around. I’m so grateful to have found Foothills Academy and how instrumental you have been in “turning this around””

School Program



Our school program was full in 2018/19 with 296 students. Most grades have waiting lists which is a tribute to the success of our program. We provide a safe and caring environment for children with

Learning Disabilities. Foothills Academy looks to understand each student, for their unique strengths and needs, whilst helping each child understand themselves. We support every student to have confidence in the knowledge of how successful they can be so that they can truly maximize their potential in school and life.

Four highlights of our school program this year include:

Transitions to Post-Secondary and Work

Staff and parents proudly celebrated our twenty-three grade 12 students who graduated in 2019. Life after high school is full of opportunities for our graduates because our high school program helped make the transition from high school to post-secondary as smooth as possible. SAIT has been a significant partner. Together, we developed Strategic Youth Initiatives which consisted of a field trip to SAIT's Open House, a grade 10 trip to their Career Exploration Centre, as well as a third year of the APPS@SAIT (Adventures in Pursuing Post Secondary). This has led to planning for a Dual Credit pilot program for 2019 and other youth initiatives in the future. For our most recent graduates, 70% had applied for and were accepted at a post-secondary institution for this coming year. Providing these transition services and programs cost approximately \$37,000 this year.

Access to Mental Health & Other Professional Supports

At Foothills Academy, we recognize the complexity of the needs of our students. These needs require that our staff go beyond addressing academics. When students' social and emotional needs are met, we have a greater ability to build the strong characteristics required for academic and post-

secondary success. To achieve this, we invest heavily in our in-house psychology team plus contracted Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Therapy services. The funding that is provided through the Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) is \$9,000 per year and does not come close to covering the true need of students at Foothills. In 2018/19, these very necessary supports conservatively cost our organization almost \$300,00 to provide.

Assistive Technology Support

Preparing our learners for today and tomorrow is one of our most important tasks which means that having up to date technology in the classroom like Smartboards and Loft Boards are essential teaching tools. It has also been a priority for Foothills Academy to equip each student with their own technology device. Younger students use iPads and older students use Chromebooks. Additionally, many of our students

require specialized assistive technology tools to help with their individual learning needs. The tools can include speech-to-text programs like Dragon Naturally Speaking; text-to-speech programs like Read/Write Gold and scanning pens that can read to students anywhere like the Smart Pen. Technology cannot be used effectively without the proper training and necessary customization. This is why Foothills Academy employs a full-time Assistive Technology Specialist who works individually with students on a daily basis to connect them with the best technology for their needs and to support them on an ongoing basis. It costs Foothills Academy approximately \$82,000 a year to provide this personal and technological support that our students need.



Bursary Assistance

Bursary assistance was applied for and approved for 109 families for a total of \$943,647. This represents almost a 15% increase in families accessing the bursary fund and over a 10% increase in financial assistance provided.

A complete school performance report and three year plan is submitted annually to Alberta Education and is available on our website.



As a parent of two children who attend Foothills Academy school THANK YOU for your support!! Foothills isn't merely a good school or even a great school - it is a life changing school! My boys went from begging me not to send them to school to eagerly heading out the door every morning after they started at Foothills." Ber Roberts

Community Services



"It allows our child to thrive and be seen for who he truly is. He is allowed to shine and his self esteem and confidence have grown beyond any other intervention we have done with other professionals in 5 years. He has gained so many skills and a heart felt knowledge that he is amazing."

Camp Amicus Parent

With the long wait lists for our school program, our ability to deliver programs and services to people beyond our school program through Community Services has become more important than ever before.

In total, we reached over 3,183 individuals in 2018/19. All child and youth and parent education programs experienced higher participation.

Children and Youth Programs

For children and youth, a total of 1,282 families directly participated in one of our programs or services. Operating at or near capacity, these include our Read/Write & Math one to one instruction; psycho-educational assessments, counselling or group programs; social skills-based Camp Amicus and Amicus Recreation programs.

- **Read/Write & Math**

In our Read/Write & Math individual programs, a total of 504 students received a total of 16,584 hours of personalized one-to-one instruction. This is 38% more students and 12% more instructional hours provided over last year. On average, a student received 33 hours of instruction which can make an incredible difference to their ability to read and comprehend written materials or math concepts.

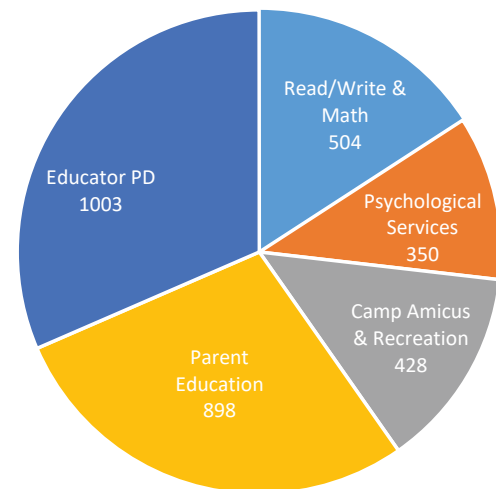
- **Amicus Recreation & Camp Programs**

In our Amicus Camp and Recreation programs, we served over 17% more participants this year over last year. We could have served even more if we had been able to have more weeks available for camp. The move this summer to Kamp Kiwanis was very positive in many ways. But, we are limited in the number of weeks that we are able to offer camp and so will be returning to Goldeye Centre in Nordegg, AB for 2020.

- **Psychological Services & Programs**

In our Psychological Services & Programs area, the number of assessments conducted increased. The number of private assessments stayed steady only. There is much more demand for private counselling than we are currently able to deliver in a timely manner due to the counselling staff being so heavily utilized by the students within the school program.

Community Services Participants 2018/19
Total 3,183



We continue to be one of the largest training facilities for psychology interns and provisional psychologists. Each year, about 15 students are supervised by our staff psychologists. They receive amazing training and mentoring learning to work with children and youth with Learning Disabilities, ADHD and co-occurring mental health conditions like anxiety and depression. Wherever they end up once they finish their training with us, they bring a wealth of experience serving this population.

Professional Development and Parent Education

Part of our mission is to share our knowledge of Learning Disabilities beyond our direct programs to increase the capacity of adults who live with or teach children with Learning Disabilities. We accomplish this through our Professional Development and Parent Education department. We also do this through monthly articles written by our staff which are posted on our website and communicated through our e-newsletter to subscribers.

- **Professional Development - More than 1,000 educators participated in in-person or online professional development.** Conservatively, these educators would impact over 20,000 students

"I can never thank Foothills Academy enough. Your group was able to take a young child with a big hole in her learning and teach her the skills that have allowed her to get into the area of excellence." Read/Write parent



knowledge about Learning Disabilities and related conditions and increased their strategies to parent the children in their lives with Learning Disabilities and ADHD. For the parents who attend our in-person workshops, they benefit not only from the information presented by our speakers but also from the supportive environment and connections that they make with other parents facing similar circumstances. Another way to increase knowledge and understanding is through online courses.

throughout Alberta and beyond with their increased knowledge and understanding of these students in their classroom. Numbers of participants in our Professional Development workshops are down compared to previous years as we put more staff time this past year into developing new online course content. In addition to our Inside LD for Educators online course, we developed an Inside ADHD for Educators course which was launched in August. A parent education companion version of this online course is currently being developed. For 2019/20, the vision for the Professional Development area is to develop webinar content that will be available on demand increasing the accessibility of current, research-based information for professionals in a format that is ready when they are to learn.

Bursaries Keep Programs Financially Accessible

Bursary demand remained steady this year. In total, \$126,604 in bursaries was provided to 143 people in order for them to access the programs and services that would help them and their family.

- **Parent Education - In 2018/19 almost 900 adults joined us for our Parent Education workshops and online course.** Through these educational opportunities, they have increased their

Supporter Spotlight: Prosser Charitable Foundation



Eric and Kathy Prosser, through the Prosser Charitable Foundation, have a great interest in the students and participants of Foothills Academy programs and have been large supporters for many years.

The Prosser Charitable Foundation was formed by Eric and Kathy Prosser in 2002 to continue their investment in the Calgary community. The Foundation partners with various charitable organizations in meeting its objectives of advancing education, working to relieve poverty and promoting other programs beneficial to the community specifically aimed at children and youth.

The Prosser Charitable Foundation contributes to Foothills Academy through two of its programs. The Parent's Choice Bursary supports 50% of tuition costs to a maximum of \$3,500 per student per year for a number of our school families. This contribution is a significant annual compliment to the bursary program operated by Foothills Academy.

Kathy Prosser says "The Foundation's mandate is to assist low-income youth in the areas of Education, Health and General Well-being. Our partnership with Foothills Academy and Amicus allows families to access programs that enrich their children's lives both academically and socially. Our hope is that these participants gain opportunities that might otherwise be out of their reach."

Fundraising and Donations

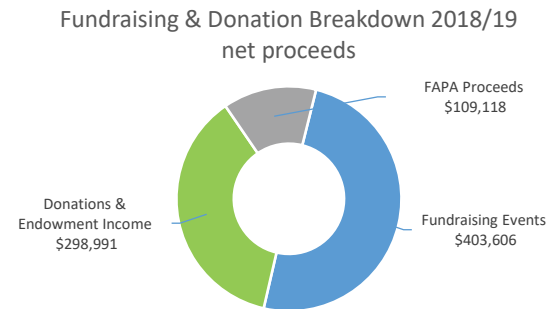


Thanks to generous donors, sponsors, parents and staff, \$811,715 (after fundraising expenses) was raised for Foothills Academy Society in 2018/19. This figure includes just over \$69,000 which was donated specifically for our Amicus Camp and Recreation programs. Fundraising and donation revenues were down almost 20% this year partly because there were some special one-time events and large donations received in 2017/18 that we knew would not be repeated this year.

Special events continue to be an important part of our fundraising. We are pleased that our fundraising event net revenue is down just slightly from the previous year even though one of our annual events had to be cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control. **The 10th Annual Gordon Hoffman Charity Golf Classic** not only sold out this year but was also our most successful tournament yet financially raising almost \$115,000 (net). Part of these funds come through our participation in the Shaw Birdies for Kids presented by AltaLink program which provides matching funds. We earned an award for having the most fundraisers in the Charity Challenge at the **Scotiabank Calgary Marathon**. Our charity also was the largest fundraiser at this event. The endowment fund revenue is lower than previous years because we chose to reinvest some of our endowment

funds. This will increase the ability of these funds to grow and benefit Foothills Academy students in the future.

Recognizing that the demand for financial assistance will likely continue to grow, we continue to pursue a diverse mix of donors and fundraising options.



Looking to the future, we are beginning to explore the need for a capital campaign to help provide funds to increase our endowment funds and also to increase our capacity to serve student and community needs now and in the future through program and facility enhancements and expansion of services. Coinciding with our 40th Anniversary Celebration in November 2019, we will be conducting an outreach and direct mail campaign to re-engage with school alumni and connect other community members in our fundraising efforts to support the whole organization.

Supporter Spotlight: Gordon Hoffman



We are extremely fortunate to have renowned Calgary lawyer and philanthropist, Gordon Hoffman, lending his name and support to the Gordon Hoffman Charity Golf Classic. In 10 years, the tournament has grown from an 18-hole tournament of 72 players a 36-hole tournament with 200 players which has raised over \$1 million for children and families affected by Learning Disabilities and ADHD. Since 2014, all funds raised have benefitted the families accessing Foothills Academy. In his charitable work, Gordon has had a long history of involvement in the area of Learning Disabilities. Additionally, Gordon has been a founder, chairman, director, solicitor, and executive member of many volunteer boards including Project Warmth Society of Alberta, Theatre Calgary, Child Find Alberta, Alberta Champions In Recognition of

Community Enrichment, and Operation Kickstart Society. Gordon has received many awards, the most recent thereof being The City of Calgary Citizen of the Year Award of 2010, the Diamond Jubilee Medal Queen Elizabeth II 60th Anniversary 2012, Calgary Catholic Separate School Board Co-Honoree Community Shepherd Leadership Award 2012, the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award 2014, Calgary Herald's Compelling Calgarian 2015, CTV inspired Albertan 2016 and Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers, Canadian Honours System, The City of Calgary Heritage Achievement Award 2016 and The Calgary Board of Education Legacy Award 2018.

Thank you to Our Generous Donors and Sponsors!

We sincerely appreciate each and every donation. Due to space limitations, we have had to limit this list to only include all contributions \$1,000 or more

Parents and Staff

We'd like to say a special thank you to all our school parents and staff who contributed hundreds of items to, bought tickets for and purchased items at all our fundraising events and all the volunteers who donated their time to Foothills Academy Society this year!

Individual Supporters

Judith Aldous
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The Ken and Roma Lett Foundation
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Our Mission

The mission of Foothills Academy is to facilitate learning in persons, primarily youth and children, identified as having a Learning Disability by providing quality educational programs and a supportive environment for families and staff. We recognize that we are interdependent with our global community – by participating in research, public education, in-service and advocacy, through community service.



FOOTHILLS
ACADEMY
SOCIETY

A Leader in Learning Disabilities since 1979

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