



Dear Parents, Alumni, and Friends of Southshire,

In the past few years, it has become even more clear how important community is. In challenging times, we learn how much we value our loved ones, how much we need help and support from those within and beyond our own household, and how much our children need to be surrounded by adults who are caring, patient, and kind.

In southern Vermont, we are fortunate to have schools that have not forgotten the core needs of children as they learn and grow. At Southshire, I see the warm and wild light in my two children burn brighter and brighter every day. Their already boundless curiosity somehow expands further, and their sense of connection to their community, and to the natural world, grows strong.

Though my children have only spent a few years at the school, I am confident that they have already learned lessons they will never forget.

They have learned what it means to be truly present when listening to those around you, and how to be considerate and thoughtful when sharing your own ideas. Because of the mixed-age classrooms and common spaces, the younger children constantly have great models before them in terms of what they can aspire to.

And the older children are reminded that everything we do in this world will impact the generations who come after us. They see younger versions of themselves, as they turn the pages of a story with one of their “Reading Buddies,” or as they guide little hands to hold on to the “spiny swing” as it turns faster and faster.

But I shouldn’t just talk about the sense of community, mutual responsibility, and collective learning that goes on Southshire. It’s important say, and I am very serious about this—
SOUTHSHIRE IS FUN!

Whether feeding and cleaning the cage of “Snibbles” (the school rabbit), or building something they’ve dreamed up in the wood workshop, my children come home every day with stories they’re excited to tell about activities in the classroom, games they played, something they learned in the woods behind the school, or a moment when friends disagreed about something, and found a way to work it out.

I remember vividly the way one of my daughters excelled academically at Southshire in her first year, but the teachers nonetheless remarked that they had a lot of work to do with her. I was puzzled. They said that while she was doing well in her schoolwork because she likes to achieve,

Thanks to your continued support we are able to do the things we love the most!

they wanted to help her find her own internal motivation, to understand for herself why she was putting in all that work. Over the next few years, I saw them help her connect her work in the classroom to what she cared about and what she deeply enjoyed. They did this with such a deep understanding of the hearts of children, and of her heart specifically, that I feel a profound sense of gratitude each time I think about my daughters' journey at this school.

I know every Southshire family could tell similar stories.

Having provided this wonderful education to several generations of children over the past 35 years, we are excited to continue this work for another 35 years (and more!), offering the kind of holistic education that every child in our community deserves.

I am writing to you today to ask you to consider supporting this ongoing work with an end-of-year gift. I hope you will consider a donation of \$50 or more today; but every penny we receive will go to help our current and future students to continue to grow and thrive.

Please do what you can and know that all gifts are worth incalculable value to the community that is Southshire Community School!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Brian Michael Murphy (father of Gia and Gemma)
Annual Fund Committee
Southshire Community School

Thanks to your continued support we are able to do the things we love the most!

Our mission is to help children to become individuals with critical thinking skills, who value themselves and others as creative contributing members of a community, who see themselves as problem solvers, who love learning for its own sake, and who view learning as a lifelong process.



“A love of learning has a lot to do with learning that we’re loved.” ~ Fred Rogers



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Woodshop – A project from start to finish!



Mentorship

**“If a child can’t learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn.”
~ Estrada**



All School Lessons



Music



Group Learning



Sports



Creative Thinking