



**The Southshire
Community School, Inc.**

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registered with the IRS and
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deductible.*

Greetings from Southshire Community School!

In 1993, our family discovered this gem of a school, and we were a part of the student body for the next ten years, spanning three siblings. We often reference, with gratitude, the solid foundation Southshire provided us in navigating life and education. Fast forward 27 years, and we are delighted to be reunited with this compassionate community, now that a new generation has joined the school, with the youngest member of our family, age four, now in his first year under Coleen's loving guidance. Through his eyes we are reminded of how this magical environment nurtures a love of learning and a sense of self within each student. Although the passing of the years has challenged the sustainability of this little independent school, the essence of what drew us to this place so many years ago remains — the interaction between all ages, heartily embracing diversity, and recognizing and fostering the unique gifts and learning style of every child. In just the few short months since this school year began, our little guy's self confidence, creativity, and curiosity have soared.

Today, there are new teachers, new families, and new projects to take on. This year the restoration of the barn began, with help from a matching grant from the state of Vermont. What was your vision for the barn? Was it a community space? Was it an art space? A rainy day playground? It's exciting to be approaching this stage of decision making. It would be great to hear from you and to know that Southshire had a lasting impact on the lives of you and your children, as it has ours. Please feel free to update your address on the enclosed form, and if you can, help support this amazing school in its continued growth.

With warmest wishes to all of you, wherever your journey has taken you,

Amy & Lydia Buckley



The School Update

The 2019-20 school year has been a year of exciting changes, with new families, new teachers, and new ideas. Southshire is in its 32nd year practicing our unique model of progressive education first established in 1987 by Ann Fitzgerald and Alison Caldwell. Our mission is the same: to help children become individuals who have academic and critical thinking skills; who value themselves and others as creative, contributing members of a community and see themselves as problem solvers; and who love learning for its own sake and view it as a lifelong process.

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“By supporting Southshire... we’re each taking a step closer to the world we want to live in.”

Our approach continues to leverage the child’s strengths as an individual learner who is safe to explore in a supportive, curious community. Each of us, child and adult, is a person of value with contributions to make to others. We are fortunate to be led by Head of School Coleen Healy and we celebrate two new teachers in Sally Shaw and Dan Sobel, both of whom joined us this year.

The students at Southshire are immersed in a wide range of curricular work with ample energetic play. Emergent themes are also a key part of learning. Southshire continues to harness the power of a simple mission to make dramatic positive impacts in children’s lives.

What's Happening

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE STUDY: With emphasis on the indigenous peoples’ relationships to the earth and animals and their deep respect for all life.

ANIMALS: In groups of four the students were given an animal classification and within their group they collectively choose an animal to research using books and then presented on their work.

WATER CYCLE: Focus on evaporation and condensation through hands on experiments.



Upcoming Events

12/18 WINTER PLAY
Alice in Wonderland
7pm @ Bennington College

12/20 -1/3 WINTER BREAK
1/25 WINTER FEST

Our Teachers

Coleen Healy- Head of School and Teacher of the Younger Group

Coleen loves working with children, and is a staunch advocate of supporting them so they know they are valued, respected, highly-capable beings. She blends her natural ability as a child-focused educator with years of experience at Southshire to provide a steady, comfortable and challenging environment at the school.



Sally Shaw - Teacher of the Middle Group

Sally has a dual interest in nature studies and children. Over the years, she has practiced child-centered, integrated learning in both homeschool groups and public schools. She loves to explore each child's unique approach to understanding and sees children as makers, constantly creating their world, and thereby truly "own" their learning.

Dan Sobel - Teacher of the Older Group

Dan has been teaching in Vermont and New Hampshire for twenty years with students ranging in age from three to twenty. Having taught both special education and regular education, Dan understands that all students have special needs and special abilities. Dan is also a musician and discovering ways to combine his great interests in music and in education has been one of the highlights of Dan's career.

How you can help

This year we have identified two special fundraising goals related to financial aid and preservation of our historic barn.

• Financial Aid Fund

In 2019 we are formalizing a financial aid program to ensure improved access to Southshire for all children regardless of financial means. Our goal - \$30,000.

• Barn Renovations

In 2017 we were successful in obtaining a Vermont Historic Barn Preservation Grant in the amount of \$15,000. The preservation work is complete, but you can still help us close the gap on the cash cost-share requirement of this grant. More information is available at www.southshire.org/barn.

• Other Donations

We welcome contributions in any amount for any reason. Undesignated gifts will be used to support the general operation of the school. If you would like to include Southshire in your planned giving, please contact the school. We also welcome contributions of time and experience if you have an interest in being directly engaged with our school community.

www.southshire.org/support

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