



GROTON
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

Helping Children Soar

Soaring

ANNUAL REPORT

2015-2016

Tending to every child

At GCS, the early childhood classrooms are like gardens, planted with seeds that hold the potential for bountiful harvests. But like any good garden, these seeds need individual attention to help them thrive and grow.

Cooper's Story

When Cooper joined the Blue Room with Miss Judi, he was a shy 21 month-old who hid behind his mother's legs at the classroom door. His first day at GCS had actually been two years before, when his mother, Beth, first visited the school while pregnant with him to ensure that he would have the opportunity to be a part of this Early Childhood Education Organization she had heard about while living in Harvard, MA. Thankfully for Cooper, he did get that chance – a chance that would truly transform his future.

On those first days, clinging to Beth's legs at the door to the Blue Room, you see, Cooper still didn't talk. Miss Judi recognized a smart young boy, but recommended that Beth have him tested to see if there were interventions that could help him find his voice. Soon, Cooper was having speech and occupational therapy within the Groton Public School district, and making great progress.

Cooper's Story doesn't end there, though.

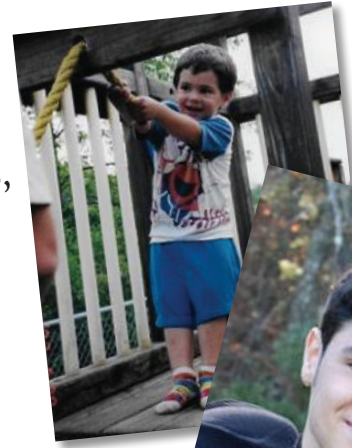
Toward the end of Cooper's Pre-Kindergarten year came a pivotal moment in his journey. The public school system told Cooper's parents he no longer needed services. His reading scores were now at the low end of the average range and this meant Cooper could go back to the mainstream classroom. This news should have been very exciting. However, the teachers at GCS who knew Cooper so well were not satisfied. They were adamant that while he had made progress, he still needed more help. They identified Cooper as a very intelligent child who had much potential. Average was not the goal. The goal was to fulfill his potential. Indeed, Cooper stayed on at GCS an extra year to help his language skills grow even stronger.

After finishing his time at GCS, Cooper used the work ethic he had learned as such a small boy to continue to overcome his difficulties. Eventually he was diagnosed with dyslexia in second grade, but his work continued. In 8th grade he was awarded the Head's Award at Carroll School. Now at age 17, he is an honors student at Proctor Academy, a school with a Learning Skills Center offering strong academic support combined with an experiential learning style. Cooper is thriving, with dreams of being a doctor someday.

If it weren't for the persistence of the teachers at GCS, and their leadership on the team that oversaw Cooper's early interventions, his journey would have been very different. When others were ready to accept some progress as sufficient, the GCS teachers insisted on more. To them the adequacy of the preparation of a student is not measured by the Bell Curve, but rather by whether that student has all the tools in place that he will need to reach his fullest potential. The GCS teachers were not willing to settle for anything less for Cooper, and their advocacy for him helped his parents make the right decisions.

At GCS, Cooper received the same individualized attention that the school strives to give every child so that all GCS children can grow to their full potential.

It mattered where Cooper's journey started. It mattered that he was a Groton Community School child. GCS has healthy roots with more than 70-years of history in the community, and it gives all the children who come through its doors the same healthy roots. GCS children go on to thrive, to be their best selves. To be kind, caring and generous citizens. GCS gives guidance, not



Cooper, then and now.



just to children, but to their families as well. And the level of attention that GCS teachers showed Cooper is the same for every child at GCS. The care for each child is very intentional.

As a parent, it is scary and overwhelming to face challenges like those Cooper faced. But his family did not face these alone - GCS was right there alongside them, encouraging them and providing guidance throughout the journey.

As one of Groton Community School's loyal supporters, you stand alongside Cooper and all the young children of GCS. Because you make it possible for GCS teachers to do what they do best – plant and nurture the seeds that allow the young children of our community to grow and flourish.

You make it possible for almost two hundred children each year to experience the individualized care and attention that helped Cooper on his journey.

My heartfelt thanks for your generous gifts to the annual fund year after year. We couldn't do all we do without you!

With gratitude,

Linda Kosinski, Director
Groton Community School

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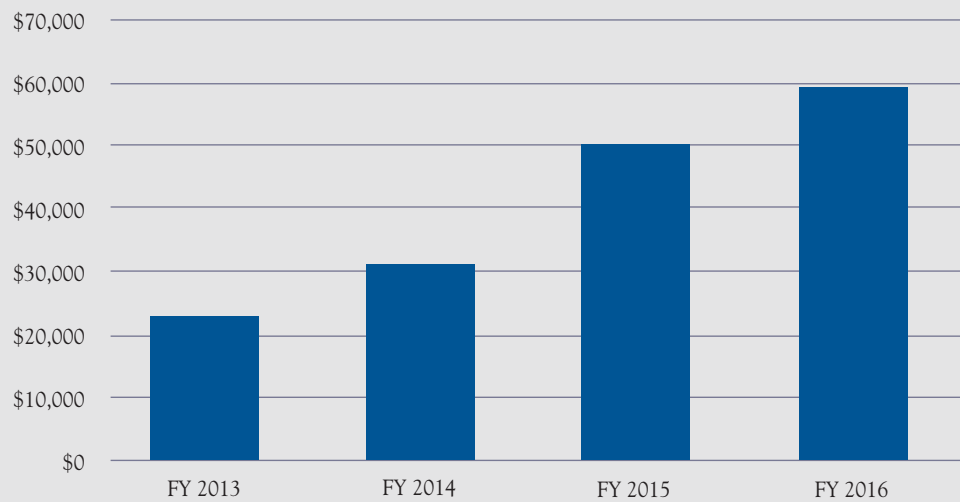
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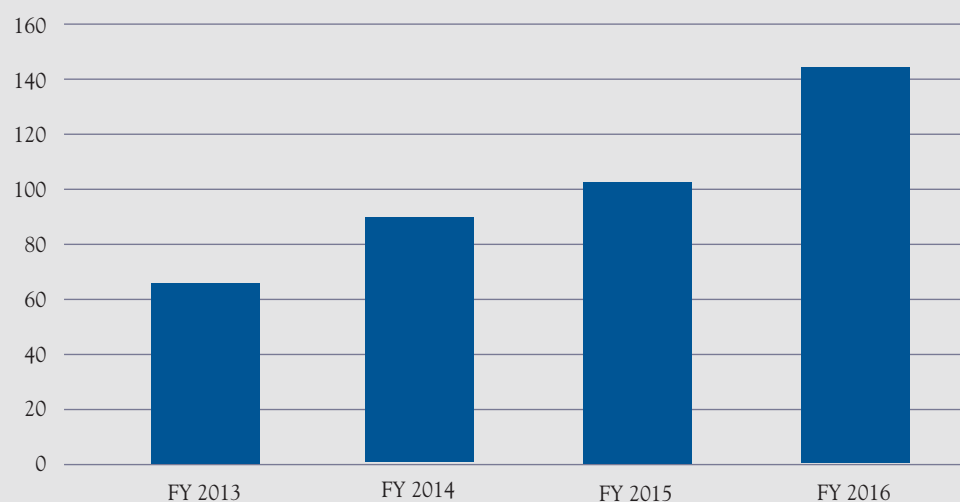
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Number of Donors



Thank you for your generous support of the Annual Fund. Here are some ways that your gift was invested in GCS:

- Creative Movement Program
- Speech/Language & Occupational Therapy Consultants
- Upgraded Computer Networking System
- Newly Designed School Website
- Staff Training in Support of MindUp Curriculum
- Wireless LCD Projector & Screen





Did You Know?

Your generous donations create opportunities for learning and discovery, provide support for our exceptional teaching staff, and give GCS the flexibility to take advantage of emerging opportunities and to respond to unanticipated needs and challenges. Your gift to the annual fund, every year, makes a difference to the children of GCS every day. Thank you!