TEMPLE GRANDIN SCHOOL

Growth From Strengths

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Friends,

Do you remember what you learned in high school? For me, it was mostly academics. I enjoyed learning, but I can't say that the U.S. History facts and algebraic equations I memorized have had a noticeable impact on my life. What did impact me was the relationships I formed with peers and teachers - some of whom I'm still in contact with today. Adolescence is a time for learning - about yourself, your community, and the world around you.

At TGS, we take this holistic approach to learning seriously. From our inception, TGS has intentionally put equal emphasis on social and academic learning and growth. Over the years, our "socio" programming has evolved in response to the needs of our students. It permeates everything we do. So much more than just teaching social skills, socio provides supported opportunities for students to explore and express their strengths, both at TGS and in the community.

Providing this programming is a significant investment for a small school. Our student support team brings many decades of combined experience across the fields of psychology, social work, and behavior support. Always looking out for teachable moments, they are the glue that helps learning stick.

If you're reading this, thank you for sticking with TGS! Our students' socio growth is fueled by supportive adults, both inside and outside of school. We are grateful for the bonds we share as one TGS community, and hope you enjoy reading about the impact your contributions have made through our socio program this year.

Warmly,

Jen Wilger
Executive Director

TEMPLE GRANDIN SCHOOL'S MISSION

We empower neurodivergent students to recognize and realize their potential, and equip them with the knowledge and skills to accomplish their young adult goals.

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TEMPLE GRANDIN SCHOOL PUTS THE "*SOCIO*" IN *SOCIO*-ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING!

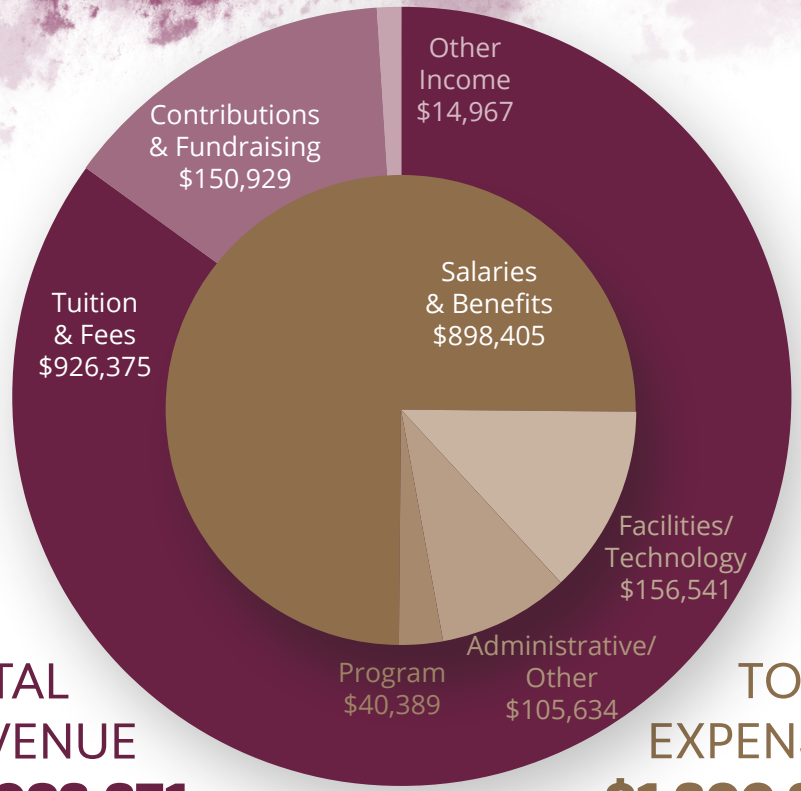
At Temple Grandin School our students' social development is as important as their academic growth. On a daily basis, our students explore academic subjects including math, science, language arts, and social studies. But each day they also receive coaching through individual and group activities that help them learn and practice the social skills they'll need as they pursue their young adult goals.

Socio programming at TGS is built on the Individualized Education Quest (IEQ), a goal-setting tool that helps students consider four "I's" that can guide their growth and development. While at TGS, students explore aspects of their individual identity, intellect, interaction, and independence. These "I" domains help young people sort out who they are and how they want to move through life.

Through interactive games, group discussions, and caring for our shared community spaces, students grow in their ability to understand themselves and others. Lessons learned in Socio come to life as we take field trips to test our skills in the community. These trips include visits to work places, public spaces such as museums, parks, and retail shops, and volunteering at local non-profits such as Community Food Share. Through these expeditions, we discover accommodations that open doors to new opportunities, and meet others who can join us in pursuit of shared interests.

As a capstone to our Socio programming, the TGS Spring Formal gives students the opportunity to prepare for and experience a formal event, so they're ready for weddings, holiday parties, and other special celebrations they may attend as young adults. Students dress up, learn how to have conversation around a table, try new foods, and participate in dancing and games. More than just a party, the Formal is a celebration of a year of learning and growing together in the Socio realm.

2023-2024 FINANCIALS



TOTAL REVENUE
$1,092,271

TOTAL EXPENSES
$1,200,968

THE CLASS OF 2024

TGS Graduation & Continuation is always a special time, honoring the accomplishments of each and every student. Our class of 2024 featured just one graduate, and we wanted to make it a special event for him. So we reached out to his favorite entertainer - autistic stand-up comedian, actor, and author Michael MCreary. We're grateful that Michael and his dad, Doug, were able to journey from Toronto, Canada to join our special day. Showing up in his own graduation gown, Michael began his speech by encouraging our students to embrace their neurodivergence and request any accommodations they need so they can be successful in the world. But that was just the beginning. Michael proceeded to share with us his interactions with our namesake, Temple Grandin, performing a spot-on imitation of her voice as he did so. The crowd of TGS students, staff, family and friends laughed uproariously. What a celebration it was!

For those who wanted more, the graduation speech was the first event in a TGS "double-header." That same night Michael McCreary performed a set at the Louisville Underground through our Comedy Night and Silent Auction. We sold out the venue, had a bunch of laughs, and raised money for TGS, thanks to Michael and to members of our community who donated or purchased silent auction items. Laughter is the best medicine, and we all got a healthy dose!

THANK YOU!

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