

BUCKINGHAM BROWNE & NICHOLS
THE LINK
MARCH 2008

Spotlight Article

Senior Luke Vargas Takes to Campaign Trail

Like most of the best U.S. presidential candidates, Luke Vargas '08 just isn't typical.

While most high school seniors keep themselves busy studying for APs, stressing over college choices or diligently updating their Facebook profiles, Vargas spends his nights and weekends either traveling to political rallies around the country or updating his popular political blog called "[Vargas for President 2040](#)," which recounts his thoughts and observations as a young voter on the campaign trail.

"He is very politically minded," Keith Mercurio, whom Vargas helped out with his campaign commercial when he ran for State Representative, said recently to the Watertown Tab. "Luke has a really unique take on politics; more than so than any other young guy."

Using his "equipment"—his Dad's car, mom's camera, and his trusty laptop, Vargas has traveled to the Iowa caucus, met every presidential candidate (and has his picture with many of them), and has attended almost 50 debates, all with a homemade laminated press pass.

"I'm no glitzy news network, that's for sure," Vargas writes in the "Welcome" section of his blog. "In the Spring of 2007 I scoured the internet for a fresh source of news about the New Hampshire primary. Outside of NECN and various blogs there wasn't much, especially anything from a student's perspective. Within a few days I was up in the Granite State mingling with the candidates, supporters, and staffers. Since then I haven't slowed down. These are the thoughts and opinions of an 18 year old in America...."

Vargas began to get press for his political enthusiasm after the New York Times quoted him at a Barack Obama rally during the Iowa caucus.

"I got a camera for my birthday," Vargas said to the Times, "and for Christmas I asked, 'Can I go out to Iowa for the caucus?'"

Although Vargas is registered as an Independent voter, last summer he got his first taste of being in a national campaign working for former Democratic candidate Chris Dodd in Manchester, N.H. While Vargas has supported Hilary Clinton as the Democratic nominee since Dodd left the race, Dodd's recent support of Obama has left an impression on Vargas:

"I would still rather see Hillary Clinton as the Democratic nominee and the next

president, but Dodd’s endorsement this morning is personal for me,” Vargas writes. “Here’s a guy whose campaign stood for ambitious environmental, national service, and educational initiatives, and whose recent career has been focused on restoring Constitution protections and opposing wiretapping and torture. In short, I respect him. With Dodd’s endorsement today, I no longer feel a wide division between my political and personal beliefs and those of Obama.”

At BB&N, Vargas runs *the POV*, a political magazine that launched last year with a staff of 30 students who do all of the writing, editing, design and photography.

“BB&N is a school of great intellectual standing, and we regard our students as some of the best and brightest,” wrote the editors in their first issue, “yet, we lack consistent interest and participation in the field of politics. However, we at the BB&N *POV* believe that politics is important: it impacts our lives in many ways, from environmental issues to education policy to issues of war and life and death. It is one of the principal goals of this magazine to present the BB&N community with a wide range of opinions and perspectives on a diverse selection of issues.”

[CLICK HERE](#) to check out *The POV* website.

Articles

Inside The Classroom: Going Global with Sheika Luc

As third grade teacher Sheika Luc enters her classroom on a late Thursday morning, her 19 students have just returned from another class, and are gathered in a rough circle on the rug, chattering amongst themselves.

“This is transition time—it gives them a few minutes to unwind from their last class before we focus on this period’s activity,” says Luc.

Focus is something they will need, as Luc’s class delves into a social studies curriculum which spends the second half of the School year examining modern and ancient Egypt.

“We’re going to start off with a ‘brainstorm’,” says Luc, as she uncaps a pen and stands before an easel with a large drawing pad on it. “Let’s talk about the geography surrounding Egypt—can anyone tell me what countries can be found on the continent of Africa and the Middle East?”

Hands shoot up across the carpet of kids, and the names come fast and furiously; “Madagascar,” “Libya,” “Morocco,” “Niger,” “Republic of Congo,” “Korea,” and many more are tossed into the air. While not all of them are correct, the scope of names is impressive.

“I try to find out what they (the students) know before I teach a lesson—it helps me cater the lesson to their needs,” says Luc. “It also encourages them to use each other’s knowledge so they aren’t conditioned to just ask me for answers—students here bring a lot to the table on their own which is empowering for them to realize.”

Following the ‘brainstorm’ session, students will break up into groups and using a sheet of paper with many countries written on it, work together to circle all of the countries located in African and the Middle East. The catch is they cannot use maps or the internet—only each other.

“If you disagree over a country, what can you do?” asks Luc.

“Rock, scissors, papers!?” ventures one intrepid student. Ultimately the consensus is to discuss disagreements and vote on them. After all of the countries are circled, the groups will complete a puzzle of Africa and the Middle East, and check their answers against the map.

Unlike many geography assignments, Luc goes out of her way to make this one fun. To create the groups, she passes around a bag of colored pencils, each marked with a letter, number, shape, and color. After each student selects one, they will find the rest of their group by matching the various characteristics of their pencil to everyone else’s. This ‘grab bag’ encourages cooperation and problem solving, but also creates a game-like feel as the kids reach into the bag and seek out their group-mates.

With the groups now chosen, Luc raises her hand, and silence falls on the room, “Okay, now that you have your groups—go!”

The room is suddenly a flurry of activity as students convene in circles on the floor, or at desks, and begin selecting countries. At one point a “Norway’s in!” chant goes up from one group as the children discuss which countries should be included. To add to the lesson and the ambience, Luc plays music derivative of the culture being studied.

The sounds of Amr Diab, a famous Egyptian singer and composer of ‘jeel’ music, has kids tapping their toes as they complete the assignment and move onto the puzzle stage of the activity.

“I’ve told the kids to listen for differences in the music from what they typically hear,” says Luc. “Dialect, style, feel—it gives them more context for the areas they are learning about.”

The semester will culminate in a research project about one specific aspect of Egypt, presented in pairs replete with a display poster or diorama.

“Interactive projects with each other allow them to become more independent, but at the same time I still maintain the comfort of a nurturing, community feel in the classroom,” says Luc.

Luc believes that BB&N contributes to that independence within a group feel as well. Coming from the Brearley School in New York City, where Luc taught primarily second and third grade, she experienced a much more urban environment, and appreciates the extra space BB&N offers students despite being located in the middle of Cambridge.

“Being part of a contained campus like the Lower School really creates a sense of community,” says Luc. “At this age kids are asked to start doing more things on their own—being able to walk to class almost like on a college campus, for example—but in a small community. It’s a warm, safe environment.”

In her second year at the BB&N, Luc feels right at home. Judging from the smiles, laughs, and learning that permeates her classroom, her students feel much the same.

Cast Shines in Upper School Winter Musical

In a production as impressive as any collegiate performance, Upper School students showcased their astonishing vocal talents in the Upper School winter musical *Anyone Can Whistle*, a Stephen Sondheim musical directed by veteran theater teacher extraordinaire Mark Lindberg.

Playing the corrupt mayoress Cora Hoover Hooper, Amy McNabb '08 steals the show, combining her skilled voice and superb acting to create a knock-out performance. Other performances of note include Talene Monahon '09 as the no-nonsense nurse Fay Apple, and Gerrit Thurston '08 as J. Bowden Hapgood, a patient mistaken for a psychiatrist who divides the town into two groups—the insane and the sane—and doesn’t tell anyone which is which. Chris Richards '08 also gives a fun performance opposite McNabb as Comptroller Schub.

The highlight of the show comes as Nurse Apple disguises herself as a French verifier and becomes romantically involved with Hapgood singing, “Anyone Can Whistle.”

The cast includes: Felicia Aikens '09, Sarah Bates '10, Julia Berkowitz '10, Maggie Brelis '10, Sarah Champion '10, Michael Darer '11, Reni Ellis '08, Kendrick Evans '10, Sarah Gottlieb '10, Nick Haas '08, Marina Keegan '08, Susan Langer '09, Daniel Lee '08, Ben Madsen '09, Michelle Mathai '08, Chelsea McLeod '08, Amy McNabb '08, Talene Monahon '09, David Ottenheimer '10, Ali Parker '09, Emily Parkinson '08, Jack Phillips '11, Danielle Rabinowitz '10, Katie Richard '10, Chris Richards '08, Katie Richards '11, Andrew Santin '11, Alyza Sebenius '10, Dan Selden '08, Adam Smith-Perez '10, and Nick Taylor '08, Dorothy Thurston '08, Gerrit Thurston '08, Brett Torres '08, and Luke Vargas '08.

Technical crew: Louise Brinkerhoff '09, Paul Brudnick '10, Sarah Gilbert '11, Paul Mannix '08, Eric Pluntze '08, and Alex Wolf '08.

A Celebration of Teaching Excellence: April 11

We cordially invite you to gather together with the BB&N community on April 11 to enjoy a festive celebration honoring BB&N faculty, past and present.

The event will take place at the Nicholas Athletic Center on Friday, April 11, 2008, starting at 6:30 p.m. The evening will include festive food, valet parking, and remarks from a keynote speaker (name still to be confirmed) as well as from two members of BB&N's Rhodes Scholar alumni/ae contingent:

--John Simon '80 (Co-founder and Managing Director, General Catalyst Venture Partners Co-founder and Chair, The GreenLight Fund);

--Sarah Light '91 (Assistant United States Attorney, Southern District of New York).

[CLICK HERE](#) to RSVP online for the event.

[CLICK HERE](#) to share your memories of a favorite faculty member(s), or about teaching excellence during your or your child(ren)'s time at BB&N.

Already, the testimonials and tributes to BB&N faculty from the past 50+ years have started pouring in from alumni/ae, parents, and past parents. Excerpts include:

--"My daughter is a lifer. The day we came to the Morse Building library to apply for beginners, I remember Ann Niles asking me what I hoped my daughter would gain from a BB&N education. I said I hoped she would feel that school was a magical place, where wonderful things happen, and that she would have that 'I can't wait to get there' excitement every day. All of that has come true in greater measure than I could have ever imagined, because of the talent and dedication of all the teachers she has been so lucky to have."

--"[Mr. Wight] was a model of moral principle and strong character that had a strong shaping influence on my own moral development and taught me the importance of courageously standing up to authority in defense of fairness."

--"Anyone who had [Mrs. Matt] as a teacher would never have any trouble knowing whether to say 'I or me,' 'who or whom.' Grammar became a game and we actually loved it, diagramming complicated sentences, rewriting incredible stories which she had written purposely filled with grammatical errors."

--"All of my intellectual life after BB&N was inspired and enriched by teaching there. Thank you."

So, we hope to see you on April 11 as we pay tribute to the contributions and profound impact of BB&N faculty, from both present day and yesteryear!

Keeping You Up to Date

57th Annual Circus: Saturday, May 3

Join all your friends at the Lower School Campus on May 3rd—10AM to 3PM—for an exhilarating blast of games, rides, food, fun and entertainment at the BB&N Circus. All proceeds from the non-stop fun benefit the School's financial aid program.

Perennial favorites back this year include the moon bounce, the obstacle course, the dunk tank, lots of games of skill and chance, several crafts tables, and face painting.

As always, the Market Bazaar will offer books, sports equipment, and toys. Donated items are needed and welcome, or just come to browse and find a great bargain.

The Silent Auction is a great opportunity to bid on unique vacations, catered parties, gourmet items, sports tickets, and more. Details on this year's online auction preview will follow soon.

Volunteers are needed, in particular to help out the day of the circus; to sign up, please contact any of the PA Circus co-chairs: [Belinda Hunsinger](#), [Julia Elhauge](#), or [David Cumberbatch](#).

Cultural Assembly Mesmerizes Lower Schoolers

The Lower School Gym resounded with gospel music last month when acclaimed pianist George K. Russell Jr. and his band visited lower school students to educate and entertain them with a narrative concert about gospel music in America. With interactive dialogue, brief history lessons, and sweet, sweet music, Russell led BB&N students on a musical tour through plantation fields, the nooks and crannies of the underground railroad, and up through gospel greats of 1900s.

“The *Clap Your Hands* Gospel program had Lower School students clapping in rhythm, enthusiastically singing along, and mesmerized by the dynamic voices of the soloists and George's amazing piano playing talent,” said Assistant Director of Studies, Rebecca Geary who helped to organize the event. “Even the teachers were clapping and swaying to the music!”

Upper School Students Aid Charles River Conservancy

Students and staff from the Upper School recently pitched in to aid the Charles River Conservancy, part of wide-ranging community service initiatives undertaken throughout the year by the school. The volunteers cleared some vistas near the Eliot Bridge portion of the Charles River and learned about the ecology of these urban parklands. BB&N is one of several area schools working on the project, which is clearing invasive plants and

pruning trees along the long-neglected stretch of Charles River shoreline. The restoration efforts are taking place thanks to grants that the Charles River Conservancy received from the Adobe Foundation Fund through the Boston Foundation.

Books, Basketball & Neighbors Program Celebrates 10th Year

BB&N opened its doors to the greater Boston and Cambridge communities once again this year with its Books Basketball and Neighbors program. Inner-city students from grades four through eight spent six Saturday's over the winter trading time between the library and Nicholas Athletic Center, concentrating on basketball and studying as facilitated by BB&N students and faculty.

Now in its tenth year, the program was founded by Director of Multicultural Services and Boys' Basketball Coach Lewis Bryant and Science Teacher Byron Bowman. Each year 50 to 60 inner-city students sign up for the program and are split into two groups, one younger and one older. The groups then take 90 minute turns being coached on basketball and receiving tutoring help in math and reading comprehension.

Middle School Preps for Debut Read-a-Thon

This spring, the Middle School will introduce a pilot literacy project that involves reading, community service, an author visit and reception, and the school's advisory program. A month-long read-a-thon will kick off on March 14; the students have elected to donate the funds raised to Safe Passage's literacy programs.

An integral part of the read-a-thon will be the recommended community-wide reading of [*Freak*](#), by local author Marcella Pixley. The fiction book deals with the struggles of a middle school girl. Ms. Pixley will visit the Middle School on April 25 to speak with the students at a special assembly. Following the assembly, the newly renovated MS library will host a reception. In addition, MS counselors and staff will hold a coffee get-together for parents to discuss issues raised by the book and the implications for kids.

Farkes '02 Featured in Boston Globe

Zak Farkes '02, perhaps BB&N's most illustrious athlete/alumnus, was featured in a Boston Globe article on February 27. The feature, written by Globe baseball columnist Gordon Edes, detailed Farkes' path from lifelong Sox fan to BB&N/Harvard graduate, to minor leaguer vying to one day inherit the catching duties from Sox captain Jason Varitek.

Farkes was asked why the Sox converted him to catcher a year and a half ago: "My makeup as a player, my body type, my intelligence, my hard work—that all fit, I guess, with the type of catcher this organization wants to develop," he said. "They wanted to see if I fit in that mold."

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the feature.

***The Link* Earns CASE Honors**

BB&N's electronic newsletter, *The Link*, was honored last month with a Bronze Award from the Council of Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District I. The category, Website-Specialty Sites, included entries from dozens of colleges and independent schools throughout the Northeast United States and Canada.

Papas and Halloran Named to Super 26 Team

Seniors Nico Papas (*left*) and Nick Halloran (*right*) were both named to the Super 26 Football Team this year. This team consists of the best 26 players in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is chosen by the state high school coaches.

Papas, a defensive lineman/fullback, finished his career with a school-record 206 tackles. Halloran, a defensive end/offensive tackle, allowed zero sacks over the two years he played for BB&N.

Both players were also named to the North squad of the Shriners All Star football game to be played June 14 at Bentley College.

Next year, Papas will play for Columbia University and Halloran for Boston College.

Fourth Graders Create Book Advertisements

BB&N Fourth Graders will be very busy for the next few weeks—not with school work—but with reading! Last month, Fourth Grader Teachers Jenny Weymouth and Bill Hritz organized a session of show-and-tell for “book advertisements” created by students about books they had read.

“Students had to write something that would convince other students to read their book without giving away the ending,” says Weymouth. “They had to illustrate and come up with a quote about the book as well.”

Most kids came away with long lists of books for that next rainy day, including such titles as: *The Penderwicks* by Jeanne Birdsall; *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan; *Just As Long As We're Together* by Judy Blume; and *Artemis Fowl* by Eoin Colfer.

Father and Son Authors Deliver Powerful Speech at Upper School

Like many BB&N students, when Nic Sheff was 17 he seemed to have it all—he was an editor on his independent high school newspaper, an honors student, and co-captain of the water polo team. But, after being accepted into some of the best colleges in the country, tragedy struck, and Nic transformed into every parent's worst nightmare—a drug addict living on the streets.

“When I was growing up I had this hole inside of me...I felt scared all the time, insecure and ugly,” Nic said to a large crowd of US students during a recent talk where Nic, along with his father David, each discussed their recent books on Nic’s methamphetamine addiction. “I didn’t know what I was doing, everyone else seemed so confident and strong and I wasn’t any of those things. My life became centered around getting high—nothing else mattered.”

Tweak: Growing Up on Methamphetamines is a harrowing first-person account of Nic’s meth addiction, telling the painful story of how Nic lived on the streets, ate food from the side of the road, and occasionally popped into his family’s life, usually only to steal money for his next fix.

His father’s book, *Beautiful Boy: A Father’s Journey Through His Son’s Addiction*, which has recently been selected as Starbucks next featured book, tells the story of Nic’s addiction from David’s perspective.

“I was completely blindsided, I thought maybe he’d been kidnapped or murdered,” David said, speaking about the first time his son disappeared due to his drug problem. “I stayed up nights, I called the police, emergency rooms...when I picked him up he was near death. That began five years of a nightmare. Nic went in and out of rehab so many times, and it was devastating.”

“Being in treatment taught me to see who I am, to accept that person that I am and not try to be somebody else,” Nic added about his recovery. “It was the process of getting open about who I am that really allowed me to start to accept myself and start to love myself.”

[CLICK HERE](#) to read an in-depth article on the Sheffs which appeared in The New York Times.

Kindergartners Celebrate Chinese New Year with Neville Place Residents

The kindergarten class co-taught by Tracy McLaughlin and Deanne Peterson brought some Chinese New Year joy to residents of the nearby Neville Place Assisted Living Facility in early February. [CLICK HERE](#) to read Tracy McLaughlin’s letter about the visit.

Local Glassblowers' Exhibit on Display at Upper School

Make certain to stop by the Upper School art gallery in the new wing to see the sculpture work of Andy Magdanz and Susie Shapiro (P ’06, ’12), but tread carefully around the delicate pieces of these well known artists—they’re all made of glass! Magdanz specializes in abstract, functional pieces while Shapiro prefers sand etched vases and other more decorative glass themes. The exhibit will be up through March 10.

McCarthy '08 Nominated for McDonalds All American Game

Andrew McCarthy '08 was one of just 23 Massachusetts basketball seniors nominated for inclusion in the 2008 McDonalds All American Game. Each year the game features 24 of the top high school basketball players nationally. Past alums of the annual event include Magic Johnson, Michael Jordan, Shaquille O'Neal, and LeBron James. [TOP](#)

Campus Voices

Each month, *The Link* visits BB&N's three campuses to hear directly from directors or teachers about what's on their minds. We share their letters below:

Lower School

Tracy McLaughlin

Kindergarten Teacher

There was something mystical and magical about Chinese New Year this year, especially at Neville Place Assisted Living Home in Cambridge. One of BB&N's kindergarten classes went there to show off the Chinese dragon the students had made for the occasion. Nineteen kindergartners walking around a large room, all of them under one long piece of fabric, is quite a sight to see! The residents were delighted with the dragon dance and the song the students sang. The warm and welcoming staff at Neville Place gave our class red envelopes and clementines. But the best part of our visit was the students' interactions with the residents.

Our kindergarten class, co-taught by me and Deanne Peterson, began a study of Chinese New Year with several children's books. One book was called *The Dragon New Year: A Chinese Legend*. It told a Chinese folk tale about a sea dragon named "New Year," whom people fled from in fear on New Year's Day. A wise man named Buddha made a plan to scare the dragon away with light and loud noise, since the dragon was used to the dark and quiet bottom of the ocean. According to the folk tale, we now have Chinese New Year parades with dragon and lion dances, loud noises, and fireworks to scare the dragon away.

The children were very excited to make their own dragon (whom they lovingly named "New Year"). We started with a cardboard box to use as the head and then attached a long piece of shiny red fabric for the dragon's body. During math, in our study of geometric shapes, students cut out triangle and oval 'scales' from construction paper and taped them onto the fabric. Some students volunteered to paint the cardboard head green and a few more students decided to add construction paper 'fire' to the dragon's mouth.

We put on Chinese dragon dance music from our music teacher, Ada Snider, and pulled names out of a hat to see who would hold the head, taking turns of course. We were now ready to go to Neville Place, home for one of our students' grandparents, to share our dragon dance and a dragon song as well.

We went to Neville Place on a snowy Thursday, February 7th, the first day of the Chinese New Year. I read a story to the students and residents. The story was called *This Next*

New Year; it is about a boy who is looking forward to a fresh start this year. The boy in the story explained that it is “my second chance, and I have so many dreams I’m ready now to make come true.” Given the smiles on the residents’ faces and the energy radiating from the children as the story was read, I was certain this was an uplifting message we could all believe in.

Next, the students sang a dragon song and then got ready for the big moment: our dragon dance. We placed the head on the first student in line and draped the rest of the body over the students. The students circled and danced around the room to the music, coming close to each table of residents along the way. The residents clapped, laughed, and smiled. After two big circles, we took the dragon off of the students and they had a chance to talk with the residents. The question that the students asked the residents was: “What was your favorite thing to do in kindergarten?” A lot of the residents answered “recess and lunch,” which is similar to what our students say when we ask them the same question.

All in all, a lot of great connections were made and the students, teachers, and residents had a wonderful time. They will forever remember their Chinese New Year.

Middle School
Miles Billings
History Teacher

I enjoy the fact that I am constantly impressed by my students during my first year here at BB&N. And, I am pretty sure I had nowhere near this amount of raw knowledge when I was in middle school. This became evident to me during a recent assignment in my eighth grade history class. But, I discovered that today’s raw knowledge does take some refining and a little bit of old school “know how” to get the job done right.

The assignment turned out to be an organic process for me. Since December, my history class has been following national politics and studying U.S. Government. I often use the digital projector and my laptop to display current primary results, polls, and the like and I find that my students are genuinely engaged. I see high fives going around the room when I display the results, these coming from 13 and 14 year olds who will not be able to vote until 2012 at the earliest. I quickly learned that my students were well informed on many 21st century issues. One student was easily able to deduce the complex process of stem cell research into a 60-second lecture better, I imagined, than any medical school professor could ever do—and my wife is a doctor.

That is when I decided to take the current events within our class and make them real. I first brought in a map of the Massachusetts Congressional districts which also showed the mailing addresses and phone numbers of the representatives’ Washington offices. Many wanted to whip out their cell phones and give them a call, and a piece of their mind, at the same time. I decided to take a more subtle, and old-fashioned approach to long-distance communication: a typed snail mail letter that included...a STAMP! “No,” I told them. “We will not be using our cell phones to call, nor will we be emailing, text messaging or ‘IM’ing’ with our House representatives. We will be sending them a letter.”

So that was the homework, to craft a one-page letter concerning a national issue that the student personally cared about. The next day, the students shared the letters with each other. The topics varied from gun control to No Child Left Behind and even one on the Mass Pike toll increases. As we shared these letters, it hit me: none of my students could correctly format a proper letter. And, upon further inspection, I realized that most of them had never even written a letter like this before.

This was where the path of my students diverged from my own middle school path. When I was in junior high school in Vermont, I had a required course called “Life Skills” which included how to write a check, sew a patch, and of course, how to write a letter. I shared this history with them and after studying the letter format for half of a class and going through a peer editing process, I had them produce a final draft. These newer versions had everything aligned and looked very professional. The final step of the assignment was to bring in an envelope and a \$0.41 stamp. On that Friday, we had everything ready to mail. But, some still needed to learn where the return address went, where the stamp went, and how to properly fold a letter to fit into the envelope. Once they were signed and sealed, a student brought them down to the front office to be picked up. Two weeks have now passed since we mailed these letters and one student has already heard back! She brought in the letter, which addressed her specific issue and was personally signed by her representative. I expect everyone to hear back in the coming weeks and be able to share their letter with the class.

What started as a simple assignment on politics turned out to be a life lesson on how the rest of us used to communicate with the outside world before all the conveniences of modern technology. And, I imagine, before long these students will be writing cover letters and sending resumes of their own, all the old-fashioned way.

Upper School
Tom Siegel
History Teacher

I have found that one of the great things about teaching at BB&N is that the students can be some of the best teachers around. Let me explain.

After many years of teaching at the high school, college, and adult level, I have developed three basic teaching methods. First, I have been a mediator between the material and my students. Second, I have been a facilitator, providing a safe environment for my students to experiment with new themes. But the linchpin of strong teaching has been to become a learning partner with each of my students. In a class of ten to fifteen this can be challenging, but I hope that my students recognize my efforts to learn from them even as they are learning from me. The ideal learning partner relationship would be having the luxury of a one-on-one experience with a student, an independent study on a topic of mutual interest.

Last spring one of my junior AP US history students asked me if I would supervise him on an independent study. After much brainstorming, we agreed on the topic: History from

the Perspective of the Other. Throughout the fall and into this spring, we have studied several peoples to see how they reacted to an invasion by a foreign power. We narrowed what could have been an endless list down to three: pre-Columbian America at the time of the arrival of the Spanish; the Arab lands at the time of the Crusades; and the History of India during the late years of the East India Company's control. For each people, we read (dissected is closer to the truth) historical works, looking not only at the history from the varied perspectives, but also at the scholarly techniques used to tell those stories. Does the perspective of the author matter? This has been as close to a college-level tutorial as I have had in many a year.

In that, it has been an exciting course to teach. But I have also learned much by working carefully as a team with the BB&N senior. As the year has progressed, we have had to rethink many of our preconceived notions about the pre-invasion cultures we have studied. In each case, the invaders came upon societies which were more fractured by cultural and political upheaval than we imagined. All were in flux. Most striking of all was how long it took each of these societies to understand what was actually happening. Our historical hindsight of 20/20 was at worst a hindrance to real understanding.

Overall, my independent study experience has already provided me with two valuable lessons. One is that the History Department's desire to globalize our curriculum will be more complicated and much more rewarding than simply adding a topic here and there to the basic courses as I have taught them in the past. And second, that at BB&N the best way to learn often comes from the learning partnership of two dedicated individuals, each willing to be both teacher and student.

**All School
Duncan Pollock
Director of Facilities**

As director of facilities at BB&N, I am pleased to tell you of a number of initiatives that BB&N has engaged in to move toward a greener campus environment schoolwide. I'm proud that the School has embraced these programs with such enthusiasm. In addition to enhancing the long-term sustainability of the School—as well as the planet it lives on—it is important for a school such as BB&N not only to teach students environmental responsibility, but also to model it.

What are some of these green initiatives? Let's start with trash recycling. This past November, BB&N moved to a "single stream" model with its recycling operations. With single stream, which has been adopted by the City of Cambridge as well, basically every non-food recyclable item—bottles, cans, paper plates, plastic, aluminum foil, white and colored paper—can be deposited in the same bin. A local company, McGeoghean Waste, then picks up the big blue hoppers filled with these commingled materials and brings them to a Charlestown company, FCR, which separates, processes, and redistributes the materials to global customers for remanufacturing.

The shift to single stream allows us to produce significantly more recyclables than in years past. Moving to single stream typically increases the recycling volume by a rate of 25 percent. BB&N's goal is to reach a recycling rate of at least 50 percent of schoolwide waste (we've been between 30-35 percent in recent years).

Students on all three campuses have embraced the School's new approach to recycling. I've spoken with Jenny Weymouth's Grade 4 class, in which the students have created posters to educate the Lower School and BB&N community about single stream recycling, and I've met with the Upper School Environmental Club as well.

We're getting greener in other ways, too. For example, we have installed carbon-activated water dispensers, replacing vendor-supplied bottled water stations. This has dramatically reduced the use of plastic bottles and the energy expended in producing and delivering the product. Even better, the end result is water quality that's equal to or better than what was there before.

Energy management is a high priority for the School. Working with organizations such as NStar and Prism Consulting, BB&N has audited its heating, cooling, lighting, and power usage, and is examining the feasibility to implement improvements and advances such as more efficient gymnasium lighting, ice rink insulation, and supplemental solar water heating and cogeneration at the Upper School.

Appropriately enough, field maintenance is another area that offers great "green" potential at BB&N. We've seen good results from the organic lawn and sports field treatment system we currently use, and we're exploring a move to a 100 percent organic treatment. In addition, we are investigating the use of corn-based fuels for our mowers, which would allow us to obtain carbon credits.

Transportation is an aspect of operations where we've been working hard to make a green impact. In an effort keep cars off the road (and away from our already-clogged parking lots), the School subsidizes a T-pass program for its community members, runs a shuttle bus to the Harvard Square MBTA station, and provides bus service to and from the western suburbs.

Dining Services is contributing in several ways to support the Sustainability Program. Examples of their efforts include the change to reusable plates, cups, and flatware, recycling all cardboard boxes, harvesting of waste oil for reproduction, and reduction of can and plastic bottle products.

The Technology Department at BB&N participates by sending old computers to be recycled and properly discarded. Cell phones are donated for reuse and copy machine toner cartridges are returned to manufacturers for credits.

As you can see, we have made a lot of progress to date, but rest assured that BB&N will continue to create alliance partnerships with experts in the sustainability initiative to

ensure that the School and the BB&N community stay at the forefront as a leader in environmentally responsible practices.

Giving Update

HELP US FILL THE GAP!

You are cordially invited...

To join your fellow BB&N Parents, Alumni/ae, Grandparents,
Past Parents, Faculty, Staff, Students, and Friends
in support of the 2007-08 Annual Fund, which fills the gap between tuition and the actual
cost of your child's BB&N education.

Goal: \$2,350,000 and 100% Parent Participation

Date: Today or by June 30, 2008

Time: No time like the present.

Location: Online at www.bbns.org/donate
or mail to: Buckingham Browne & Nichols
80 Gerry's Landing Road, Cambridge, MA 01238-5512

RSVP TO: Jo-Ann Lovejoy, Director of Annual Giving
jo-ann_lovejoy@bbns.org or 617-800-2723

Response to date: \$1,437,140 / 61% of goal

Parent Participation	Grade
56%	K
81%	1st
59%	2nd
38%	3rd
61%	4th
76%	5th
53%	6th
56%	7th
48%	8th
42%	9th
61%	10th
63%	11th