



Established in 1865 as the first coeducational boarding school in New England, Cushing Academy was the vision of Ashburnham native Thomas Parkman Cushing. In its first year of existence, 122 students were enrolled; most were from Ashburnham, but others came from throughout Massachusetts and neighboring states. Today there are approximately 390 boarding and day students, representing 31 countries and 25 states.



From its founding through the early 1960s, when the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District was established, Cushing proudly served as the town's public school.

Dr. Randy R. Bertin is the Academy's thirteenth Head of School, serving since July 2018. Under Dr. Bertin's leadership, the 168 members of the administration, faculty, and staff work with the Board of Trustees to fulfill the Academy's mission: *Cushing Academy exists for students and develops curious, creative, and confident learners and leaders.*

Cushing students embark on a life-changing journey as they pursue their passions, discover new interests and make lifelong friends from all over the world. With a focus on support for student learning and growth, Cushing's outstanding faculty offer exceptional academic, artistic, athletic, and student life opportunities, with a wide array of traditional and innovative courses.

Commitments to the Town have included contribution of labor and materials for the renovation of the William J. Bresnahan Scouting and Community Center and a gift of \$270,000 for the public safety building in 2007. In 2004, when Cushing Academy and the Town agreed to discontinue the use of portions of School/Academy Streets as public ways, Cushing gave for the construction of the public safety building: 5 acres of land on Central Street, a \$1.5 million cash payment, and \$500,000 payable over 20 years. In 2021, Cushing donated \$50,000 to the Town of Ashburnham to complete the paving of Pleasant Street. In addition, Cushing incurred costs of approximately \$168,000 in labor and materials to upgrade the underground drainage system, initial grading and sidewalk installation for Pleasant Street.

In 2023, we began work on a new strategic plan to chart the road ahead for the next five years, following the completion of the Academy's Five-Year (2017-2022) Strategic Plan: *Embracing Our Legacy and Positioning for Our Future*. That plan's implementation during the pandemic enabled the Academy to weather the global crisis with a never-wavering focus on our students. We continue to enjoy a renewed celebration of all the traditions and experiences that are part of a Cushing education.

Cushing Academy is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and completed its most recent 10-year review in 2018.

A multi-year comprehensive facilities renewal is underway, transforming the Cushing campus and experience. Work began in 2022 on a new dormitory and wellness center to be completed in the Spring of 2024, on the site of the original Sawyer-Hopkins Hall.



*Dormitory and Wellness Center to be completed in Spring 2024*

Over the last ten years, this campus renewal has included the construction of four new dormitories and the Watkins Field House, the renovation of three additional dormitories, the expansion of the Fisher-Watkins Dining Commons, and the refurbishment of campus grounds and athletic fields. The Iorio Arena has also been renovated, benefiting the local hockey community that also uses this facility.

This report covers the fiscal year through June 30, 2023.

Cushing alumni are leaders in the fields of the visual and performing arts, athletics, business and other areas and industries. Our students, alumni, and faculty were recognized for many awards, achievements, and championships in fiscal year 2023. Highlights include:

- 100% of graduating seniors who applied to colleges were accepted, enrolling in more than 70 colleges and universities.
- Cushing visual artists received 19 awards this year, including two National Medals, from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, the nation's longest-running and most prestigious recognition program
- Fourteen members of the Class of 2023 were inducted into the Cum Laude Society, a national honor society recognizing scholastic achievement.
- Varsity Girls' Volleyball won the NEPSAC Class C Championship, with an 18-1 record; Varsity Softball captured its second consecutive WNEPSGSBA (Western New England Prep School Girls' Softball Association) Class B Championship, with an 18-1 record. Varsity Boys' Ice Hockey advanced to the finals in the Elite 8 Tournament, and Varsity Girls' Ice Hockey was in the Dorothy Howard Tournament, making it to the semi-finals. Varsity Boys' Lacrosse competed in the NE Big East Tournament, and two student-athletes participated in the Pippy O'Connor Girls' Golf Tournament (CT), placing 1st and 2nd in the 9-hole round. Also seeing tournament play were Varsity Girls' Soccer, Boys' Prep Basketball, Varsity Girls' Basketball, and Varsity Alpine Skiing.
- Approximately 50 students across 18 teams won a variety of league and tournament accolades, including Class C NEPSAC Player of the Year in Volleyball and Varsity Girls' Ice Hockey. A student also represented the U18 Team USA (Women's) at the International Ice Hockey Federation in Sweden and received the John Carlton Award from the Boston Bruins, as the outstanding Massachusetts High School female high school student athlete. Six student-athletes were named to NFHCA National Academic Squad (Field Hockey).
- Our coaching staff received honors including NFCA Regional Coaching Staff of the Year (Softball) and US Lacrosse & NNELL Coach of the Year (Varsity Boys' Lacrosse).
- 42 members (35%) of the Class of 2023 committed to play athletics at the college level, in 9 different sports - with one student committing in two sports.
- Approximately 110 alumni played sports at the college level during the '22-'23 academic year.
- Maya Rogers '96, CEO of Tetris, received the Cushing Academy Leadership Award and served as the keynote speaker at Commencement 2023.



- Current professional athletes David Duke '18 (NBA), Joey Daccord '15 (NHL), and Conor Sheary '10 (NHL) are part of a long line and proud tradition of Cushing Penguins over many years. This year marked the retirement of veteran Keith Yandle '05 who reached Iron Man status for having broken the record for the most consecutive games played in the NHL.

Cushing Academy is proud to be located in Ashburnham and to participate fully in the Ashburnham community:

- Students and faculty donated food items, clothing, bedding, housewares and supplies to the Ashburnham Food Pantry and Community Closet. Surplus items were also donated to the Lion's Club bins in town.
- Students wrote cards to seniors at a local nursing home.
- In both Fall 2022 and Spring 2023, Cushing again hosted the Special Olympics Young Athletes program, for children ages 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities, with many Cushing students volunteering. Both sessions ended with a parade involving the Ashburnham Fire Department and the Ashburnham Police Department.
- The entire Cushing community spent a full day in April 2023 caring for others through acts of service on the 20th Annual Tony Fisher Day of Service to Others. Each year, all students engage in community service on this day, working on projects locally and beyond. The many local service projects this year included work at six state parks and land trusts, two libraries, two food banks, two churches, two community organizations, a school, and a Little League field.
- Cushing students and faculty participated in the Scouting for Food drive to support the Ashburnham Food Pantry.
- Cushing provided hot chocolate and cookies for the 2022 Ashburnham Tree Lighting.
- Cushing donated \$1,500 to the inaugural Celebrate Ashburnham Street Fair in September 2022, and the Cushing Art Club led art projects for children at the event.
- Many members of the faculty and staff serve as volunteers with local organizations, including Ashburnham Town committees, schools, scouting groups, community organizations, and churches.
- Cushing continues to offer Girling Field for use by Life Flight for medical evacuations.
- Cushing continues to welcome on-duty Ashburnham Police Department and Ashburnham Fire Department personnel to meals in the Fisher-Watkins Dining Commons, at no charge.
- The Academy is pleased to welcome the Ashburnham community to campus for performances and athletic events.
- Cushing has been pleased to host events and to offer facilities for free or at greatly reduced rates to area organizations. Typical community opportunities at Iorio Arena include discounted ice time for the Oakmont Regional High School Ice Hockey Team and priority booking opportunities for Oakmont and North Central Mass Youth Hockey,

During 2023, Cushing Academy provided approximately \$12 million in economic impact to Ashburnham and the surrounding communities.

This economic impact took the form of:



- In 2023 Cushing Academy had a payroll of over \$10.6 million; over 40% of the total payroll was paid to Ashburnham residents. Another 36% was paid to individuals who lived in neighboring towns/cities.
- Cushing Academy paid \$2.7 million to over 170 vendors, suppliers and independent contractors who reside or conduct business in Ashburnham or its surrounding communities. Our three most highly paid vendors – including the Town of Ashburnham itself – received a total of \$1,300,000 and all proudly call Ashburnham their primary place of business.
- It is conservatively estimated that in 2023 Cushing Academy students, faculty and staff spent approximately \$304,000 patronizing local businesses and vendors, primarily in the town center. (This assumes that half of Cushing's 390 on-campus students and 75% of its approximately 200 residents and employees spent \$20 per week for approximately 44 weeks, including its Summer Session.)
- Cushing Academy provides over \$204,900 in grants and scholarships to enable 7 local students to attend the Academy.
- Cushing Academy employs 27 individuals who own homes in Ashburnham. These families provide over \$133,500 in real estate taxes to the town.
- A \$119,400 grant to the Town of Ashburnham Police Department to provide for a second police officer on the overnight shift, providing greater public safety to all residents of Ashburnham. During April 2021, Cushing committed to providing this funding for another three years, through June 30, 2024.
- Continuing Cushing's funding commitment for the Rave 911 Suite software package for Ashburnham Dispatch, with a contribution totaling \$11,628. This software enhances public safety through increased communications capabilities.
- Cushing Academy paid over \$11,000 in permit and service fees to the town.

Cushing Academy has been a proud partner of the Town of Ashburnham, and we look forward to continuing to work together.