

Gauld plans return to basics

By SARA HAMMOND
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BATH — The Hyde School of the future will stress the academic abilities of its students while developing their character, the founder and newly returned chief executive officer says.

That statement represents a return to the basic philosophy of the school under the personal direction of Joseph W. Gauld, who founded the school in 1966 and left it in 1980.

Gauld, who has returned to be the school's chief executive officer, said in an interview Friday that his years away from Hyde have taught him character growth and intellectual growth are interrelated.

Gauld's educational philosophy at Hyde's conception was to assume every individual has the capability for excellence and the elements of character would be used as the standard to measure that excellence.

Newsmaker

'I believe it is a very important concept Hyde is trying to deal with. I see that as the focus of my life.'

— Joseph W. Gauld



"If character can be developed, then academic achievement up to the level of one's potential will follow," was Gauld's assumption.

"Today I don't believe that's true," he said.

Gauld is returning to Hyde School with \$500,000 in commitments from three parents of former Hyde students, all of whom will serve on the school's five-member governing board, the body to whom Gauld and the headmaster and financial officer will report.

His return to the school he founded serves two purposes, he said.

"The school needs me," to help solve the financial problems and to clearly define and implement the school's working philosophy.

For himself, Gauld said he was unsuccessful in putting his character-building philosophy to work in public schools in Arlington, Va., where he has been working.

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Gauld

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"Over the last five years, I learned I did not have a working philosophy. We have a school (Hyde) that knew how to do it, but we didn't have a program," Gauld said.

Gauld said he was considering founding a day school when he was approached by the parents of former Hyde students who were willing to put up the money to help the school if he would return as chief executive officer.

The major change at Hyde in the upcoming years will be developing an academic program that emphasizes critical thinking and intellectual growth.

Gauld said the \$500,000 will "immediately hit the deficits" Hyde has, and he plans to raise money over the next five years, at least \$300,000 a year, which will act as an endowment.

That money will be used to hire five exceptional teachers in the areas of English, mathematics, history, science and language to bring the school's program to a level of academic excellence, "an area where Hyde never established itself."

The money also will be used for a complete maintenance program to upgrade the school's facilities and for a scholarship program.

The scholarship program, totaling about \$200,000 a year, has been coming directly from tuition, causing some of the school's financial difficulties, he said.

Enrollment at Hyde now stands at about 135, down from more than 200 in previous years. Over the next three years, Gauld said he wants enrollment to increase to 225 or 250, including boarding and day students.

By the 1985-86 year, Gauld said there should be 130 full-paying boarding students, in addition to 35 or 40 scholarship and day students, with the number of full-paying students increasing the following years.

Gauld said the type of student to be attracted to Hyde will change in the future.

"At the present time, the kind of kid that is going away to school at a place like this is a kid for whom it is not working out very well," he said.

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board of trustees; Lennox K. Black of Philadelphia and William Fleming of Virginia Beach, Va., two of the three contributors; the third contributor, whose name Gauld said he would release in February; and a Maine resident also to be named later.

Under the school's reorganization program, a board of advisers numbering 10 to 12, similar to the old board of trustees, and an alumni board also will assist in advisory capacities and in development of Hyde's program.

"We need direction from people who have gone through the Hyde experience," Gauld said. "I want people to listen to the alumni and advisers."

Gauld said the board of governors will have the ultimate responsibility for Hyde School, ensuring the institution's financial integrity and responsibility for the quality of the administration, including Gauld, the headmaster and the chief financial officer.

Gauld said he expects acting headmaster Timothy P. Wilson to remain at Hyde.

"He has the support of the parents, teachers and students. The school was in turmoil last year and he did a good job of turning it around," Gauld said of Wilson.

Although there has been some public criticism of Wilson by former members of the school's board of trustees, particularly about his recruitment of Maine Indians and New York City blacks, Gauld said Hyde welcomes a variety of students.

"We have one of the largest percentages of minority students of any prep school," Gauld said. "Indian students are fine. We will consider anybody."

While "our doors are open," Gauld said, "we don't want to be a state agency. There was an implication that we would become a state agency."

Responding to a remark that some board members did not want the school to have a Maine identity, Gauld said, "We see ourselves as a Maine institution. Why wouldn't we want to have Maine students?"

Gauld said he is prepared to work with Wilson to reach his goals of de-

"In the short term, you're talking about helping people with a problem they feel they have to deal with. When Hyde was operating well, it became a family school. They would send a kid who wasn't doing very well, but after they got here and the parents got help, they realized it was for all of their kids.

"In the short run, the tendency of Hyde is going to be to deal with families who are enough concerned about the situation to look for an alternative. Hyde is an alternative. It is particularly successful in dealing with most families where the family is not functioning at peak, isn't doing as well as it could be."

As more emphasis is placed on academics, Gauld said the school will attract "families who consider education vitally important. You don't send a Rolls Royce to a mechanic down the street."

Hyde "at its best is dealing with kids where there is a great deal of concern within the family for excellence. That's what this school is really going to be designed for," Gauld said.

Hyde School will become elitist "in terms of desire. We will take the people who want to go for broke."

Gauld said a symbol of Hyde's success is the three families putting up \$500,000 to bail the school out of its financial difficulties. Their kids didn't graduate from Hyde, but the parents applied Hyde's concepts to themselves, he said.

Gauld will report directly to a new five-member board of governors, he said.

The members will include Armin U. Kuder of Washington, D.C., acting chairman of the school's

want to have Maine students? Gauld said he is prepared to work with Wilson to reach his goals of developing a working philosophy for Hyde.

"We both understand the philosophy. He is welcoming me in the role of developing the philosophy," Gauld said.

"We have had half a dozen talks," Gauld said, adding the school's board is preparing a contract for Wilson's services.

Gauld said his five years away from Hyde were "the most difficult experience of my life. It was not a very successful period, but it made me a better person."

Gauld said he is returning to the school as a leader, "not as a founder. It is their school now, the alumni and parents."

During the early years of Hyde, Gauld said, "I took it as a personal responsibility to change education. I don't feel that way any more."

However, Gauld said he still thinks he has a contribution to make to the country's educational system.

"I believe it is a very important concept Hyde is trying to deal with. I see that as the focus of my life."

At age 57, Gauld said he would like to stay at Hyde for five years, but not go into retirement after leaving. The future may mean dealing with other schools around the country, he said.

"I hope within five years the school is really operating smoothly, with excitement and with a working philosophy," Gauld said.

"I have spent a lot of my life preparing for what I'm about to do. I feel like I've got a bigger contribution to make," he said.

HYDE SCHOOL. BATH.

Report of interview with Joseph W. Gauld who has just returned to become the Hyde School's chief executive officer. He talks about his plans for the school.

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