

# Tamassee DAR School

## Beginning a Second Century of Service

### Answers to Frequently Asked Questions



*Is Tamassee closing?* Of course not! Tamassee has a very bright future. We have transitioned to new programs in the past while continuing to fulfill our historic mission, and we will again.

*Why are you sunsetting the residential program?* We are sunsetting our residential program because of the significantly reduced community need and public funding for it. Instead, our state and nation are prioritizing placing foster children with relatives and community families.

*How are other children's homes and DAR school handling this?* Every children's home in American is feeling the effects of these system changes. The child welfare sector is complex, and the degree to which these changes impact each children's home depends on how their state has prepared for these changes and how they have developed their programs.

*What does this mean for the children in care at Tamassee now?* The Tamassee staff will work tirelessly with our partners at DSS and other children's homes to ensure the children currently in our care transition according to their plan and into another high quality placement.

*What does this change mean for the staff?* Tamassee is deeply grateful for the tireless service of our past and present staff in caring for children. The transition from residential programming means we need less staff, but we will be fair and compassionate with staff who leave us.

*What will you do with the residential cottages and other buildings on campus?* The Tamassee campus is beautiful and has great potential for new programming. Tamassee leadership will explore many opportunities including productive enterprise, partnering with other non-profits, and our own use as we expand.

*What will happen with boarding and college scholarships?* Tamassee is excited to continue supporting three college students with scholarships for the 2020-2021 school year. The Tamassee staff will contact scholarship donors and work with each donor to honor the original intent of their gifts and explore opportunities to realign them with our new programming.

*What comes next for Tamassee DAR School?* Over the 2020-2021 school year, Tamassee will be offer high quality after school and summer camp enrichment programs. These programs will be a spring board to other programs possibilities such as specialty summer camps and family support services.

*What makes the after school program different?* While there are multiple after school programs available in the community, they largely focus on childcare with some homework support. Our program will be different. We will offer evidence based academic services to ensure students are performing on grade level and then excelling. We will also offer numerous enrichment opportunities, for example creative and performing arts, outdoor/nature activities, recreational sports, and STEM experiences. We will mentor students in citizenship values, and reward them for their success. Our programming will be trauma informed so children develop strong resiliency skills.

*What kind of student will you serve?* Tamassee's after school enrichment program will serve elementary and middle school students. Consistent with Tamassee's historic mission, we will prioritize children who are living in poverty, performing below grade level, or have experienced trauma. At the same time, the program will welcome all interested students.

*What is the cost of the new after school program?* Tamassee's after school program will be fee based while also offering sliding scale scholarships for at-risk children and families. Foundations recognize the importance of high quality after school and summer programming for children, and grants are available. Nevertheless, Tamassee will need to raise funds for program support, special activities, infrastructure and capital projects, and support services.

*How will you find students for the program? How many will you serve?* We will partner with our public schools to market to families in the area as well as other community students. We hope to open our doors to twenty to thirty students for the 2020-2021 school year, and then double or triple the program in the years to come.

*When does all this happen?* We will sunset our residential program during 2020 and launch our after school program with the 2020-2021 school year.

*What about the Academy Expansion?* While there is tremendous need for students aging out of foster care and our program design has been consistently affirmed, there are insufficient funding sources beyond DSS at present, so we have put this program on hold. We plan to reevaluate next year as South Carolina implements the Family First Prevention Services Act.

*What do you need to make the program a success?* Your support! Financial giving is incredibly important to sustain Tamasee during the transition of our residential program so we can care for children today and in the near future. Your gifts also are also critically important to our new programming. If we are to provide the very best early childhood learning and after school programs, we need your support. Beyond donations, we are excited to engage volunteers in numerous ways in our afterschool program and in other ways throughout the campus.