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The Greene School, which was founded by Palm Beach's Jeff Greene and his wife, Mei Sze, has announced plans for a ninth grade in the fall. PROVIDED BY THE GREENE SCHOOL

The Greene School will add ninth grade classes this fall

Move is part of plans to expand into high school

Carol Rose
Palm Beach Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK

Palm Beach billionaire Jeff Greene has announced detailed plans for a ninth grade at The Greene School starting in the fall, as part of a rolling program for a full high school.

Launched in 2016 by Greene and his wife Mei Sze Greene, the private school began with 40 children enrolled in pre-K to fourth grade and has since expanded its curriculum. The West Palm Beach school today has 156 children in pre-K through eighth grade at the campus at 2001 S. Dixie Highway, he said.

The goal for the high school is 35 children in the first year; already, the number of applicants is at 60% of capacity, Jeff Greene said.

What will the high school offer that's not currently available? According to Jeff Greene, the intent is to offer "what we've done successfully at the Greene School for pre-K to eighth grade these past five years: A hands-on approach for every student to grow in every way possible."

He stressed the school's small student-teacher ratio of 1:6, and that teachers all have master's degrees and are recruited from the first-rate schools



Mei Sze and Jeff Greene
MEGHAN MCCARTHY/PALM BEACH POST

in the country.

The decision to add high school grades, Greene said, was spurred by repeated requests from parents who wanted their children to remain at the school through 12th grade.

Offerings at the new high school will include in-depth, high-level courses in English, mathematics, science and social sciences; Advanced Placement and honors courses; project-based learning embedded throughout the curriculum;

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Jeff Greene
The Green School co-founder

internships and service learning; an artist-in-residence program; a student television program; and daily mindfulness, according to the release.

"We already have a full-time college counselor," Greene said, who has been in touch with top colleges "and getting from them what they're looking for so our graduates can gain admission."

The school also will have an athletic program that includes cross-country, golf, basketball, volleyball and tennis.

"We are proud to provide an exciting new educational offering that truly meets the needs of Palm Beach County's future leaders," Head of School Denise Spiro said in a news release.

"The addition of the Upper School also benefits our Lower School students who excel in particular subjects by offering them individual classes above their grade level. This will enhance their

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Greene School

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college-readiness and ensure our Greene School students remain challenged and stimulated,” she said.

Greene said his three boys — now 8, 10 and 12 — were his motivation for starting the school. “As they were growing up, my wife and I realized there was a need for something different from what was available ... that’s rigorous and fun for the kids.”

Greene noted that his school started as a blank canvas with a goal of designing “the perfect school for kids to get an education that will serve them well in this ever-changing and fast-changing world.

“We realize that we are preparing the kids at The Greene School for the workforce of the 2030s” and a world that “will require skills and a type of resilience and ability to adapt that graduates in previous years didn’t have to have. Because we are so small and new, we will have the perfect school for bright, curious learners to reach their full potential.”

Toward that end, Greene said, the school has a rigorous admissions process — children have to pass an aptitude test, spend two days in class and get

letters or recommendations. Pre-K kids don’t take the test but they must spend two days in the classroom.

Annual tuition ranges from \$24,950 in pre-K to 33,750 in the fifth to eighth grades, officials said, and high school tuition will be \$35,000.

The cost includes lunch and snacks served throughout the day and after-care.

No child who meets the admissions criteria is turned away, he said. “We offer merit scholarships because we want to make sure we attract the best students ... and we also offer financial aid based on need,” he said.

Greene in July bought the EmKo art and restaurant complex next to The Greene School in West Palm Beach to expand the campus for the high school. The school now sits on almost seven acres and construction is underway on six tennis courts, a new gym and a full basketball court, with plans to build a performing arts center for the drama department.

“The Greene School is the number-one commitment for our time and resources right now,” Greene said of himself and his wife. “We really want our community to have a school that is a good as any ... and we will do whatever it takes with our money and our time to make it happen. This community deserves it.”