



Great River School

Engaging intellect, shaping character, building community

Strategic Plan Update June 17, 2008

Introduction:

Strategic Planning is a dynamic process that continues after the plan has been developed. Goals and strategies for implementing the plan are included as part of this planning document.

The Great River School Board approves the mission, vision, goal, and general strategic plan outlined below. The Board recognizes that the tactics for implementing the goals need to be flexible.

The School Director is responsible for implementing the academic and school program parts of the strategic plan with oversight by the Great River School Board.

The Board Committees are responsible for implementing their specific portion of the strategic plan with oversight by the Great River School Board.

MISSION

Great River School, an urban Montessori learning environment, prepares students for their unique roles as responsible and engaged citizens of the world.

VISION

Great River School is a place where college bound students are excited and inspired to learn. Great River School encourages students to ask complex questions and seek new and difficult challenges. Great River School combines academic and social experiences in a culture of civility and trust through peaceful practices. Great River School is a place where students feel safe to express and challenge themselves. Every student at Great River School is a valued member of the community. The exceptional Great River staff teach teamwork through cross-country travel, experiential learning, drama, the arts, and micro-economic ventures while helping students set individual academic goals.

GOAL

Great River School is the public school of choice for highly motivated students.

CORE VALUES

Great River School believes in the following:

1. Great River School believes in learning in its broadest, most ecological sense. The school asks each student to make an equal commitment to all learning areas.
2. Great River School believes in community and the fostering and nurturing of the relationships that build community.
3. Great River School believes in hard work. Great effort, and the willingness to meet difficult challenges.
4. Great River School believes in civility and good manners. Manners are an essential aspect of the way we show respect and caring for others. To act in a civil way means to act as a citizen of the community.
5. Great River School believes in peace. It strives to be a peace community.
6. Great River School believes in acting responsibly. Acting responsibly to the school means students give first priority to their school work and to acting in ways that honor the worth and dignity of their schooling.

BOARD COMMITTEES:

To implement the plan, the Great River School Board establishes and re-establishes, the following committees.

All Board Committees are required to comply with open meeting laws. The community shall be given notice of all regularly scheduled meeting and minutes for all meeting shall be filed in the school office and available in electronic format.

The **Strategic Planning Committee** monitors the school's progress in achieving the Strategic Plan goals. The Strategic Plan committee is chaired by the School Board President and the School Director. The Board can appoint additional members of the committee. GRS stakeholders provide valuable input and are welcome to participate in the Strategic Planning process. The committee reports to the Board semiannually regarding progress toward the Strategic Plan goals and recommends changes to the plan as needed.

The **Finance Committee** develops and recommends the annual budget for each year; monitors financial operations and provides regular reports to the Board regarding income/expenses/current financial health; implements and periodically reviews financial controls; recommends finance policies for board approval; assists with the school's annual audit; and provides financial information to other Board committees, as needed. The Finance Committee is chaired by the School Board Treasurer. The School Director is a member of this committee. The Board appoints additional members of the committee.

Finance Committee Annual Goals: Achieve the MDE Finance Award each year; ensure fund balance growth by 2% each year until the 15% fund balance goal has been met.

Fundraising Development Committee formerly known as the Fundraising and Development Committee and the Board's External Funding Committee is responsible for establishing, ensuring, and assessing fundraising goals and strategies for the school. This committee is co chaired by the school's Development Director and a Board Member.

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Fundraising Development Committee goal: Increase annual donations to \$115,000 in the 2008-9 school year; continue to grow the annual donations by \$5,000 each year; in the 2008-9 school year, establish and document long term strategy for fundraising development.

Buildings and Grounds Committee is responsible for developing the long-term plan for the school's building and grounds. The committee reviews requirements for code and safety standard compliance, and evaluates, prioritizes, and coordinates maintenance work, ongoing construction, building improvements, and garden planning. This committee is chaired by a Board Member. The Board appoints additional members of the committee.

Building and Grounds Committee goal is to assure GRS has classroom space for the projected enrollment in 2008/9.

Parent Involvement Committee f/k/a/ **School Support Committee** is chaired by a Board member and facilitates and encourages parent participation in school projects and events. It coordinates and organizes hospitality at school functions and other social events. The committee promotes and coordinates communication and networking among parents, staff, the board, and board committees. This committee seeks to build a sense of community among parents. The Board appoints additional members of the committee.

Parent Involvement Committee goal in the 2008-9 school year is to establish and organize this committee and begin planning this committee's activities for 2009-10 school year.

Nominations Committee: The Board Vice President is the chair of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee coordinates the Board nomination process, nominates new Board candidates based on criteria set forth in the Bylaws, carries out new Board member training and orientation and maintain records of Board member tenure. The GRS Board appoints the members of this committee.

Personnel Committee is a new board committee that grew out of the staff sustainability goals in the original strategic plan. The Personnel Committee is a Board and Staff committee that formulates policy and addresses governance issues relating to paid GRS staff. The scope of the Personnel Committee's charge includes:

- Articulating/establishing philosophies, *for recommendation for approval by the GRS Board of Directors*, regarding the goals of compensation policies and practices that are consistent with the GRS mission, philosophies and values.
- Establishing and updating as needed GRS personnel policies and practices, including the GRS staff handbook and employee contracts.
- Determining annually a salary rate schedule for paid staff that is consistent with established GRS compensation policies.
- Establishing and updating annually or as needed a staff benefits package, including retirement, health insurance, disability and leave policy, and professional development benefits.
- As requested by the School Director, assisting and advising in hiring new staff members.
- Assuring that there is a consistent and ongoing vehicle for communication, feedback, and response regarding current and potential personnel policies and practices with GRS staff and relevant board or staff committees, i.e., establish an annual personnel issue agenda for staff dialogue.
- Governance: A member of the GRS Board of Directors chairs the Personnel Committee. Committee members include the GRS office manager, Community HR expert, and GRS staff appointed by the GRS Board of Directors.
- Grievance Policy: All personnel grievances shall be brought to the Personnel Committee chair person. The Personnel Committee chair person can either resolve the issue or can ask that the staff member reduce the claim to a formal written complaint. If a formal complaint is brought to the chair has the option of forming a committee to hear the complaint. The committee's decision is final. All data privacy laws shall be observed.

Personnel Committee goal: continue to monitor and add employee benefits as permitted by the fund balance goals. When the 15% fund balance goal has been reached, review and recommend staff bonus/performance/merit pay plan(s).

Program Goals Update:

The Strategic Planning Committee held four community meetings: March 25, 2008, April 10, 2008, April 30, 2008 and May 12, 2008 to gather input from the parents and GRS staff regarding the GRS Program goals for 2012. The over all goals have not changed. The tactics to reach the goals have been updated.

PROGRAM GOALS 2012

- JH - 3 key experiences
- SH - Odyssey trip
- International Baccalaureate
- Off campus classes
- thriving micro economies
- support additional language experiences
- support health and PE curriculum
- 2 learning communities
- IB and Montessori trained staff

TACTICS NEAR TERM 2008-2010

JUNIOR HIGH

08-09 Odyssey = 11 days (w/ staff eval)
09-10 Odyssey = 12 days ((w/ staff eval)

SENIOR HIGH

08-09 Trip = 11 days
08-09 First Year of IB
08-10 IB analysis and results

09-10 Trip = 12 days
09-10 First IB Graduates

BOTH JUNIOR/SENIOR

Program

08-10 Prepared environments established.

08-10 Develop and formalize ongoing relationship with 1 to 3 off site staging areas for core classes
08-10 Begin staging for instrumental music program
08-10 Additional Language experiences/indp study/after school/extracurricular/lunch tables
Health and PE Curriculum

TACTICS MID TERM 2010-2012

JUNIOR HIGH

10-12 Odyssey = 12 days (w/ staff eval)

SENIOR HIGH

10-12 Senior high trips = 12 days
10-12 Continue IB analysis

10-12 National/international trips

BOTH JUNIOR/SENIOR

Program

10-12 Integrated cross curricular curriculum within a 3 year looping framework for both JRH and SRH
10-12 Utilize off site staging areas regularly for core classes

10-12 Instrumental music program
10-12 continue to support additional language experiences

Health and PE Curriculum

Micro economies

Cont. Dev. of other Micro Es.(needs phase II; occupations established); Cont. Dev. of Urban Garden/Kitchen; Cont. Dev. of Bike Shop

Staff

08-10 Addition of full time Science and Social Studies Teache

08-10 Continue Staff IB training (as financing allows)

08-10 new staff to complete NAMTA Summer Orientation Training (as financing allows)

08-10 One staff member to begin Elementary Montessori Training (as financing allows)

Misc

Transportation Plan Implemented

IDEA Lab support

CAPP Grant for Arts Programming ongoing

Environmental Grant

Grade Level Structure

08-10 7/8, 9/10, 11/12

09-10 7/8, 9/10, 11/12

Micro economies

10-12 Micro economies truly thriving w/ measurable outcomes; For example: bike shop funds bike trip; plays support theater curriculum, etc.....

10-12 Theater program in same facilities year to year

Staff

10-12 Assess staffing and determine if add'l staff are needed

10-12 Continue Staff IB Training (as financing allows)

10-12 new staff complete NAMTA training (as financing allows)

Misc

Transportation Plan Implemented

IDEA Lab support

CAPP Grant for Arts Programming ongoing

Environmental Grant

Grade Level Structure

10-12 7/8/9, 10/11/12