



Strategic Plan

Spring 2017

Board of Trustees
Strategic Planning Committee

VISION FOR CLIFF VALLEY SCHOOL

- A widely recognized school, among those setting the standard as a school of choice in independent education in Atlanta.
- A superior academic institution, specializing in differentiated instruction, serving students in preschool through grade 8. Our students are well prepared to succeed in a challenging secondary school setting.
- A program with a global perspective emphasizing the arts and the environment.
- An intimate school community built on a student body that is small by design appropriately sized for optimizing children's emotional and social development, in a caring environment.
- A socio-economically diverse, scholarship institution.
- Emphasis on promoting respect, responsibility and resourcefulness among our students. They thrive academically, artistically, physically and socially. They take risks, explore new things, and participate in school and society with self-confidence.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Strategic Objective

We are committed to fulfilling our mission: to provide an outstanding education focused on students' academic and social development in a caring community environment.

In keeping with our positioning and our heritage, we will remain small and selective, with low student/faculty ratios and multiple instructors in our classrooms.

We seek a student body primarily made up of “lifers” -- students who join our community at preschool and stay to graduate. We then seek to add a healthy mix of new applicants, to maintain a strong sense of community among our student body.

Cliff Valley School now serves students age two through 8th grade. We recognize that this generates questions, suggestions and expressions of interest concerning high school; it's a reasonable question.

Expansion to high school would require significant demand from our community, as well as significant financial and property resources – neither of which is in evidence at this time. It is the role of the Board to continually evaluate marketplace conditions and the needs of our surrounding community, and position future boards to consider possible expansion through grade 12 – if and when that becomes the right thing to do for the school and community, and if and when it becomes financially feasible.

Action Items

- Continue to attract and retain diverse, outstanding teachers who demonstrate a clear understanding of our school's educational philosophy and who are highly competent.
- Continue to ensure high quality admissions and enrollment processes and procedures to maintain high quality of student body and meet expansion goals.
- Monitor the school's competitive landscape to position the institution for continued success.
- Continue to monitor enrollment demand at the youngest preschool levels and structure our program accordingly for our families' needs and our school's long-term success.

FINANCE

Strategic Objective

Create and execute annual financial plans for the school that include a balanced operating budget, positive cash flow and earnings retention.

Maintain pricing strategies that position the school competitively in the independent school market. We seek to offer good value for an outstanding educational program. That requires significant resources, and we price our services accordingly.

Maintain prudent, responsible use of debt, particularly for additional facilities and growth.

Action Items

- Create and analyze long-range financial projections and scenarios for board planning.
- Refinance debt as advantageous opportunities arise.

ADVANCEMENT

Strategic Objective

Ensure financial sustainability and support growth of the school. The plan will include strategies to: finance capital improvements, increase brand recognition, increase brand awareness and applications, and communicate effectively, focused on the needs of our students, our community and our future plans.

Action Items – Development

- Create advancement plan annually, working with specifically dedicated advancement staff.
- Continue to raise funds for scholarships, through vehicles including the Georgia Student Scholarship tax credit and our Harrison Scholarship Fund, while also raising funds for future needs.
- Promote growth of the 2066 Endowment.
- Evaluate needs and timing for future capital campaign.

Action Items – Marketing & Communications

- Develop annual marketing plans to support continued growth in a time of increasing competition from independent, parochial and charter schools.
- Create an annual communications plan to support awareness, admissions and enrollment.

FACILITIES

Strategic Objective

Provide a campus and facilities to support the delivery of an outstanding program, preschool through 8th grade, and an overall outstanding experience for our customers and community.

We will make decisions to position future boards to consider possible expansion through grade 12 – if and when that becomes the right thing to do for the school and community, and if and when it becomes financially feasible.

Action Items

- Consider options for additional field and athletic spaces as opportunities and finances permit.
- Improve facility options for the performing arts.
- Review space utilization needs regularly to determine priorities for use of space and future plans.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & ENRICHMENT

Strategic Objective

Continue to ensure the high quality of the preschool – grade 8 curriculum and programs.

Maintain and advance Cliff Valley’s historic strengths in environmental and arts education.

Ensure that programs develop well-rounded students who are academically prepared and socially and emotionally well developed, who are notably respectful and responsible, who have a global perspective and experience with the arts and athletics, and who are effective digital citizens and public speakers.

Offer high quality, comprehensive enrichment experiences for students.

Develop additional athletic and fitness options as our student body grows. Provide opportunities to compete while enjoying camaraderie and fitness.

Ensure that faculty, parents, and students have a seamless experience from preschool through grade 8. We are committed to preparing our graduates for acceptance to, and success in, metro Atlanta’s finest upper schools.

Action Items

- Continue to develop and offer a comprehensive parent education curriculum that provides parents with the resources and tools to address the developmental needs of their children.
- Continually evaluate and adjust programming to ensure student success and social development throughout the program.
- Maintain dual SAIS/SACS accreditation.