



Strategic Planning Report

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Prepared By



North Andover, Massachusetts

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Introduction

Richard R. Blain & Associates, LLC (RRBA) is privileged to have assisted Christ the King School (CKS or School) in developing its strategic plan, and is grateful for the opportunity to do so.

Strategic Planning is a valuable means for a school to “chart its course of direction.” When done properly, with input from various “stakeholders,” it enables the school’s leadership to determine where the institution needs to be, the direction it must take to get there, and how it will know that it has arrived (or perhaps has not).

The following report describes the purpose, process and result of the strategic planning project. It addresses the overriding institutional goals for approximately the next three years, and the objectives to accomplish said goals. For purposes of this strategic plan the term "year" will refer to a calendar year unless otherwise specified.

The strategic planning process and the resulting documented plan are only a beginning. It is imperative that this document be visited regularly by the Administration and Board. Sometimes a Strategic Planning Committee is established, with representatives from the various constituencies involved in crafting the plan, to assist with ongoing evaluation. We would recommend that the existing Strategic Planning Steering Committee serve this purpose. With the School Administration, this committee reviews the plan quarterly, evaluates the implementation process and progress, and identifies potential problem areas.

The strategic plan that you have developed is “SMART”:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound.

A plan that is less than this will often find its way to a shelf or file drawer never to be seen again.

Accountability is also important to a useful strategic plan. The planning process should determine who will be primarily (and perhaps secondarily) responsible for “driving” each objective. A timetable should also be established for each goal and objective, essential to accountability.

As part of this process, the School and the Strategic Planning Committee would like to acknowledge the unwavering support of Christ the King-St. Anthony Parish over the years. Throughout this planning process, the Strategic Planning Committee has identified numerous opportunities for further collaboration that will benefit both the School and the Parish, many of which are detailed in this report. While in coming years, it is hoped that the actions taken in accordance with the report will lead to reduced reliance on the Parish’s generous financial contribution, with reductions beginning in 2020, the collaborative endeavors identified in this report will also provide a multitude of opportunities for the ties between the School and the Parish to strengthen.

Finally, the Strategic Planning Committee would like to thank all members of the School and Parish communities who participated in the process. The committee well knows that the finished product is the result of time, energy and wise counsel from many, many people, including over fifty parishioners, parents, faculty and staff who attended the initial retreat day and volunteers who served on the Task Forces and lent their expertise on facilities, budgeting, marketing, and countless other topics. The children at CKS are well-served by the energy, skills, expertise and commitment of the community, and now it is time, as a community, to leverage our resources, energy and commitment to implement the recommendations contained in this report.

Strategic Planning Process

Steering Committee

An initial meeting with a Strategic Planning Steering Committee allowed us to “tailor” the process to the particular needs and circumstances of Christ the King School. During this meeting we discussed, and agreed upon, logistics including:

- Purpose
- Process
- Potential participants
- Methods of participation
- Timing
- Location of a “Planning Retreat”
- And other related details

The Steering Committee later requested that the Pastor and Principal determine the specific goals to be addressed, which largely reflected the results of the planning retreat group. The Task Forces determined the objectives necessary to accomplish said goals. These goals are indicated at the beginning of each Task Force Report.

Steering Committee Members:

Natalie Byrne

Bob Clark

Arline Duffy

Mary Farley

Mary Michel

Amber Murphy

Shannon Zachary

Monsignor John McDermott, Pastor

Angela Pohlen, Principal

Jon Hughes, Advancement Director

Rick Blain, Consultant

Strategic Planning Retreat Day

A strategic planning retreat is a crucial component of the process. A group of approximately 50 stakeholders, representatives of each of the school's constituencies, gathered at St. Michael's College and shared their thoughts and opinions. Rick Blain, Principal of RRBA facilitated this discussion.

Participants undertook a SWOT analysis of Christ the King School, reaching consensus about what are the School's greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This was followed by a "visioning" session, a sort of "big picture" discussion.

The session was then directed toward brainstorming about institutional goals, reaching consensus as to what are the five most important goals, and identifying some of the associated objectives. This provided the basis for the work of the task forces that were subsequently established.

Task Forces

The Steering Committee established the following Task Forces, and in some instances Committee members served as (Co) Chairs:

- Academic Programs/Curriculum: Amber Murphy
- Marketing & Communication: Mary Farley & Mary Michel
- Facilities: Shannon Zachary
- Development: Arline Duffy
- Finance: Mary Farley & Angela Pohlen

These ad-hoc committees were formed for a finite period to address a particular goal by expanding upon the objectives that had already been identified, as well as to determine other appropriate objectives. For some Task Forces, this required additional research.

After considerable discussion each Task Force prepared a report regarding their findings, discussion and recommendations, which were submitted for inclusion in the resulting Strategic Plan.

Planning Document

RRBA prepared a preliminary strategic planning document combining the task force reports, with some revisions that contributed to the document's consistency and continuity.

This preliminary plan was presented to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and Administration for review, revision, and final approval.

Goals & Objectives

ACADEMIC PROGRAM/CURRICULUM

Goal: CKS will develop and implement a defined method for ensuring a sound locally, nationally and technologically competitive curriculum, which distinguishes its Catholic identity through a clear focus on Catholic Social Justice, diversity, inclusion, and faith formation. Implicit in this goal is the need to establish a clear rubric for instructional excellence, and the retention of those teachers who meet the criteria.

Objectives:

1. Science Curriculum

Employ measurable standards such as the new Next Generation Science Standards (“NGSS”) ,and integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (**STEAM**) more fully into the current curriculum with such efforts as:

- Increase professional development opportunities in STEAM areas for Preschool - 5 teachers (6-8 is currently being trained through the Tarrant Institute for Innovative Education);
- Expand teaching resources to support science instruction and replenish and bolster existing supplies;
- Review/establish and evaluate standards in these areas to ensure consistency with measurable standards;
- Build upon new Makerspace, and investigate possibility of expanding existing space to provide increased student use and access; and
- Expand access to technology school-wide by utilizing technology resources in each grade in an age-appropriate manner. This would include deploying current resources or increasing the technology resources in the School to match increased access and use.

2. Religion Curriculum

Children will have a knowledge of, and relationship with, Jesus – not only as a human being, but also as the unique being who is both man and God, and will experience the Sacraments as the work of the living Jesus in their lives.

To this end, CKS will review and enrich the current curriculum with an emphasis on the study of the lives of the Saints as examples of living out the Catholic faith, and on experiential learning opportunities (i.e. learning by doing). The latter should be regular and ongoing experiences especially in the middle school grades, and should be rooted in Catholic Social Justice teaching.

3. Social Science Curriculum

Expand the current social science curriculum with greater emphasis on diversity and global and local citizenship.

- Create opportunities both in and outside the classroom for students to experience and learn about diverse cultures, including racial and ethnic groups different than their own.
- Academically, students should explore and study the world and the diverse communities within it from social, cultural, political and historical contexts.
- As part of an overall increased emphasis in experiential and service learning in all aspects of the curriculum, students should learn about themselves as citizens and participate in on-going volunteer programs that foster a connection to the larger community and assist the students in seeing their role as a member of that community.

4. Instructional Quality

Establish a Merit Pay Program, with corresponding teacher evaluation, to attract and retain the highly qualified teachers required to fulfill the mission.

FACILITIES

Goal: CKS will develop a long-range plan to support the overall student experience and increase marketability by identifying, prioritizing, and addressing the need for updated and expanded academic and extra-curricular space. An initial review of the physical plant identified three main areas of focus. Two relate to energy efficiency efforts and the third is to improve the exterior of the building, particularly the entrance and street presence, to make the School more inviting and welcoming, and safer for pick-up and drop-off.

Objectives:

1. Engage an outside firm to conduct a commercial energy audit and use the recommendations to undertake facility upgrades to increase energy efficiency, thereby reducing overall physical plant costs.
2. In conjunction with the Parish, form a committee with School and Parish representatives to develop a capital improvements master plan, with an immediate emphasis on addressing energy efficiency and making the entrance and street presence more inviting and welcoming.

MARKETING

Goal: CKS will seek new and innovative means for increasing its brand recognition and establish its unique position in Chittenden County, in order to achieve and maintain full enrollment, which is 285 in the current facilities.

Objectives:

1. Create new print materials, including a "Look Book," as well as a promotional video. Explore Diocesan production of print materials and/or a promotional video.
2. Create a system of outreach social media activities to grow enrollment by using interns from Champlain and St. Michael's Colleges to increase marketing/public relations efforts.

3. Affiliate the school with professional organizations such as the New England Council for Advancement (NECA) and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) to increase access to professional development and other resources to assist with marketing the school.

ADVANCEMENT

Goal: CKS will expand the current fundraising model and develop a specific emphasis on targeted, project-based giving.

Objectives:

1. Develop an Advancement structure to support the increased fundraising efforts, including creating a volunteer group specifically dedicated to fundraising efforts.
2. Develop a Major Gifts Fundraising Program, which would include identifying five (5) prospects for major gifts each year.
3. Collaborate with the Excellence in Education Foundation to expand the endowment.
4. Identify targeted giving opportunities that are attractive to potential donors.
5. Explore feasibility of increasing staffing with dedicated half time assistance with advancement efforts

FINANCES

Goal: CKS will develop and implement a plan for increased financial growth and independence from the Parish to support academic programs and teacher compensation by effectively developing and utilizing existing financial resources and endowments.

Objectives:

1. Fund the Merit Pay Program through a two-tier effort including:
 - Targeted tuition increases for 2 - 3 years;

- Growing the Excellence in Education Foundation endowment.
2. Utilize the updated budget/financial information from the Parish and School to better inform management decisions related to budgeting and expenses.
 3. In 2020, begin a targeted reduction of the Parish contribution at a rate of 5% per year for the next four years.
 4. Collaborate with the Parish to fund the physical plant growth/improvements and subsequently explore a capital campaign to fund a fair and reasonable share of property improvement costs.

Timetable

This Strategic Plan has been developed with consideration given to the current and projected financial situation, current and projected enrollment, current and projected tuition levels, and the role of institutional advancement. Most importantly, it has been developed to ensure that Christ the King School will continue to thrive, offering a Catholic educational experience that is second to none.

The timetable for accomplishing these goals and objectives follows:

Year 1

Academic Program and Curriculum:

- Identify professional development opportunities focused on STEAM for Preschool - 5 faculty
- Develop budget to expand STEAM teaching resources and replenish related supplies
- Convene faculty group to review and establish science standards
- Increase experiential and service learning opportunities in all grades to support objectives in religion and social science curriculum

Facilities:

- Conduct a commercial energy audit
- Form a committee with School and Parish representatives to develop a capital improvements master plan

Marketing:

- Prepare new promotional print materials and a video
- Engage college interns to create a system of outreach utilizing social media
- Affiliate with NECA & NAIS

Advancement:

- Create Advancement structure to support increased fundraising efforts
- Identify and publicize targeted giving opportunities attractive to donors
- Identify Major Gift prospects

Finance:

- Review budget based on new information to seek savings due to redundancies or inefficiencies in expenses
- Set initial targeted tuition increase
- Begin funding of the Merit Pay Program

Year 2**Facilities:**

- Undertake targeted recommendations from energy audit to increase building energy efficiency
- Begin initial implementation of capital master plan, and if possible prioritize entrance and street presence

Finance:

- Set targeted tuition increase
- Continue efforts to fund Merit Pay Program
- With the Parish, begin to fund plant improvements and explore a joint capital campaign

ONGOING EVALUATION

Academic Program/Curriculum:

- Goals and objectives will be ongoing throughout the duration of the plan with benchmarks every six months

Advancement:

- Develop an advancement and volunteer structure (quarterly benchmarks)
- Develop a major gifts program (annual benchmarks)
- Coordinate with the Excellence in Education Foundation to expand the endowment (annual benchmarks)

Finance:

- Utilize updated information to inform expense management decisions (annual benchmarks)
- Evaluate progress toward financial readiness for Parish contribution reductions beginning in 202 (annually)

Marketing:

- Evaluate effectiveness of initial marketing efforts (annual benchmarks)
- Develop admissions targets to use as indicator of success (annual benchmarks)