



GATEWAY SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

JUNE 2009

STRATEGIC GOALS

FACULTY

Attract, retain and develop faculty and administration that fulfill Gateway's educational philosophy, program and mission.

Rationale

Our faculty is our single most important resource and a key driver behind the long-term health and viability of Gateway School. Teachers at Gateway have a solid reputation for excellence, dedication and innovation in the classroom. Their team approach and communication skills create an environment well suited to nourish Gateway's rich academic program and culture of compassion. Maintaining a healthy environment for faculty means offering competitive salaries, expanding opportunities for professional development, and providing an evaluation process that supports continued growth for teachers.

Gateway's high quality staff is essential to the success and future of our school. As our needs continue to evolve, it is imperative that we respond accordingly with appropriate administrative support.

Initiatives

- Continue to provide competitive salaries and benefits for faculty and administration.
- Expand faculty professional development.
- Refine, develop and implement a teacher evaluation process to be initiated during the 09-10 school year.
- Find a way to hire additional administrative support for the operation of the school.

FACILITIES

Obtain a campus owned by Gateway School.

Rationale

The current Gateway campus is a leased facility and is unlikely to be available as a permanent location for the school. The current lease will end in 2019. Although the location of the current campus has many positive attributes, the leased status limits Gateway's capital investment in the facility. By contrast, owning our campus would provide opportunities for facility improvements and additions to enhance our programmatic offerings and advance the long-term viability of the school.

Obtaining an owned campus was identified during the strategic planning process as the most commonly held vision shared by the participants. While the goal is clear, the steps to realizing it are less so and will require careful planning and execution. The following initiatives were identified as advancing the goal of campus ownership.

Initiatives

- Identify potential properties.
- Prepare to take action when a property or opportunity is identified.
- Provide a detailed campus facilities vision that can be used to support a capital campaign.
- Prepare a timeline for key milestones in transitioning to a new facility.

FINANCE

Develop a sustainable financial plan capable of meeting Gateway's current and future needs.

Rationale

For over 35 years, Gateway School has functioned with a financial model that has been adequate for its needs. Over the past five years, the Board of Trustees has committed to increasing teacher salaries to be on par with the public school system, in order to attract and retain outstanding faculty. Gateway has continued a strong and broad educational program at a fraction of the cost of its peer schools, while limiting tuition growth as much as possible (an average of 4.3% a year over the past seven years). Over 90% of our community participates in Annual Giving, and the annual spring fundraiser has been a consistent success.

The strategic planning process has identified many areas in which additional financial support will be needed over the next few years; including owning our campus, increasing our endowment and financial aid, and expanding our educational programs.

Initiatives

- Explore the feasibility of a capital campaign and, if deemed feasible, prepare foundation for and launch campaign.
- Develop specific endowment goals, exploring ways to increase endowment funds in conjunction with possible capital campaign.
- As the endowment increases, commit a growing portion to financial aid
- Explore additional sources of revenue, including enhanced summer program and co-curricular offerings.
- Maintain focus on professional financial management and commitment to fiscal stability.
- Maintain vibrant Annual Giving Campaign and continue to strive for 100% parent participation to match existing 100% Board, Faculty, and Staff participation.

SCHOOL LIFE

Support and promote Gateway’s distinctive developmental approach and culture of compassion.

Rationale

Gateway prizes and nurtures high personal expectations and integrity, respect for others, an understanding of how diversity enriches us, and how our lives affect the world. While this “Culture of Compassion” is a defining strength of the school—implicit in all aspects of school life—close review reveals the need to attend to the language and program tools that support these values.

Gateway needs to communicate more effectively with families about how social-emotional learning is taking place at school. While the school provides excellent professional support for our developmental approach to learning, parents express a desire for more clearly defined codes for discipline and social conduct. There is also consensus that social emotional learning needs to be more explicitly and concretely applied in the school programs, using a framework and language that is consistent across the grades.

Initiatives

- Improve Gateway’s character education and enrichment programs for teachers, parents and students.
- Refine Gateway’s vision and mission statements to present the school’s distinctive culture and social climate.
- Provide effective means for Gateway families to understand, engage in and promote the school’s mission.

COMMUNITY AND OUTREACH

Further integrate Gateway with global and local communities, ensuring that this outreach serves as a learning opportunity for students and reflects the mission of the school.

Rationale

Part of Gateway's philosophy is to prepare students to become responsible, contributing members of our world community. Student programs that bear on the world beyond school walls will be expanded and promoted, both internally and externally, and their relationship to the core mission of the school clearly expressed. The faculty and administration will continue to develop practical strategies that encourage our students to consider themselves in the global context.

Initiatives

- Investigate the possibility and economic feasibility of being authorized by an established academic framework such as the International Baccalaureate that will connect Gateway to an international community.
- Articulate Gateway's commitment to environmental issues.
- Pursue efforts to enrich Gateway's social, economic and ethnic diversity, investigating program partnerships with other more diverse schools, including local and international exchange programs.
- Introduce ongoing diversity training for students, staff and faculty.