



PATH TO AN INSPIRING FUTURE



SOUTHRIDGE
We Are All ONE

STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT
2008-2012





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR: STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

LORI DAMS

Strategic planning provides everyone a clear understanding of where the organization is headed and how it intends to get there. At Southridge, being strategically focused has allowed us to accomplish a great deal in a short time.

Before creating the plan reviewed in this brochure, we gathered relevant materials such as, demographic and admissions data, educational studies and information on relative trends. We spent several months reviewing this information before we met to create the plan.

In 2008, Board members and the Southridge leadership team came together for a two day retreat. After presentations from the school's leadership team we began envisioning the future of Southridge. But first, we reaffirmed our vision, mission and guiding principles. This reconnection to our core values guided the process and ensured that anything included in the plan was congruent with what we say we are and what we want to be.

As a Board, we continued to structure ourselves around our strategic plan. Our committees were organized according to the plan's goals and priorities. Our agendas were set accordingly and we had several opportunities each year to delve deeper into topics requiring further discussion. Being strategic kept us focused on the long term best interest of the school instead of the day to day operations.

It also meant having to make some difficult decisions such as an unusual tuition fee increase, which was approved to pay for improved programs and to enhance the learning environment for our students.

Each fall the Board met again to review and refresh the plan. Here we formally "crossed off" the completed tactics, reviewed the priorities and determined if they were still relevant, added new ones where needed and in some cases added completely new goals.

We have operated strategically for many years now. Our plan is not "put on the shelf", it is at the forefront of almost everything we do. We are proud of the outcomes presented in this brochure. Looking back, it is amazing the amount of work that has been done by so many members of our community.

Thank you to everyone who completed a survey, participated in a focus group, volunteered for a committee or participated in some way. Even if you think you weren't involved in the plan, you were, just by being part of our dynamic and supportive community. You all helped bring our strategic goals, priorities and tactics to life.

In January 2013, we will begin to think and talk about what our next strategic plan will look like. As always, we will be planning for an exciting future.



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

DREW STEPHENS

As we bring our current strategic plan to a conclusion, I would like to share some important elements of growth our school has experienced over the past three years. We defined our athletics program more specifically and sharpened our policies and guidelines surrounding competitions and participation. We also assessed our co-curricular program as a whole and developed a detailed guide for how we define and support character development at Southridge. In that regard, our Personal Growth and Development Program has been a guide for us to integrate purposeful experiential learning opportunities for our students that are connected and complementary in terms of the traits and skills they develop.

In addition, our Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Program was defined more holistically during this strategic plan, with the Senior School Education Program (SSEP) building on the Junior School's Primary Years and Middle Years Programs (PYP and MYP), both of which went through authorization and/or evaluation processes with the International Baccalaureate during the past three years. Our students now have an excellent opportunity to develop fundamental knowledge, skills and attitudes in a progressive and focused manner. Each program is meant to support and balance the others, and our students are challenged steadily, appropriately and in more sophisticated ways as they move through the grades at Southridge.

There are many other areas of growth and development that you will find referenced throughout this report. Southridge is a better school as a result of these programmatic developments because our students are exposed to an even greater array of wonderful opportunities, have an even more consistent network of matching programs between the school divisions and are supported systematically throughout our entire caring community. Southridge is a school that is constantly looking for ways to progress and develop, and the strategic planning process is an important path for continuous improvement.

GOAL *Well-defined, enriched, forward-thinking programs consistent with academic excellence and strength of character.*

Our academic program at Southridge extends from Kindergarten through Grade 12. The Junior School PYP received a positive report from the visiting committee and the MYP was accredited two years ago, with an evaluation scheduled for the spring of 2013. The first phase of the Senior School Educational Program (SSEP) was completed recently with the design of the model and the implementation of a new timetable. The SSEP now offers additional courses, class size reductions, increased flexibility in course selection and more effective scheduling options for students in upper level classes.

A team of teachers, coaches and administrators assessed our athletics program. Working with a consultant, our current practices, philosophy and policies were reviewed. Data was collected from a number of Canadian independent schools to garner an understanding of what other schools' programs offer. We also invited feedback from a number of parents, current students and alumni. As a result a new Athletics Policy was created.

The Personal Growth and Development Program takes the "hidden" character development piece of the Southridge curriculum and describes it within the context of experiential learning. It underscores how all facets of our program work in concert to develop the qualities and attitudes needed for our students to make a difference in the world. The Personal Growth and Development Program at Southridge recognizes that what happens beyond classroom walls helps set the foundation of a school culture that balances knowledge and goodness. Being a dedicated learner is just as important as being a good citizen and the Personal Growth and Development Program emphasizes the importance of this sentiment to our students.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must sharpen and enrich our forward thinking program by examining our academic options including the possibility that develops conceptual thinking and helps align our students to our vision and mission.*

OUTCOMES

- Created the Senior School Educational Program (SSEP) and began its implementation.
- Received an excellent PYP evaluation in the Junior School.
- Created and submitted self study for our first MYP evaluation.
- Designed a means to vertically integrate a skill-based curriculum to teach the attributes necessary to be effective lifelong learners.
- Developed a comprehensive roadmap for the implementation of the SSEP.
- Created Junior School intern teaching position to provide more support for students.
- Daily physical activity (DPA) now incorporated in the Junior School daily timetable.
- Increased physical education curricular time for Senior School students.
- Created new Senior School teaching positions for English, social studies, art/HCE/planning and modern languages in order to reduce class sizes.
- Grade 8 – 11 class sizes reduced from 22 to 18 in the Senior School.
- Offered French language instruction within the Junior School Kindergarten program.
- Additional courses offered in the Senior School to increase options for students.
- Reviewed how service learning, athletics and fine and performing arts fit in the curricular program.
- Defined the role of student services within the curriculum framework.
- Received an exemplary Ministry of Education external evaluation report and authorization.
- Reviewed the role and focus of post secondary advising.
- Conducted a Gr. 6 -12 student satisfaction survey.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must provide a sustainable co-curricular program.*

OUTCOMES

- Developed and defined a Personal Growth and Development model.
- Defined the role of our co-curricular program in the development of character.
- Examined ideal student involvement in the four pillars and how they are embedded in student life.
- Reviewed the athletics program.
- Implemented a new Athletics policy.
- More specialized coaches employed to coach athletic teams.
- Examined the purpose and goals of the Outdoor Education program.
- Implemented the Grade 10 Service Learning Week.
- Developed and piloted a Learning Experiential Week (LEW) for Grades 8 - 12.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must recognize student life as a focus for character development.*

OUTCOMES

- Defined the role of our educational programs in the development of character.
- Implemented the Senior School restorative justice program in order to provide students a method to deal with conflicts.
- Retrained Junior School faculty in the restitution program to help support our students.
- Senior School Upper and Lower Division Coordinator positions created to help support student life.
- Reduced teaching time for Lower Division Coordinator and Upper Division Coordinator in order to have time to influence school culture and be available for students.
- Incorporated character development in the Personal Growth and Development Program.

GOAL A campus that inspires the vision and mission of the school.

The Campus Utilization and Security Committee (CUSC) was established by the Board in April 2010 with the mandate to develop a campus which embodies both the vision and mission of the school and the goal of ensuring that the Southridge community feels the property is safe and secure. In the future, the committee will also focus on defining, organizing and articulating the planning process for future usage of the remaining undeveloped land.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must sustain our inspirational environment and ensure our long-term campus plan.*

OUTCOMES

- Completed a 10,000 square foot Senior School addition, on time and on budget.
- Built a second chemistry lab in the Senior School expansion.
- Added a net of four new classrooms in the Senior School.
- Renovated the Senior School Little Theatre, providing better facilities for drama students.
- Constructed the Junior School sidewalk to ensure the safety of our students walking in the parking lot.
- Added frosting to hallway doors to provide better protection in the event of a lockdown.
- Completed the tiling of K - 3 classrooms to provide cleaner classroom floor surface.
- Installed a new sound system in the Junior School Great Hall to enhance student and school performances.
- Finalized plans for perimeter fencing and re-alignment of the rear field to make better use of existing space.
- Developed a campus utilization and security plan that takes into consideration our relationship with our surrounding community.
- Proposed and approved fencing and gating of school frontage to protect our school and students.
- Developed a Facilities Use Policy to help reduce risk to the school and to make the school safer.

- Reviewed and updated campus security plans keeping in mind the safety of our students.
- Moved uniform shop to the Senior School expansion, providing better access.

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Investigate and plan future usage of remaining undeveloped land. **ONGOING**

Develop a proactive building maintenance plan for the upkeep and maintenance of aging school buildings. **ONGOING**

GOAL A financially accessible and sustainable school.

Financial accessibility refers to the affordability of attending Southridge, relative to the incomes of our greater community. Southridge has always considered accessibility to be important to achieving our mission. Socio-economic diversity amongst our families and the opportunity to admit students based on the qualities they bring to the student body (rather than their financial circumstances), improves Southridge and our community for everyone.

The other crucial element affecting accessibility, and the only one that has the potential over time to substantially improve it, is a major focus on our advancement, fundraising and donation programs. Building up endowments through donation and fundraising programs is the only way, other than higher tuition levels for those that can afford them, to make a significant impact upon accessibility.

The other long term financial issue, sustainability, refers to the ability of our financial model to ensure that funding for all needs, both operational and capital, will continue over time. Fortunately, the factors that lead to success in improving accessibility – controlling costs, increasing fundraising and donations, and building up endowments – will also improve sustainability. Developing a Planned Giving Program and a greater emphasis on our Annual Giving Program will

further help to improve accessibility and sustainability and provide resources to enable Southridge to achieve its mission and fulfill its vision.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must attract financial resources and determine the allocation of available and increased financial resources and prioritize their use based on the issues of accessibility and sustainability.*

OUTCOMES

- Allocated a portion of our fundraising events to endowments and another portion to unbudgeted but prioritized capital needs.
- Continued our practice of preparing strategic financial plans which makes transparent the costs of pursuing our dreams.
- Examined tuition fee philosophy in consideration of debt reduction and the long-term financial plan.
- Allocated all summer camp profits to endowments.
- Formed a committee to review advancement.
- Hired new advancement professional replacement.

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Research and design Planned Giving Program. **ONGOING**

Develop the school's endowment fund philosophy and policies. **ONGOING**

Examine strategies to develop a feeling of contribution to a common purpose while valuing everyone's role in helping to create a beloved school. **ONGOING**

Develop and implement a revitalized Annual Giving Program. **ONGOING**

Track and report progress of the new Annual Giving Program. **ONGOING**



STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must establish a Foundation.*

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Develop a plan to create a Foundation Board.

ONGOING

Establish the Board.

ONGOING

GOAL *Proper risk management.*

Risk management is an emerging field, especially in schools and is therefore difficult to identify existing models to follow. As a result, a risk management professional was hired to do an audit of our existing policies and procedures. This audit was conducted in the late spring of 2010, resulting in a thorough school review of risk, which helped us create a road map for planning purposes.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must develop a comprehensive risk management protocol.*

OUTCOMES

- Purchased a defibrillator for each of the Junior and Senior Schools and trained the faculty in its use.
- Upgraded outdoor security cameras.
- Created clearly stated response procedures for emergencies during field trips and international excursions to ensure safety of our students.
- Defined new procedures for the field trip approval process to ensure proper planning that clearly defines risk levels and hazard assessments.
- Reviewed campus safety and implementation of safety upgrades (including new signage, perimeter fencing, visitor registration process, surveillance cameras and necessary sidewalks).
- Developed response protocols for injuries, especially concussions, at sporting events to help ensure the long term health of our students.
- Created a standing Risk Management Committee.
- Developed of a Board risk management statement to provide a touchstone for the overall understanding of acceptable risk.
- Addressed the recommendations of our risk

- management consultant.
- Increased general awareness of our risk management tactics and responsibilities by including risk as a standing item on meeting agendas.
- Embedded safety protocols into the school culture resulting in risk awareness amongst community members.
- Created a policy for document management, approval, review, etc. in order to ensure all policies are current and effective.
- Reviewed third party waivers distribution practices in order to ensure the school is as financially protected as possible.

GOAL *Our voice, which is who we are and what we stand for, inspires and attracts.*

Differentiating ourselves from other schools via our messaging and graphic identity is key to attracting and connecting aligned students and families to Southridge. Through a series of focus groups, internal and external surveys and interviews with external community members, the Branding Committee utilized market research to build our new identity program. Our new promotional mark truly represents the many facets of our school, community and programs. It stands as a metaphor for the various connections we have with one another and to our greater community. This symbol embodies energy, youth, vitality, creativity and innovation. It evokes a warm and welcoming aura. The rings suggest unity and Southridge's far-reaching community contributions as well as the energy which is generated as our students realize their potential. The traditional school crest will continue to be used for internal and formal communication to the school community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must develop and communicate our distinctive "voice" that is consistent with our desired image.*

OUTCOMES

- Applications for 2011-2012 increased by 13%.
- Attendance at Open House increased

- (November 2011) by 9%.
- Investigated and analyzed our perceived and desired image with our internal audience through focus groups, surveys and interviews.
- Created new graphic identity as a promotional mark for external marketing that is easily identifiable.
- Upgraded and launched the school website to include new graphic identity and updated features.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must develop opportunities to engage the greater community in the proliferation of our voice.*

OUTCOMES

- Provided access to the school's facilities to some outside groups who fit within the parameters of the Facilities Use Policy.
- Hosted over 1,000 external community members for guest speaker presentations.

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Identify opportunities and community members who can serve as school ambassadors.

ONGOING



DR. GORDON NEUFELD PRESENTATION

GOAL *A community of engaged families aligned with our mission, vision and guiding principles.*

Several members of the Southridge community came together for interviews to explore what community looks like and what needs to be present for our community to feel connected and engaged. Subsequently, a number of members returned for meetings where the process and the results were summarized. After examining the conditions that appeared in the interview stories, commonalities were discovered amongst the stories. From this list of common conditions, and after debate, the following definition was settled upon.



As a community of aligned families, we are committed to a set of common values and a shared purpose beyond ourselves and our own families. Through rewarding experiences where contributions and relationships are valued and appreciated, we create a spirit of community and a sense of belonging. In essence, the actions of others inspire us to continue to leave Southridge a better place.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must attract, admit and retain aligned families.*

OUTCOMES

- Conducted a parent satisfaction survey and focused on recommendations of survey consultant.

- Created a “buddy” program for current parents to welcome new families to the school community.
- Reviewed organizational structure of volunteerism.
- Identified opportunities for engagement and ways to enhance the Southridge experience for our families.
- Created and communicated the definition of aligned families to the school community.
- Updated the Admissions Policy.
- Reviewed and ratified the Re-enrollment Policy.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must create a system between the Volunteer Committee and Advancement that enhances engagement and fosters collaboration to ensure the mission of the school is advanced.*

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Form an ad hoc committee to develop a system that ensures consistency and accountability.

ONGOING

Identify opportunities for engagement.

ONGOING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must enhance and deepen the engagement of the alumni community.*

OUTCOMES

- Conducted an alumni satisfaction survey in order to gain feedback on the school’s programs.
- Continued efforts to enhance alumni relations and possible creation of an alumni association.

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Create an alumni focused parent liaison position on the Volunteer Committee.

ONGOING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must enhance the engagement of our families.*

GOAL *A passionate and fulfilled faculty and staff aligned with our vision, mission, and guiding principles.*

In order to attain this goal, our faculty and staff talked to each other by means of an interview process that focused on stories from a time when they felt fulfilled, aligned and able to pursue a passion. The conditions that were present in these stories were identified, compiled and distilled in order to reach a definition of a passionate, aligned and fulfilled faculty and staff.

Aligned members of our faculty and staff have a shared sense of purpose as defined by our vision, mission and guiding principles. They have a strong belief in the value of teamwork and actively contribute to an atmosphere of trust. They seek opportunities to shape our school community and understand that the effect of their influence extends beyond the immediate. Above all, they feel a strong connection with the Southridge community.

Southridge has been able to support teachers in professional pursuits that help sustain them personally. Over the past couple of years, teachers have been supported by school visits and workshops that rejuvenate and challenge our teachers to hone their skills and develop their interest in inquiry and student-centered learning approaches.

The Personal Growth and Development Program helped identify and make explicit our common purpose while recognizing the important role that all of the faculty and staff play in creating a caring community culture in support of developing student character. The alignment statement has found application in our professional growth plan model and in our Hiring Policy and Guidelines as well as our new faculty and staff orientation process.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must provide opportunities for faculty and staff to experience an even greater sense of passion, fulfillment and alignment with our vision, mission and guiding principles.*



OUTCOMES

- Created and filled a new Human Resources Manager position.
- Conducted an employee satisfaction survey and focused on recommendations of survey consultant.
- Continued to prioritize professional development as an important factor in supporting our faculty as lifelong learners.
- Created a Senior School receptionist position.
- Created a definition of what it means to be an aligned member of the faculty and staff.
- Created protocols to ensure we are attracting and hiring faculty and staff who are likely to be aligned with our mission, vision and guiding principles.
- Provided opportunities to support faculty and staff in their personal growth and fulfillment to further develop their sense of passion and engagement.
- Examined strategies to develop a feeling of contributing to a shared purpose while valuing everyone's role in helping to create a beloved school.



The Board proactively develops, maintains and educates its membership. It consults with and uses resources from a variety of providers including: Canadian Accredited Independent Schools (CAIS), National Associations of Independent Schools (NAIS), BoardSource and Independent School Management (ISM). The Board has developed an in-house handbook which is used to orient new Board members and to provide information for existing members. It also uses yearly evaluation to help promote growth and an understanding of our strengths and weaknesses as a group. The Board's annual two-day retreat is a time to engage intensively with the strategic plan – reviewing, evaluating, reflecting and prioritizing.

The Board believes that seeking out and supporting focused leadership provides the foundation for a vibrant, healthy and visionary Board. It seeks to avoid passive stewardship and instead encourages its members to provide thoughtful, engaged and energetic service to the Southridge community.

One of the main responsibilities of the Board is to monitor the overall success of the school. This sounds simple, but it requires consideration of a multitude of measures that, taken alone, give only a snapshot of a particular aspect of a program or constituency. It is the responsibility of the Assessment Committee to make sense of all these various measures and to build a report card of sorts for the Board to review. Surveys, external inspection reports, government test results, university admission statistics, CAIS benchmarking data, as well as information included in the Annual Report each year, all form the basis on which the committee assesses the progress of the school. In a report card format, these numbers speak clearly to the health of our community, our culture of philanthropy and our commitment to keep our fees as low as possible, while providing a first-class education for our students.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must identify, educate, inspire and develop leaders with a strategic mindset.*

OUTCOMES

- Developed a model for effective recruitment of Board members and leaders.
- Created a timeline for setting the year-long Board agenda and committee structure.
- Reassessed Board protocols regarding leadership development.

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Develop a Board assessment and education plan based on a strategic governance model.

ONGOING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must recruit an adequate number of new members (to be determined by the Governance committee) and an adequate number of prospective members.*

TACTICS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD

Identify opportunities to meet and recruit new members.

ONGOING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must develop a system to assess the school performance by reviewing and reporting on external assessments.*

OUTCOMES

- Formed an Ad Hoc Committee to create the structure and mandate of an "assessment committee".
- Struck the Assessment Committee.

GOAL *Better Board Communication.*

STRATEGIC PRIORITY *We must develop a communication plan to explain the work of the Board with emphasis on the strategic plan and its outcomes.*

OUTCOMES

- Created a Board of Governors section in the parent portal with board bios and contact information.
- Created a strategic plan update section in parent portal of the website.
- Placed a series of Board updates on the progress of the strategic plan progress in the *Wednesday*.



BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2012



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PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL ANY BOARD MEMBER WITH YOUR IDEAS, CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS.