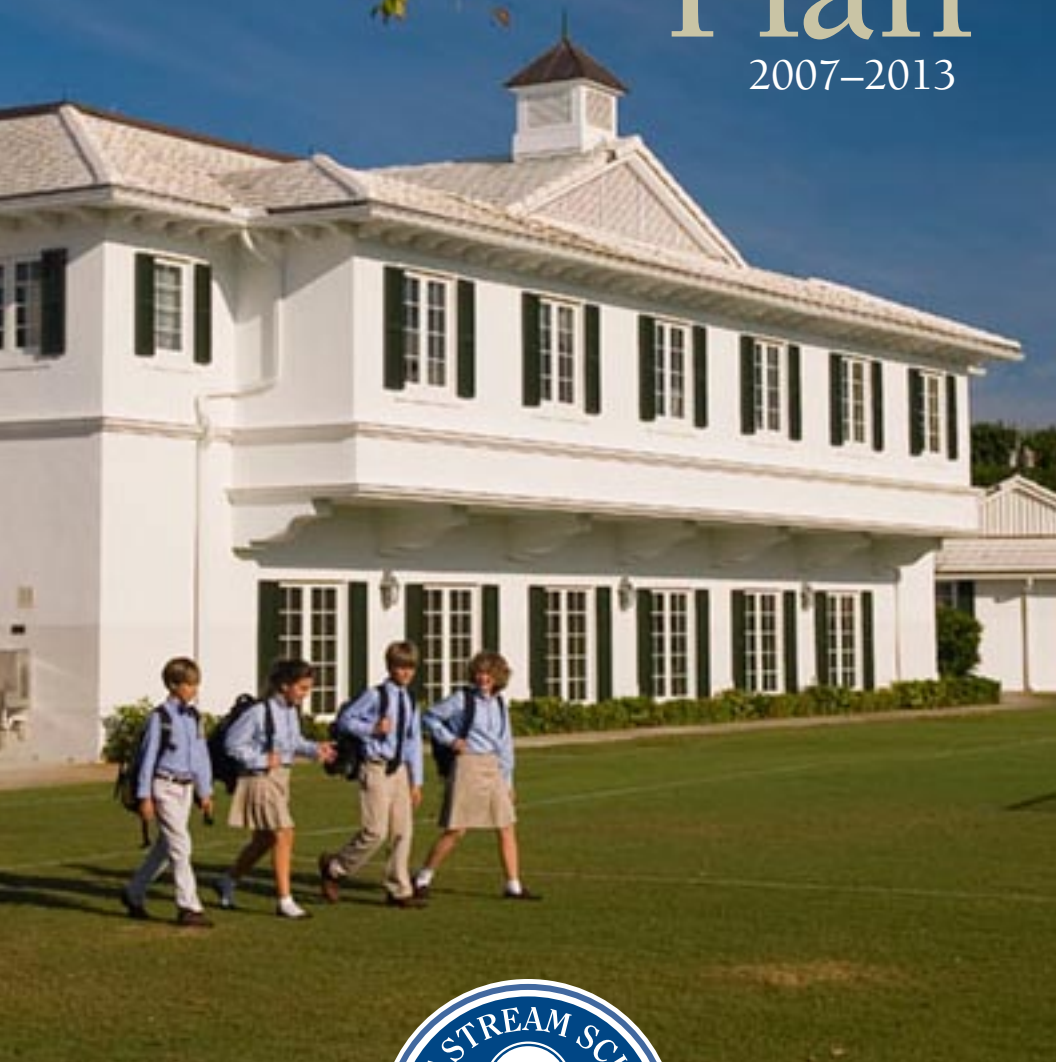


Gulf Stream School Strategic Plan

2007–2013



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Gulf Stream School Mission Statement

Gulf Stream School empowers students to succeed, inspires intellectual curiosity, and celebrates both effort and accomplishment. The School is distinguished by a sense of family, small size, and respect for its heritage.

Gulf Stream School Values

ACADEMIC VIGOR

Gulf Stream School actively engages students and faculty in a challenging educational experience that fosters the skills, habits and passion for lifelong learning.

CHARACTER

The Gulf Stream School experience develops moral courage, integrity, kindness, empathy, responsibility, courtesy and respect for different backgrounds, talents and interests.

PARTICIPATION

Gulf Stream School requires its students to participate in every aspect of school life, encouraging them to learn more about themselves and others, while preparing them for purposeful involvement in the local and global community.

Strategic Plan

Introduction

Since 1938, Gulf Stream School has provided students the opportunity to study and learn in an environment which is committed to excellence. Its past is rich in tradition and throughout its evolution, the School has remained strong in continuing to provide an education which will enable students to succeed both scholastically and socially. Academic vigor, character, and participation have been cornerstones of Gulf Stream since its founding and are values reflected in the School's Mission Statement.



In preparation for success at secondary schools, our faculty has developed a curriculum which stimulates students to think critically while testing their limits within a secure and supportive setting. Along with high academic standards and expectations, we emphasize basic skills as a foundation for future challenges. In our faculty, children find highly qualified, patient mentors whose love of teaching and learning inspires them to stretch their minds and reach their potential. In classrooms and on playing fields, caring, courtesy, and consideration for others are emphasized by example. Relationships are built on understanding, respect, and trust.

Suggesting that school atmosphere was a key to academic achievement, founders Ada Belle and Bill Johnston often equated the School to a “big family” with their role as “surrogate parents.” Gulf Stream remains and always will be a family school with teachers and parents working closely together, creating a bond which empowers students to succeed, inspires intellectual curiosity, and celebrates both effort and accomplishment. The Johnstons also realized the value of the School's exceptional location. The original charming wood frame structures are now state-of-the-art buildings, progress which was made possible through sound leadership and generous financial support from the School's families and friends.

The Board of Trustees will give careful consideration to each major area addressed in the Strategic Plan and will establish a timeline and direction for its implementation. Published as a “working document,” the Plan will prepare the School as it approaches the celebration of its 75th anniversary in 2013.

Vision

GULF STREAM SCHOOL WILL CONTINUE TO REFLECT A VIBRANT COMMUNITY WHICH STRIVES TO HONOR ITS PAST, INSPIRE ITS PRESENT, AND SUSTAIN ITS FUTURE THROUGH A COMMITMENT TO HIGH STANDARDS OF CHARACTER AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, WHILE DEVELOPING AN AWARENESS OF AND THE ABILITY TO THRIVE IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.



Implementation Steps

- Clearly define Gulf Stream School's heritage and articulate it within and outside of the school family via appropriate school communications. The rich heritage of the School will be affirmed with current and new faculty and students through events such as Founders' Day, as well as dedicated chapel programs and faculty meetings.
- Conduct new faculty orientation to include specific information about the traditions and culture of the School.
- Honor and maintain the valued and unique traditional experiences at Gulf Stream School for students, families, and faculty.
- Mindfully reinforce the values of personal respect, good manners, and sportsmanship, in our relationships with each other, as well as those we welcome to our community.
- Work with School families and faculty to uphold their values through daily interaction and more formal events.
- Maintain the small class sizes that afford students of varying ranges of ability the individual attention they need to succeed.
- Identify and develop programs that will begin to prepare students for the global environment in which they will live as adults.
- Offer curriculum to reflect the School's visionary outlook as well as its respect for sound primary education.
- Implement a distinctive interdisciplinary curriculum for the Upper School which will be interwoven through Grades 5-8 and will culminate in a capstone experience.
- Continue the dialogue on increasing the multiculturalism of the student body.
- Focus on the goal of introducing students to individuals from a variety of backgrounds, thereby enriching the Gulf Stream School experience for all.
- Require Professional Development for the Faculty and Administration to ensure adaptability and the anticipation of future educational requirements that will equip students with skills, both academic and social, to compete well in their future endeavors.



Vision

GULF STREAM SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM WILL CONTINUE ITS EMPHASIS ON LITERACY, INCORPORATE MORE INTERDISCIPLINARY WORK, AND ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF AN INCREASING VARIETY OF ABILITY LEVELS AND STYLES. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT WILL FACTOR PROMINENTLY THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM. THE SCHOOL WILL FOSTER A SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE CHILDREN DEVELOP PERSEVERANCE AS THEY ENCOUNTER SETBACKS AND GAIN THE CONFIDENCE TO SUCCEED. STUDENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN ARTS AND ATHLETICS AT EVERY GRADE LEVEL, AND BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITIES TO PURSUE AREAS OF SPECIFIC INTEREST AND TALENT.



Implementation Steps

- Complete a thorough analysis and comprehensive evaluation of the curriculum which will be shared openly and clearly with the School community.
- Provide exposure to all disciplines while instilling a passion for learning.
- Emphasize literacy across the curriculum.
- Examine ways, including a reassessment of the After School Program course offerings and summer programs, to offer options for children to explore specialized interests and talents.
- Incorporate interdisciplinary programs.
- Ensure that all students meet established benchmarks at various points in their careers in preparation for high school demands and opportunities.
- Examine the balance of time and emphasis as well as the continuity of academics, the arts, and athletics.
- Enhance the arts program by looking at ways to increase offerings and opportunities in art, music, and theater.
- Allow for an ongoing evaluation of the role of technology.
- Reflect the advice of a curriculum consultant as necessary.
- Incorporate, to the extent possible, creative scheduling.
- Strengthen the parent-teacher partnership.
- Develop a cohesive plan to meet a variety of learning styles, ability levels and needs.
- Explore the feasibility of hiring a learning specialist.
- Create a plan for faculty development and education which will encompass reviewing, updating and writing curriculum, integrating an interdisciplinary approach and addressing a range of different learning styles and abilities.



Vision

GULF STREAM SCHOOL WILL COMMIT TO A PREEMINENT FACULTY IN ORDER TO FULFILL ITS MISSION OF INSPIRING AND EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO DEVELOP INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY AND ACHIEVE PERSONAL SUCCESS. THE FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION, AND STAFF OF THE SCHOOL REPRESENT OUR SINGLE MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE. GULF STREAM SCHOOL WILL DEDICATE ITSELF TO ENSURING THAT THOSE WHO WORK WITH OUR CHILDREN ARE THE BEST-EDUCATED, BEST-TRAINED, AND BEST-SUPPORTED INDIVIDUALS WE CAN RECRUIT, RETAIN, AND CELEBRATE.



Implementation Steps

- Compensate faculty at a level which is competitive with independent schools in the South Florida region.
- Establish a Board of Trustees Compensation Committee with faculty representation to explore salaries and compensation benefits.
- Develop and implement a superior faculty development program that promotes professional growth, leadership opportunities, and measures of accountability.
- Create and implement a formal faculty evaluation process including job descriptions and goals.
- Establish a joint Faculty and Administration task force to study professional development, identify leadership opportunities, and draft a plan for Gulf Stream School faculty, staff, and administration.
- Educate the faculty through a series of meetings with key members of the Board of Trustees and Administration regarding the budget process and financial operations.
- Anticipate faculty openings and participate in national conference in an effort to recruit excellent candidates from diverse backgrounds.

Vision

GULF STREAM SCHOOL WILL INCREASE ITS ENDOWMENT TO BE IN LINE WITH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOL'S RECOMMENDED STANDARDS OF AT LEAST TWO TIMES THE ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET. THIS ENDOWMENT LEVEL WILL ASSIST THE SCHOOL IN FUNDING THE ANNUAL GAP BETWEEN REVENUES AND OPERATING EXPENSES, ALLOWING FOR COMPETITIVE FACULTY COMPENSATION, ENHANCED ACADEMIC, ARTISTIC, AND ATHLETIC PROGRAMS, INCREASED FINANCIAL AID AND ANNUAL FUNDING FOR PHYSICAL PLANT MAINTENANCE.

Implementation Steps

- Expand and enhance the School's advancement operations including development, public relations, and alumni connections.
- Update marketing materials on a timely basis.
- Set priorities for advancement programs.
- Maintain prudent and conservative guidelines while continuing the use of best practices in finance and advancement.
- Conservatively manage the growth of existing endowment.
- Allocate 10 percent of all unrestricted funds to endowment.
- Initiate an endowment campaign.
- Continue compliance with financial audit comments and suggestions.
- Adhere to conservative investment advice as given by representing management firm.
- Implement Advancement and Business Office operational procedures for coordinated communications and reporting.



Vision

GULF STREAM SCHOOL, ONE OF THE PREEMINENT SCHOOLS IN SOUTH FLORIDA, WILL MAINTAIN ITS FACILITIES TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS POSSIBLE. A CAMPUS THAT EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS IS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT ACADEMICS, ARTS, ATHLETICS, AND TECHNOLOGY.

Implementation Steps

- Identify an architectural firm to create a master Property and Facilities plan.
- Create a physical inventory of all campus fixtures, furniture, and equipment.
- Create a 3-5 year preventative maintenance and replacement schedule for existing buildings and grounds.
- Prioritize and undertake summer maintenance and renovation projects on the basis of need, time, and expense.
- Prepare and submit to the Finance Committee an annual budget request for items to be addressed by Physical Plant Replacement, Repairs, and Special Maintenance (PPRRSM).
- Draft an annual Buildings and Grounds report which will address the fire inspection, risk management assessment, and other significant issues to be addressed.
- Coordinate the Property and Facilities budgets with the Finance Committee and Board of Trustees.
- Ensure that future building and renovation projects reflect the unique location of the School and that energy saving and environmentally sensitive issues are considered before undertaking any projects.





Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Dr. Heather Frazer, Co-Chair
Mrs. Anne Gaudree, Co-Chair
Mrs. Susan Duane, President, Board of Trustees
Mr. Michael Mahady, Administrative Co-ordinator
Mr. Joseph Zaluski, Head of School
Mr. Gregory Floyd, Consultant

Strategic Planning Workshop Participants

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Mrs. Helen Burns	Mrs. Deborah Handler	Mrs. Catherine Scheurle
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Miss Dee Forde	Mr. Christopher Malfitano	Mr. Joseph Zaluski
Mr. Charles Frankel	Mrs. Nancy Moore	
Dr. Heather Frazer	Mrs. Holly Pemberton	





3600 Gulf Stream Road
Gulf Stream, FL 33483-7499

561-276-5225
www.gulfstreamschool.org