ONWARD AND UPWARD IN THE 21ST CENTURY
Avery Coonley School 2010 Strategic Plan
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THE AVERY COONLEY SCHOOL 2010 STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission

The Avery Coonley School is an independent school whose mission is to provide a learning environment that is appropriate both for academically bright and gifted children who are motivated to learn and have demonstrated the potential for the scholastic achievement necessary to succeed in a challenging academic program, in order that they may become positive, productive, and respectful members of society.

Philosophy

We believe that the joy and excitement of learning must begin early in life. We place a high premium on developing the desire in our students to become critical thinkers and independent, life-long learners.

We assist our students in realizing their intellectual, emotional, social, creative, and physical potential by promoting academic achievement, character development, self-reliance, self-confidence, independent thought, and personal fitness.

We recognize and are sensitive to different learning styles of gifted children. Within a traditional structure, we provide acceleration and enrichment, and foster a supportive atmosphere that provides opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, and risk-taking.

We believe that diversity is the foundation for a strong, competent, and compassionate community. Therefore, we seek racial, religious, economic, and cultural diversity in our student body, faculty, and staff.

We strive to build a community that encourages understanding and mutual respect and nurtures appreciation of the individual, civility, gratitude, honesty, kindness and consideration, responsibility, and volunteerism.

STRATEGIC GOAL ONE
PROVING AN EXCEPTIONAL FACULTY, STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

Goal: Recruit, develop, support, and retain an exceptional faculty, staff, and administration.

Rationale: In order to provide the learning environment necessary to educate the unique population of academically bright and gifted students, the Avery Coonley School must employ and nurture a dynamic and highly qualified faculty, staff and administration.

Initiatives:
1) Continue to recruit and support a dynamic and highly qualified faculty, staff and administration who are committed to the unique mission of the school.
2) Develop, communicate and implement a comprehensive professional development plan.
3) Formulate and implement a faculty compensation program that is competitive with peer schools.
4) Establish an evaluation process for administration and support staff.

STRATEGIC GOAL TWO
PROVING AN ACADEMIC PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE

Goal: Challenge our academically bright and gifted students with a rigorous academic program which nurtures the development and growth of each student.

Rationale: The Avery Coonley School must maintain its long-standing tradition of excellence grounded in a challenging and innovative academic program. In order for the students to reach their potential, the school must ensure that its program meets the unique needs of gifted children.

Initiatives:
1) Align the academic program with best practices in gifted education.
2) Enhance curricular communication/collaboration/articulation among the faculty.
3) Utilize standardized test data to guide instructional planning.
4) Apply knowledge of student learning styles to enhance the student’s intellectual growth.
5) Continue to utilize technology as a powerful educational tool.
STRATEGIC GOAL THREE
PROMOTING A COMMUNITY OF CHARACTER AND LEADERSHIP

Goal: Promote the development of character and leadership with an emphasis on balance, perspective, and a sense of community.

Rationale: The Avery Coonley School is mindful of the social and emotional needs of academically bright and gifted students. Nurturing positive, productive, and respectful citizens is an essential component of the school’s mission. The school seeks to develop well rounded learners who will contribute to the 21st century global community.

Initiatives:
1) Review and develop student leadership opportunities in a variety of settings.
2) Review and evaluate the overall support of social and emotional needs of all students.
3) Promote school wide character education.
4) Evaluate Lower School and Middle School extracurricular activities.

STRATEGIC GOAL FOUR
BUILDING AND COMMUNICATING THE SCHOOL’S UNIQUE COMMUNITY

Goal: Attract an exceptional and diverse community of academically bright and gifted students whose families are committed to its mission. Communicate the school’s distinctive mission, unique story, and shared vision to both internal and external audiences.

Rationale: A diverse, exceptional community of academically bright and gifted students is essential to the success of the mission of The Avery Coonley School. Well-delivered and strategic communications are essential to the health of the school community. By communicating the school’s mission, story and vision, and by promoting its achievements, the school will increase its visibility and raise its profile.

Initiatives:
1) Examine, refine, and communicate the admission process.
2) Assess the school’s capability of increasing the financial aid budget as a percentage of tuition revenue.
3) Develop and implement a communication plan.
4) Improve and maintain the school’s website as an important informational and marketing resource for the school’s internal and external communities.
5) Raise the school’s profile within local communities.

STRATEGIC GOAL FIVE
ENHANCING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR EXCELLENCE

Goal: Provide and operate an exceptional physical learning environment that supports the mission of the school, with specific attention to program needs, health and safety, historical significance, technological needs, sustainability and environmental impact.

Rationale: The facilities of the Avery Coonley School must support the mission and values of the school. In order to do this, the school must ensure that the physical plant and operations of the school provide an exceptional learning environment, while maintaining its aesthetic significance which is embedded in the rich history of the school.

Initiatives:
1) Utilize master facility plan to guide improvements and update every 3-5 years.
2) Conduct a comprehensive risk assessment in order to update the overall emergency plan.
3) Maintain a robust technology infrastructure to support and continue to advance technology-related initiatives.
4) Develop future facility and landscaping projects with an understanding of program enhancements and/or needs.
5) Utilize environmentally responsible building principles whenever possible.
STRATEGIC GOAL SIX
SECURING THE FINANCIAL FUTURE OF THE SCHOOL

**Goal:** Develop a financial plan to sustain educational excellence, increase the size of the endowment, meet the school’s facilities needs and exert control over tuition growth.

**Rationale:** The Avery Coonley School must carefully manage its financial resources to ensure the long term financial stability of the school as well as the continued excellence of its program, faculty and facilities.

**Initiatives:**
1) Maintain and refine a multi-year financial plan that will strike a balance among income sources (tuition, fees, programs, fundraising and endowment).
2) Develop a comprehensive endowment plan.
3) Develop and implement a multifaceted alumni plan that will increase the involvement of alumni in the life of the school.
4) Identify, cultivate and secure additional resources from current and past parents, alumni, grandparents and friends of the school.
5) Increase annual giving as percentage of the school’s operating budget.
6) Develop recruitment and recognition programs for volunteers and donors.

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STRATEGIC GOAL SEVEN
DEFINING EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

**Goal:** Recruit and maintain a board of trustees that is diverse in experience, representative of the school community, active in stewardship, and fully supportive of the school’s mission in order to govern the school effectively.

**Rationale:** The Board of Trustees governs the school by establishing policy, appointing and overseeing the Head of School and providing fund raising leadership. The Head of School and the administrative team implement policy and lead the school. The strategic plan is assessed and updated annually by the Board of Trustees. Effective leadership, at every level, must be in place for the school to realize its potential.

**Initiatives:**
1) Retain an effective Head of School who is committed to the mission of the school and its development.
2) Review the recruitment process for trustees.
3) Direct the Head of School to review administrative structure, function and effectiveness in all divisions.
4) Evaluate the progress of the strategic plan annually.
5) Maintain a professional development plan for all board members.
6) Develop a clearly delineated succession plan for board leadership.
7) Provide opportunities for the Board of Trustees to interact with members of the school community.