



BLUE OAK SCHOOL
STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN*

The Vision for Blue Oak School

Blue Oak School will be nationally recognized as a beacon of progressive educational excellence, inspiring a community of lifelong learners.

*Strategic Agenda endorsed by the Board of Trustees April 11, 2011

Blue Oak School

Plan to implement the 2011 Strategic Agenda

The following plans lay out the initial steps in bringing Blue Oak School policies, practices, and organization in line with Strategic Agenda approved by the Board of Trustees on April 11, 2011. Each section of the plan addresses a separate goal and briefly outlines the task and responsibilities involved. In several cases, existing committees are charged to review or oversee particular tasks; in the case of program development and assessment – tasks already begun by the faculty – new *ad hoc* committees will be formed (Program, Assessment, and Teaching and Learning). In addition, a new cross-constituency task force will assume responsibility for overseeing the education of the Blue Oak community on its progressive identity and creating a Center for Community Learning proposal for Board consideration (Goals 1 A, B, and 2 B.)

The current work of the school in educating its students continues, including faculty efforts to enhance the program. The strategic tasks that follow are also integral parts of the ongoing work of the school. The steps outlined here are presented not as final steps in the School's growth or in its pursuit of excellence, but as stages in what is always, at a progressive school, a work in progress. The next ten years will be years of confirmation during which Blue Oak will build on its strong foundation and draw from its unique culture to provide the school, and its surrounding community, with an example of what progressive education at its best offers to all involved in the enterprise -- not, as John Dewey said "as preparation for life, but as life itself."

A copy of the Strategic Agenda is appended to this document, together with an outline of work to be done on refining the Mission Statement and philosophy of the school.

May, 2011

Goal 1: Clarify the school's progressive educational philosophy, align the program with it, and demonstrate its effectiveness.

A: Clarify Blue Oak's Philosophy.

Blue Oak School comes from a rich tradition of progressive education, yet the larger community needs to understand more comprehensively how and why the school educates the way it does. Internal discussion of Blue Oak's pedagogy and intellectual commitments will add insight and passion to the evolution of its program. External demonstration will begin to build awareness of Blue Oak's vision as a Center for Community Learning.

Blue Oak will need to demonstrate the value and excitement of its program. Then it will need to engage the broader community:

Objectives:

- A. Develop administration and faculty agreement on Blue Oak's progressive philosophy and its specific application to Blue Oak's population.

Head of School, Faculty; Education Committee

June and August 2011 for faculty workshops

September 2011 for documentation

- B. Develop and implement effective strategies to educate the internal Blue Oak internal constituency (parents, supporters) about Blue Oak's philosophy, pedagogy and objectives, including the Center for Community Learning.

Head of School, Communications Director, PA President, and Vision Task Force (Education Committee, Marketing Committee review)

August 2011 - April 2012

August – October 2011 for speakers series

- C. Develop an effective vehicle to carry the above message to the external community (branding, materials, communications plan).

Communications Director, Admissions Director, (Head and Marketing Committee oversight)

January – March 2012

Resources:

A—Head, Business Manager and Development Director develop budget and fund-raising strategy for program development. (Education and Finance Committees oversight)

B: Develop the Program.

Blue Oak School believes in the innate capacity of all students to achieve excellence in many areas, as teachers guide and inspire them to construct meaning. The School reaffirms its commitment to environmental education, the arts, and interdisciplinary programs that enable students to integrate their understanding of the world. Blue Oak will continually develop cutting edge curricula and experiences that provide real-world insight.

Objectives:

- A. Review current educational programs to ensure program range matches strategic goals and progressive pedagogy, ensures excellence and serves student population (i.e. is compatible with scope and sequence and differentiation needs). Research comparable programs, potential partners, and appropriate pedagogy.

*Head and Faculty Program Committee review current program; Education Committee
May 2011 – June 2012*

- B. Ensure effective leadership and faculty involvement in developing and continually improving general and signature programs (see also Goal 3, professional development).

*Head and Faculty Program Committee (professional development to facilitate faculty development plan)
January 2012 onward*

Resources:

A—Head and Business Manager (with Board Education and Finance Committees) develop funding strategy

B—Head, Faculty Program Committee (with Development Office) develop appropriate fund-raising strategy

C: Demonstrate the effectiveness of the Program.

Because, as a progressive school, Blue Oak seeks alternatives to traditional testing, through use of portfolios, narrative assessment, and project based outcomes, the school needs to continually re-appraise its effectiveness in terms of classroom experience and delivery, and through the success of its graduates in their subsequent education. These forms of assessment help ensure deeper and richer appreciation of Blue Oak's level of excellence.

Objectives:

- A. Create ongoing multi-level assessment process
 - a. Student progress (multiple vehicles – see above)
 - b. Program and curriculum efficacy (includes tracking of alumni/ae progress: secondary, post-secondary; parent/student satisfaction; faculty perceptions)
 - c. Development, support, monitoring and improvement of program and of faculty involved
Head, with counsel from Faculty Assessment Committee, oversees process, integrated with program development
August 2011 for development of process
November 2011 for outline
February 2012 for implementation

- B. Ensure appropriate record-keeping system at all three levels
Head oversees process and assigns responsibilities (possibly create new research and assessment function)
February 2012 for implementation

- C. Create appropriate reporting for board and community
Head and Communications Director, with Education Committee of Board (and Marketing/ Communications Committee, where appropriate)
October 2011 for initial reporting
June 2012 for integrated system

Resources:

Head and Business Manager define process for incorporating into budget

Goal 2: Engage with the broader community, both local and global.

To live its philosophy and to bring real life to its program, Blue Oak School will act explicitly on its implicit belief in the importance of the internal and external learning community. Global awareness, human and environmental, is essential in this day and age. Blue Oak students will engage the broader world, in developmentally appropriate ways, through classroom, technology, and service learning. The aim, however, is to achieve not just the engagement of students, but reciprocal engagement between the school, as a community of learners, and the surrounding community.

While focusing initially on its program for students, Blue Oak will begin to create the structures, events, learning opportunities that will bind adults to its visionary ambitions as a center of lifelong learning.

Objectives:

- A. Develop structure, systems and priorities for student educational programs (global, environmental, diversity, off-site)

Head, Faculty Program Committee

June - November 2011 (faculty workshops and subsequent meetings)

- B. Create a Center for Community Learning proposal and plan, for board review and funding

Head and Board Vision Task Force (trustees, faculty, PA representatives, Advisory Board)

August - December 2011 for research

January - April 2012 for proposal

January - March 2012 for partners

November 2011 - March 2012 for systems and funding

- C. Engage community partners (local and distance) in developing mutually beneficial collaborations at the curricular, program, community and global levels

Head and Chair of the Board or designee

November 2011 - April 2012 for engaging partners

- D. Begin to implement partnership programs

Head and faculty/parents recruited to coordinate particular initiatives

April - September 2012

Resources:

A & B—Head, Business Manager cost and develop models, review with Development Director and Education, Finance and Development Committees

C & D—Head, Business Manager cost and develop partnership model budgets for review

Goal 3: Recruit, retain, support and develop outstanding teachers.

Excellent teachers are the single most important resource of an excellent school. As Blue Oak becomes better recognized as a “beacon of progressive education”, teachers also become the lead ambassadors and the welcoming committee to those seeking to understand the School’s uniqueness. Visitors bring insights, knowledge of best practices, and innovative approaches to Blue Oak.

Teachers, in turn, are nurtured by the continual support of their growth across all segments of the school community, just as they offer counsel and support to families. Parents and friends also offer educational capabilities that can enlarge and redefine the school. As Blue Oak embraces the opportunity to be a more comprehensive center of learning, teachers, parents, administrators and board will shape a richer environment for students and adults.

Objectives:

- A. Develop a long-range staffing plan that meshes with preceding priorities
 - a. Determine general range of capabilities for all BOS faculty in an interdisciplinary environment and for Center for Community Learning
 - b. Determine capabilities necessary for specific programs (e.g. environment)
 - c. Create an effective recruitment program

Head, with assistance of Faculty Committee on Teaching and Learning

September through January 2012 (ready for 2012 hiring season)

- B. Create a continuing faculty and staff development and support program geared to these objectives
 - a. Ensure active on-campus and external professional development opportunities
 - b. Create and implement an effective faculty observation and evaluation system

Head and Faculty Committee on Teaching and Learning (Education Committee)

October - December 2011

- C. Develop funding models to sustain the recruitment, retention and development plan

Head, Business Officer, Development Director, Education Committee, Finance Committee

September - November 2011

December 2011 for implementation

D. Develop marketing plan, integrated with other marketing objectives, to attract teachers, interns, and visitors

Head, Communications Director PA President, Marketing/ Communications Committee

January 2012 (in conjunction with Goal 1 marketing plan)

Resources:

B—Business Manager and Head develop budget model for professional development

C—Business Manager and Head develop budget model for staffing

Goal 4: Ensure the resources necessary to fully support all students admitted.

Blue Oak serves a compact area market. It also seeks to provide a unique education. Ensuring the right match between students, families and school is critically important. Providing the fundamental resources for success is equally so. Blue Oak School will examine how to effect the best match for the whole child and how it can provide integrated support for the range of abilities among the students it admits.

Objectives:

- A. a) Research admissions potential that aligns with BOS mission and strategic agenda
Head and Admissions Director (with assistance from Business Manager on indexed tuition); review with Marketing Committee
September - February 2012 (for 2012 admission cycle)

- b) Implement admissions strategy and criteria in line with mission and market
Admission Director, with support from Admissions Committee, Head ad Business Manager
October 2011 - March 2012

- c) Refine admissions marketing plan in line with Goal 1 planning (and branding)
Admission and Marketing Director, with assistance from Head and Communications Director
September - October 2011

- B. Develop a comprehensive support system, in line with strategic objectives, for students admitted to ensure effective implementation by faculty, specialists and administration and effective communication with parents and students involved
Head, Faculty Program Committee (including Learning Specialist), with external expertise, Education Committee advice and oversight
August 2011 - February 2012

- C. Establish effective monitoring (in line with Goal 1 - Assessment) including comprehensive parent surveys

*Head and Faculty Program Committee; review with Education Committee
December 2011 - March 2012*

Resources:

- A--Head, Business Manager and Admissions Director cost and budget for market analysis and admissions implementation (assistance of Finance and Development Committees)
- B--Head and Business Manager cost and budget for comprehensive support system

Goal 5: Ensure Institutional Support.

A: Implement a strong financial sustainability plan.

Objectives:

- A. Ensure a long-range financial sustainability plan

Head and Business Manager, in consultation with Faculty Program and other Committees; approved by Finance Committee

August 2011 – March 2012

- B. Develop and implement a long-range fund-raising plan to support Objective 1, above

Head and Development Director, with input from Business Manager and Finance Committee, approved by Development Committee

November 2011 for preparations

February 2012 for initial drafts

Resources:

Head and Business Manager develop budget, in consultation with Finance and Development Committees

B: Develop and implement effective marketing and communication plans.

Objectives:

- A. Develop comprehensive marketing plan that addresses all four strategic goals, coordinates with Blue Oak School marketing plan for admissions and fund-raising, and leverages the strategic vision for Blue Oak.

Marketing Director and Head, with assistance from the Communications Director, and in consultation with the Marketing and Communications Committee

August 2011 onwards

Resources:

A—Marketing and Communications Directors and Head work with Business Manager to develop long-term budgets for cost-effective marketing -- incorporate into annual budget cycles

C: Build effective governance and leadership.

Objectives:

- A. Develop a clear decision-making model (Board, Administration, Faculty, Parents Association) to provide effective leadership and community ownership of strategic decisions.
Board Chair, Head, Parents Association President and Committee on Trustees
Summer 2011
December 2011 for model ready for review

- B. Provide effective development of governance (Board, Faculty, Parents, Students) at both formal and informal levels through training, and board(s) and committee development
Committee on Trustees, with guidance from Chair and Head
September 2011
Fall 2011: COT implements

- C. Develop a comprehensive data-base of all constituents for all levels to draw on in staffing governance and volunteer efforts to facilitate realization of the Center for Community Learning ideal
Development Director with oversight from Head
June 2011
February 2012 for completing initial database

Resources:

Cost software, consultants, implementation. Business manager incorporates in budget.

The Mission of Blue Oak School

Review the current articulation of the school's Mission, Philosophy and Guiding Principles with a view to developing a succinct statement of mission, affirming the importance of:

- Social, emotional, and moral growth of the whole child
- Safe, diverse and collaborative community
- Dynamic engagement with the broader world
- Inspiring a love of learning and the pursuit of excellence

Objectives:

- A. Ensure that Mission, Statement and Philosophy of the school are aligned with the Strategic Vision and Agenda

Head, with assistance from a small board-appointed group of trustees, faculty and parents (PA); Board approves

2012

- B. Ensure that the Mission of the school is clearly articulated, understood and communicated throughout the BOS school community

Head, with assistance from Director of Communications (and Marketing/Communications Committee)

2012

- C. Ensure that the Mission and other relevant materials are accurately portrayed to the local, regional and national communities

Director of Communications, with Marketing/Communications Committee

2012

Blue Oak School's Strategic Priorities

1. Clarify the school's progressive educational philosophy and align the program with it

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A. Develop the program

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B. Demonstrate its effectiveness

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5. Ensure Institutional Support:

- A. Implement a strong financial sustainability plan
- B. Develop and implement effective marketing and communication plans
- C. Build effective governance and leadership

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