



The Williams School

2009 – 2012 Strategic Plan

Introduction

At the September, 2008 Retreat, The Board of Trustees of The Williams School spent considerable time reviewing and evaluating the current Strategic Plan which reflects and represents the mission and educational values of The Williams School. All goals and strategies of this plan do and should refer directly to our mission “to foster the intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and physical development of young women and men in preparation for college, a lifetime of learning, and active participation in a changing society.” Understanding that strategic plans are only valuable if they balance strategies dealing with contemporary challenges and issues faced by our school with long-term vision, The Board’s purpose for revising this plan is to present a strategic direction for implementation by the Head of School and the Administrative Team. This fall, a visiting team from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges will be on campus to review a ten-year self-study completed by the faculty, administration and staff at Williams; commendations and recommendations made by the visiting team will help direct any additional strategies need for implementation in the strategic plan. The Head of School will bear the responsibility of developing an action plan and implementing measurable tactics to reflect each strategy. This document is to serve as a framework for which The Williams School carries out its mission through 2012.



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GOAL 1: Increase selectivity and diversity of the student body and maintain strong enrollment.

Rationale: Although demographics of southeastern Connecticut are changing, there continues to be a goal to operate the school at a goal of 325 students each year. There are a number of neighboring towns where we have a potential to attract applicants. While we have broadened our outreach in recent years, there are still more areas of southeastern Connecticut and western Rhode Island that can be further cultivated. Coinciding with our desire to increase our applicant pool, there has been a marked increase in the number of families requesting financial assistance. This includes our current families whose financial situation may have changed due to the recent economic downturn. In addition, The Williams School is committed to providing financial support to achieve racial and socio-economic diversity in all grades.

No.	Strategy Description
1.	Strategy 1 – Continue to enhance parent satisfaction.
2.	Strategy 2 – Increase targeted outreach to prospective students and families, their schools, and their communities in our market.
3.	Strategy 3 – Optimize the distribution of financial aid to support enrollment goals.
4.	Strategy 4 – Capitalize on our existing and future programs and assets to attract prospective students.



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GOAL 2: Continue to attract, retain, and develop top talent in order to maintain a strong program.

Rationale: The quality of the educational program and our teachers is the hallmark of The Williams School. Over the next few years, several of the school’s most veteran and revered teachers will be retiring, and the next generation of academic leaders must be identified. Consequently, we must be able to attract and retain a new “crop” of teachers committed to excellence in education, advising, coaching and meeting extracurricular needs of the school. It is also essential to develop and retain our administrative team and staff to foster our mission and support our faculty. Furthermore, our current and future faculty must be compensated competitively as well as given opportunities to hone their craft through professional development. While we are proud of our historically rigorous and competitive academic program featuring traditional requirements in all disciplines (English, mathematics, modern and classical languages, science, history, and the arts) we seek to determine ways to develop a dynamic curriculum and effective pedagogy which will meet the needs of a 21st century education. As we review the results of our ten-year, comprehensive self-study from The New England Association of Schools and Colleges, we will continually assess our educational program to ensure it meets the needs of all of our students now and in the future.

No.	Strategy Description
1.	Strategy 1 – Create a succession plan for replacing key faculty, administrators, and staff.
2.	Strategy 2 – Identify the next generation of leaders and provide for career development.
3.	Strategy 3 – Improve the total compensation package for faculty, administration, and staff using peer independent schools as benchmarks.
4.	Strategy 4 - Continuously assess the educational program to ensure it meets The William School’s core values and prepares our students for the 21st century.



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GOAL 3: Employ sound, fiscal policies and programs that ensure the long-term sustainability of the school.

Rationale: We were very successful in reaching our December 2008 goal of raising \$2.5 million for the comprehensive campaign. A splendid new Student Center was built and ready for the 2008-09 school year, the annual fund goal was achieved, and the endowment grew. However, we remain considerably behind a number of our peer independent day schools in the size of our endowment. We need to raise this figure exponentially over the next few years. In addition, we must create a comprehensive long-range financial plan in preparation for future building needs and the possible expansion of our athletic facilities. Having and meeting benchmarks with long-range financial and facilities plans will ensure our desired place in southeastern Connecticut.

No.	Strategy Description
1.	Strategy 1 - Create a comprehensive long-range financial plan.
2.	Strategy 2 – Update the long-range master facilities plan.
3.	Strategy 3 – Develop financial strategies committed to: a) building the endowment and b) maintaining the Annual Fund to support the operating budget.
4.	Strategy 4 – Ensure Board philanthropy at the leadership level.
5.	Strategy 5 - Develop new revenue streams to be less tuition dependent.
6.	Strategy 6 - Develop a comprehensive alumni relations program to increase alumni philanthropy.



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GOAL 4: Become recognized as the premier independent school in the region.

Rationale: It will forever be a goal of The Williams School to effectively communicate with all of our constituents. While we have never had a marketing audit, there is a need to brand, celebrate, and market our school to promote better communication among those directly involved with the school (students, parents, alumni, past parents and past alumni) as well as extending our list of potential stakeholders (applicants, colleges, communities, local businesses and organizations, the media). It is imperative for our sustainability and advancement both in admissions and development that we introduce a comprehensive marketing plan for Williams.

No.	Strategy Description
1.	Strategy 1 – Develop a comprehensive marketing plan which distinguishes and promotes The Williams School.
2.	Strategy 2 – Define the Williams brand (what distinguishes and differentiates it) and its value.
3.	Strategy 3 - Continue to foster an enhanced sense of pride, belonging and commitment within the Williams community.
4.	Strategy 4 - Develop and reinforce effective means of communication with those outside the Williams School community.