



GARDEN SCHOOL

Jackson Heights, New York

Richard Marotta, *Ph. D., Headmaster*

To the Garden School Community:

The three-year Strategic Plan below was adopted on April 29, 2014 and covers the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016. The Board of Trustees is pleased to make this Plan available for review.

The Strategic Plan is a formal document by which the Board of Trustees determines its near-term goals and aspirations for Garden School. It is meant to be flexible and is purposely limited to a defined term. The current Strategic Plan covers the following areas: Governance and Board Development; Finance; Educational Program; Faculty; and Facilities. In future years, the Strategic Plan might address different topics.

The current plan ends on June 30, 2016. It will be replaced by a new plan that will commence on July 1, 2016. The Strategic Planning Committee will begin its work on a new plan toward the end of 2015.

Comments and suggestions are welcome.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Kline

Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

Parent

Trustee



GARDEN SCHOOL

**3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014**

Page 2 of 10

**Garden School 3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014
FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 2013 – JUNE 30, 2016**

Respectfully Submitted

By the

Strategic Planning Committee of the Garden School Board of Trustees

Members:

Jonathan Kline, Trustee, Chair

Richard Marotta, Headmaster, Trustee

Lisa Sohmer, Administration

Stephanie Sarran Parker, Faculty

Patricia Saxby, Parent

The Role of the Board of Trustees is to ensure the financial stability of Garden School and its continued viability as an educational institution. To achieve this goal, the Board of Trustees must prepare and implement a strategic plan to set the long range direction for Garden School. In addition, the Board of Trustees must hire, evaluate and support the Head of School in carrying out Garden School's mission.



GARDEN SCHOOL

**3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014**

Page 3 of 10

I. GOVERNANCE AND BOARD DEVELOPMENT

A. Goal: Expand the number of Trustees up to the maximum allowed under the by-laws.

- 1. The Board of Trustees is currently composed of 11 individuals, including the Headmaster, alumni from the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and parents of current and former students. The Board of Trustees may include as many as 21 Trustees under the By-Laws.**
- 2. The Board of Trustees intends to expand its numbers in order to achieve its goal of continued operational sustainability and governance in accordance with best practices.**
- 3. Use the permanent committees and ad hoc committees to identify and evaluate parents and alumni as prospective candidates to join the Board of Trustees.**

B. Goal: Utilize a permanent committee structure to facilitate Board management and efficiency.

- 1. The Board of Trustees has established permanent committees, each chaired by a Trustee.**
- 2. The Governance Committee is chaired by Arthur Gruen, President of the Board of Trustees.**
- 3. The Finance Committee is chaired by Muzzy Rosenblatt, Treasurer of the Board of Trustees.**
- 4. The Fund Raising Committee is chaired by Jean Kinn, member of the Board of Trustees.**
- 5. The Strategic Planning Committee is chaired by Jonathan Kline, member of the Board of Trustees.**
- 6. The Maintenance Committee is chaired by Donald Berhrang, member of the Board of Trustees.**
- 7. The Technology Committee is chaired by Gerald Dunne, member of the Board of Trustees.**



GARDEN SCHOOL

**3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014**

Page 4 of 10

C. Goal: Utilize ad hoc committees to address discrete subjects

- 1. The Board of Trustees has established ad hoc committees at various times, each chaired by a Trustee.**
- 2. The Board of Trustees established a Financial Advisory Committee, chaired by Muzzy Rosenblatt, Treasurer, in 2012 to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees as to how to apply the proceeds of the sale of the Garden School field, which closed in 2013. This committee delivered its report to the Board of Trustees in June 2013, and the committee has now been discontinued, as the ongoing financial advisory function will be fulfilled by the permanent Finance Committee.**
- 3. The Board of Trustees established a search committee in 2013 to identify and evaluate candidates for a newly created position of Director of Marketing and Admissions. The committee is in the process of evaluating candidates.**
- 4. The Board of Trustees established a Gala Committee in 2011 to run the annual Garden Gala. The Gala Committee is chaired by Jean Kinn. This committee will continue annually as part of the permanent Fundraising Committee.**
- 5. The Board of Trustees established an enrollment outreach committee in 2013 to identify neighborhoods where prospective students might reside and raise the profile of Garden School in those neighborhoods, as well as generally within the Northern Queens area. This initiative was spearheaded by a current parent. This committee will work with the Director of Marketing and Admissions when that person is hired.**
- 6. The Board of Trustees plans to establish a permanent Annual Fund Committee to institutionalize the Annual Fund.**

D. Goal: To provide current and future Trustees with proper orientation, development and education so they can fulfill their role of guiding Garden School.

- 1. Each Trustee will be provided a copy of the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees of Garden School and is expected to review the By-Laws regularly.**
- 2. Each Trustee should be provided a copy of the NAIS Trustees Handbook and should review it.**
- 3. Each Trustee should participate in one NYS AIS Workshop for Trustees each year. Such workshops are given twice per year and are open to NYS AIS members such as Garden School.**
- 4. Each Trustee should prepare a self-evaluation annually by completing a form to be developed by the Governance Committee.**



GARDEN SCHOOL

**3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014**

Page 5 of 10

5. Each Trustee is required to sign a confidentiality agreement and a conflict of interest disclosure statement upon joining the Board of Trustees and before the first meeting of each academic year.
- E. Goal: Develop a plan for Headmaster succession.**
1. The Board of Trustees should form a committee to explore Headmaster succession.
 2. The committee should develop a plan for the succession of the Headmaster.

II. FINANCE

- A. Goal: Grow enrollment to levels that support the long-term financial sustainability of Garden School.**
1. Develop a 3 year comprehensive recruitment strategy that will cover attrition at about 15%.
 2. Increase overall enrollment to 300 students by 2016.
 3. Hire a Director of Marketing and Admissions for the 2014-15 year to implement the necessary marketing outreach and to meet the enrollment target.
 4. Roll the recruitment strategy out to the entire school community including parents and students. Involve the entire Garden community.
 5. Develop a budget to cover the recruitment strategy to include marketing, PR, events, social media, incentives and possibly staffing.
 6. Develop a plan to reduce financial aid to 14% over the next 3 years, by geo-targeting recruitment efforts to the wealthiest neighborhoods with the poorest performing public schools.
- B. Goal: Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to increase enrollment, improve Garden School visibility, and increase Alumni involvement.**
1. Implement a new media marketing program, including hiring a consultant to redesign, maintain and update the web site and the Facebook page, send announcements through Twitter, and provide other new media outreach.
 2. Reinforce the caliber of Garden School faculty through profiles in the newsletter and on the website, and by listing their awards and accomplishments in the yearbook.



GARDEN SCHOOL

**3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014**

Page 6 of 10

3. **Develop future ideas for Alumni events that could carry fees for attendance as part of an additional fundraising effort. The goal of these events would be to provide opportunities for career development, networking, socializing, and re-connecting both among Alumni and with Garden School. Guest speakers and special guests should be included in these events.**
 4. **Actively develop and promote relationships with various “feeder” schools.**
 5. **Encourage alumni and parent involvement in alumni career day events, and profile alumni achievement in Garden School publications.**
- C. Goal: Grow fundraising efforts to supplement revenue and build an endowment.**
1. **Driven by a current parent, Garden successfully ran an Annual Fund in 2013-2014. The Board of Trustees must lead the institutionalization of the Annual Fund into an annual appeal to Garden families, Alumni and community.**
 2. **Support the Garden Gala and the efforts to repeat its success annually.**
 3. **Consider hiring a Director of Development to implement fund raising goals.**
- D. Goal: Create investment strategy and guidelines for the proceeds of the sale of the field.**
1. **The Finance Committee should solicit financial management proposals from institutions that specialize in investing for independent schools.**
 2. **The Board of Trustees should determine how much of the current funds should be invested, and how much held in reserve cash.**
- E. Goal: Develop non-traditional alternatives for maximizing revenues for Garden School.**
1. **The Finance Committee should solicit ideas from its advisors and the Garden School community of Alumni, Parents, Faculty and Administration for alternative revenue streams.**
 2. **Some areas that may be explored are real estate, on-campus tutorial programs, vacation “mini” camps, and school within a school.**
 3. **Maximize existing non-traditional revenue streams such as Summer Camp, facilities rentals, and Universal Pre-Kindergarten.**



GARDEN SCHOOL

3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014

Page 7 of 10

III. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

A. Strengths

1. Demanding curriculum incorporating the latest theories and tools, for success.
2. Small class sizes
3. Students treated as individuals
4. Educational freedom
5. Advanced Placement courses
6. Various and numerous special classes offered such as P.E., Art, Music and world languages such as Mandarin
7. International, regional and in house trips that supplement curriculum
8. Extracurricular programs such as Lego Robotics, model UN, and Debate that supplement the curriculum
9. Smart board lessons integrated into educational program in lower and upper divisions
10. Personalized student instruction
11. Individualized College Counseling leading to 100% of graduating class matriculating into college
12. Comprehensive and inclusive athletic program
13. Stable school, administration and faculty.
14. Extent of Diversity among student population present in an expanding global world.

B. Goal: Align the Garden School curriculum school wide

1. Continue the work that has been done to integrate the Garden School curriculum throughout the school.
2. Promote regular meetings between faculty members to facilitate transition of students from one grade to the next, including identification of individual returning student strengths and weaknesses.



GARDEN SCHOOL

**3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014**

Page 8 of 10

C. Goal: Increase use of technology in teaching methods and throughout Garden School.

- 1. Expand technology driven Professional Development for teachers to stay current with new practices.**
- 2. Consider hiring a technology expert for maintenance and possibly computer classes.**
- 3. Consider creating additional technology electives.**
- 4. Develop and implement a technology behavior code.**
- 5. Consider expanding use of digital report cards throughout, all grade levels.**
- 6. Develop a program for integrating and maintaining the latest technology.**

D. Literacy

- 1. Consider a literacy center for reading and writing support after school.**
- 2. Encourage and expand literacy publications.**
- 3. Organize and expand the lower division storage space for book collections.**
- 4. Consider hiring a librarian or other position to include library maintenance.**

E. Goal: Enhance the Garden School educational experience through expanded programs and protocols.

- 1. Consider expanding Mandarin instruction after the third grade, and offering Spanish and French in Early Childhood through the seventh grade.**
- 2. Consider starting a public speaking program to enhance student communication skills.**
- 3. Encourage and expand world language experiences including guest speakers and field trips.**
- 4. Improve referrals for support services, including creation of a protocol for recommending PT, OT, speech and counseling.**
- 5. Strengthen the orientation of parents, teachers and students to school guidelines and behavioral expectations.**



GARDEN SCHOOL

**3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014**

Page 9 of 10

IV. FACULTY

A. Strength of current faculty

- 1. Longevity.**
- 2. Commitment to Garden School.**
- 3. Credentials within subject area.**
- 4. Devotion to student success.**

B. Goal: Enhance faculty professional development.

- 1. Introduce outside speakers for Workshop Days.**
- 2. Design off-site Workshop Days.**
- 3. Create a network for independent school visits by teachers.**
- 4. Encourage faculty to join/participate in professional organizations (support through Garden School payment of dues).**
- 5. Expand and support the new teacher-driven professional development program.**
- 6. Implement formal and informal review processes for teachers.**
- 7. Reinforce the role of department chairs in training and evaluating new teachers.**
- 8. Maintain a schedule of department and division meetings.**

C. Salaries and Benefits.

- 1. Provide incremental increases to bring faculty and administrative salaries in line with those at peer institutions.**
- 2. Evaluate and adjust (as necessary) stipend levels.**
- 3. Consider merit as well as standard increases.**
- 4. Consider increased Garden School match in TIAA-CREF based on length of service.**



GARDEN SCHOOL

3-Year Strategic Plan
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 29, 2014

Page 10 of
10

D. Attrition and Future Planning.

1. Support long-time faculty members in retirement planning.
2. Charge senior faculty with training teachers to assume responsibilities for AP and other programs.

V. FACILITIES

A. Goal: Improve Garden School facilities in the near term through necessary capital projects.

1. Implement the recommendation of the FAC to spend a portion of the current funds on necessary facilities improvements.
2. Needed improvements include: locking decorative gate on the 79th street side of the school; paint on the woodwork in the main entry way exterior; renovation of the main hall restrooms; a new electronic sign at the entrance; renovation of the gym restrooms.

B. Goal: Increase the appeal of Garden School through strategic high value capital projects.

1. When Garden School has achieved financial stability at an enrollment level that sustains expenditures on a consistent basis, other capital projects should be considered.