



# RIVERBEND — SCHOOL —

An Innovative Montessori Education

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2018

INSPIRE. DISCOVER. ACHIEVE.

## INTRODUCTION:

In 2012, Riverbend's Board of Directors embarked on a strategic planning effort because our school is at an important point in its history and the time is right to create a strategy for future growth. The purpose of our strategic plan is to help Riverbend fulfill its mission and vision. By identifying the school's priorities and creating a roadmap for its future direction, the plan provides guidance that will allow and encourage all stakeholders to work together towards common goals.

The strategic planning process was extensive and included parents, faculty, board members, an independent strategic planning consultant, and administrators. Input was gathered through many sources:

- A strategy session with the Board of Directors in October 2012
- Extensive independent research
- Five focus groups in February and March 2013
- A parent survey in April and May 2013
- A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis by the board in June 2013.

## MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY:

*Mission:* The Riverbend School is a collaborative Montessori environment that develops self-motivated, independent learners by integrating academic excellence and a respectful social community that results in confidence and lifelong achievement.

*Philosophy:* At Riverbend, our innovative approach encourages students to explore their talents with confidence, strive for achievement and discover new ways of thinking, all in an environment founded on respect and collaboration.

We engage our students in:

- Academically challenging curriculum
- Superior extracurricular programs
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Team building
- Small classes

The Montessori philosophy and our small student-to-teacher ratio allow for flexibility and customization in our curriculum. Our teachers are trained to recognize and bring out the best in every child. We prepare self-assured learners with highly developed inner discipline so they become responsible participants in their lifetime of education, resulting in lifelong personal achievement and happiness.

## OUR FIVE INITIATIVES:

The core purpose of strategic planning is to help Riverbend live its mission and achieve its vision. The data from the focus groups, the parent survey and the SWOT analysis identified **five initiatives** that form the foundation of the strategic plan. By working towards these initiatives, we seek to transform Riverbend from an excellent Montessori school into a well-known independent school that is not only true to its Montessori roots but also competitive with area schools.

## OUR FIVE INITIATIVES *(continued)*:

### **1: Strengthen Riverbend's position as a School of Excellence and a Leader in Innovative Montessori Education**

We will continuously improve upon our innovative curriculum, academic excellence, and the unique components of a Montessori education while enhancing the visibility of the school through increased marketing and public relations efforts. We will build on the recent growth in enrollment and grow the school incrementally as facilities expand. We will seek to strengthen the global nature of our programs and the students' self-awareness as global citizens, as well as incorporate integrated technology resources into the curriculum where beneficial.

### **2: Ensure that Riverbend remains a Top Choice for Teachers**

We recognize that our faculty's commitment to excellence has always been at the heart of our ongoing ability to live our mission every day. In the future, we seek to provide our faculty with improved compensation and benefits, as well as to establish a faculty appreciation fund so we may offer more professional development opportunities. We will ensure more action is taken to identify and celebrate the many accomplishments of our teachers, and maintain a working environment that fosters profound professional satisfaction.

### **3: Develop Campus Facilities that reflect Best Practices**

We will create a permanent home for The Riverbend School that supports the physical, social, and programmatic integration of the two campuses into one unified location. Over the course of this strategic plan, we will continue to evaluate our current buildings for their ability to support fully the school's mission. We are now beginning Phase I of the campus master plan, which includes setting the physical groundwork for the unified campus, building a new Children's House and playground, as well as renovating Morse Tavern. Future phases to build the elementary and middle school buildings will begin once planning and funding requirements are completed.

### **4: Broaden Riverbend's Financial Sustainability and Governance Structure**

We will nurture a culture of giving and emphasize the importance of fundraising to achieving Riverbend's mission and vision. It is essential that we strengthen all fundraising initiatives, including the Annual Fund and the Gala, as well as identify opportunities for foundation grants and sponsorships. We will re-energize the capital campaign in order to provide the needed funds for all building phases of the unified campus. We will establish an endowment to provide long-term funds for the enhancement and stability of the school. Where necessary, we will enhance succession planning and define metrics for key administrative and board positions, plus undertake a risk assessment analysis for benchmarking our approaches.

### **5: Support our Growing and Vibrant School Community**

We recognize and appreciate the dedication and enthusiasm of our school community. Our goal for this initiative is to expand and strengthen our community network by advancing the Parents' Association and establishing stronger relationships with alumni students, their families, and other former community members. We also plan to develop a new school website that increases ease of use and becomes the central communications portal for the entire school community. The results from the 2013 Parent Survey were very helpful and we intend to repeat the survey event annually as a way to gather essential feedback, evaluate our programs and events, and continuously improve our school.

### CONCLUSION:

The Board of Directors and School Administration would like to thank all of the parents, faculty, and staff who participated in Riverbend's first strategic plan. Your voice in a focus group, your opinions on the Parent Survey, and your incredible support were invaluable. We look forward to working with the entire school community to accomplish the goals set forth in this plan.