



Strategic Plan 2014-2020 Update

Goal One:

Build a School Campus of Natural Learning

Objective: Plan, design and build a school campus that realizes a natural environment for play and learning beyond the classroom and serves all constituencies of the school community

Action Items:

1.1 Develop a Long-term Campus and Facilities Master Plan (2013-14) est. cost = \$7-10K
Develop a long-term campus and facilities master plan that includes the purchase and development of contiguous properties which includes a property/facility plan that projects both a preventive maintenance schedule (and its costs and revenue sources, both subsets of the strategic/ financial plan) for existing buildings and grounds, and projected new-structure/new-property expectations.

**Completed: Based on engineering for new construction, entire campus play has been created.
Approximate cost to date = \$80k**

1.2 Greenhouse and Garden (2013-14) est. cost = \$15k
Create and maintain an outdoor fenced garden space with an adjacent greenhouse for year-round gardening

**Completed (Greenhouse purchased) = \$15k
In Progress (Greenhouse and Garden Installation) = \$20k**

1.3 Develop Play Spaces (2013-14) est. cost = \$7-10k
Create age-appropriate play areas with innovative play equipment that fosters creativity, enhances cooperation and encourages physical challenges in a safe and protected manner.

Completed: \$50K

1.4 Design and Build a Multipurpose Building with Middle School Classroom (2014-15) est. cost = \$830k

Identify and create a multipurpose room for sports and games, community gatherings, and school performances. Incorporate storage space for school. Build a new Middle School classroom to accommodate 25 students by 2018-2019.

**In Progress (Multi-purpose Space) = \$1 million
Completed (Middle School Classroom) = \$10k**

1.5 Incorporate Farm and Domestic Animals into the Outdoor Environment (2014-16) est. cost



= \$7k

Completed: Chickens donated

In Progress: Moving Chicken Coop to Natural Learning Area after construction (Cost = TBD)

1.6 Build Outdoor Structures on the Campus (2014-17) est. cost = \$5-10k

Build outdoor storage space(s) to house sports equipment, wheel toys, bikes and game equipment. Encourage the entrepreneurial ventures of the adolescent community with structures on the site, eg, pottery barn, bike repair shed, farm stall, sugar shack etc.

In Progress: Outdoor storage will be complete when the new building is done.

TBD: Outdoor shed for entrepreneurial ventures.

1.7 Enhance the Entrance and Security of the Campus (2014-18) est. cost = \$40-50k

Enhance the entrance of the site to welcome the community and reinforce the sense of arrival and departure. Develop appropriate signage and displays that convey information and promote way finding. Fence site for safety and security as necessary.

Partially Completed: New entry way and signage secures facility at the main entrance. Cost = \$3400

Approximate Cost for entire campus fence = \$30k

1.8 Provide Accessibility to the Entire Site (2014-18) est. cost = \$5-10k

Make the entire site accessible by creating and maintaining safe and sensible pathways for pedestrians, wheeled toys and bikes. Create secondary paths to enhance exploration and play. Protect and build upon the natural diversity of the site by creating accessibility and providing environmental education through nature observation and study. Build positive relationships with local residents, businesses and city representatives and provide opportunities for sharing the campus with others beyond the immediate school community.

Completed: Based on current site layout and wetland restrictions, the Quest property is developed as much as possible. Because of our relationship with the Town and other community organization, Quest has done this.

1.9 Develop an Outdoor Performance Setting (2015-16) est. cost = \$3-5k

Designate and develop an outdoor performance setting for gathering, meeting and working to further stimulate presentations, encourage teamwork, and foster a sense of community

TBD depending on new site layout after construction of multi-purpose space is complete.

Goal Two:

Enrich and Enhance Program

Objective: Work vigorously to improve our curriculum and programs with an emphasis on



teaching innovation, leadership, global awareness, responsibility and sustainability. Support and strengthen our core curriculum based on current educational research.

Action Items:

2.1 Broaden the Scope of the Curriculum (2014-18) est. cost = TBD

- Health and Wellness Curriculum

Add a Health and Wellness component to the core curriculum along with the necessary teacher training that will engage students in age-appropriate discussion and instruction on issues that are important to their physical, social and emotional development.

In progress – During the 2015-16 school year, Quest contracted with Planned Parenthood of Rhode Island who then taught researched based Health and Wellness courses to students in grades 6-8 with great success. Quest continues with this program.

- World Language Program

Survey the expressed interest by parents for expanding our World Language curriculum and provide the necessary staff, training and resources to implement it school wide.

In progress – Spanish continues to be offered at Quest. Mandarin was introduced through the After School Program during the 2014-15 school year with little interest express to continue it. Further introductions of more language options are not feasible based on the current format of the three-hour work cycle that is essential to the Montessori method. Quest will look to hire a fulltime Spanish teacher in the coming years.

- 21st Century Technology

Develop standards for computer competency for our students. Create an assessment plan that will identify appropriate technology instruction needed to prepare our students for the demands of high school. Provide state-of-the-art technology and equipment for instruction and administrative operations.

In progress – Quest has offered coding classes through the After-School Program and has done significant research on the implementation of coding into the classroom environment as part of the three-hour work cycle. The middle school uses technology on a regular basis and utilizes a SmartBoard in this process. Each middle school student uses a laptop and the school provides computers to those students who do not have access. Est. Cost = \$20-30k per year (cost of part-time instructor and materials)

2.2 Middle School (2014-18) est. cost = \$500-600k

Further develop the Quest Montessori Middle School program by creating a dedicated space for instruction with characteristics that define a land based Montessori Middle School that is a Center for both noble work and academic study.

Completed – There is now a designated Middle School Space that gives the students ample room



to grow.

2.3 Community Learning (2015-17) est. cost = \$7-10k

Create and develop specific programs designed to facilitate learning, connections, and interactions between students across age levels.

Completed and Ongoing – Opportunities like the yearly trip to Clark Farm, the Fall Festival, Monthly Community Meetings, and all other community gatherings build connections across the school community. Middle school's new classroom placement beside the Toddler Room will allow for more connections between the two classrooms. The Lower Elementary classroom move will provide more curriculum connections to Upper Elementary.

2.4 After School Programs (2014-17) est. cost = \$15k

Create a Montessori program after school that is a home-like environment and encourages the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of each child in its care and one that continues the Montessori philosophy of independence, cooperation, and mutual respect that the children are accustomed to in their classrooms.

Completed: cost per year = 15K

Gross Revenue generated per year = \$57K

2.5 Summer Programs (2014-17) est. cost = \$3-5k

Implement a summer camp program that meets the level of demand for all ages in a variety of fun and enriching activities. Program to include field trips, special visitors and work with specialists in areas including athletics, visual arts, performing arts, nature exploration, science, music and movement, games, gardening, and other specialty programs.

In progress: cost per year = \$10k Due to building maintenance and the hope of construction progress, summer camps have been canceled for the last two years. They will begin to resume in summer of 2018.

Gross Revenue: \$14k

Goal Three:

Connect the Quest Community through Opportunity, Service and Giving

Objective: Design and implement strategies that connect the Quest community through opportunity, service and giving in ways that ensure the financial stability and long-term viability of the school.

Action Items:

3.1 Strengthen the Community Connection Among Parents, Students and Staff (2014-2020)
est. cost = minimal



Strengthen the community connection among parents, students and staff through increased and purposeful engagement of parents, more venues for teacher collaboration, and initiatives to facilitate connection and relationships between students across programs. Implement strategies to increase visibility and participation within the greater community. Cooperate with other organizations to increase the number of cultural, arts, and informational events for students, teachers, parents and community members.

In progress: Annual speakers occur throughout the year bringing the community together. Monthly events ran by the school and PTO also facilitates community connection. Est. cost per year = \$5k

3.2 Enhance the Parent Experience (2014-20) est. cost = minimal

Increase parent community cohesiveness by providing more diverse opportunities for gathering in small groups for lifelong learning, parenting discussions, and social interaction. Engage parents in a wide variety of volunteerism including our parent organization that strives to engage Quest families fully in the life of the school and represents the school in a variety of forums. Develop parent programs and strategies to welcome and support incoming and transitioning parents and students. Develop a plan for periodically assessing level of satisfaction and understanding among parents and faculty.

In progress: Parent socials and community events are scheduled throughout the year. Montessori parent education events will increase during the 2017-18 school year to help parents better understand the value of a Quest education. The yearly Board survey assesses parent satisfaction. Est. cost per year = \$2k

3.3 Culture of Philanthropy (2014-20) est. cost = minimal

Foster a culture of philanthropy to generate greater resources for the School. Create a compelling case for support that invites investment and clearly indicates why a gift will make a difference. Cultivate annual giving, alumni giving, and major gifts programs while decreasing emphasis on fundraising events. Involve School Head, Board members, volunteers, donors, staff members, and faculty in planning and executing cultivation strategies.

Completed: The implementation of the Quest Annual Fund from 2015-2017 school year raised \$95k. This enabled the school to decrease fundraising events across the board.

3.4 Long-term Strategic Financial Plan (2015-16) est. cost = minimal

Ensure that tuition increases are reasonable while sustaining commitment to program, faculty, and facility needs by developing a long-term Strategic Financial Plan for the school which includes regular, routine utilization of a planning document that simultaneously displays viability-related items (items related to money, organizational structure, technology, and facilities/grounds) and the financial/ quantitative consequences of those items, including the projected net tuition



gradient, other hard-income gradients, and the basic expense gradient. The Strategic Financial Plan will also include soft-income targets such as capital and/or major gift items that are identified in the strategic planning process. These are six-year planning documents that are completely redone every four years.

Completed: There is a six-year strategic budget that is reviewed by the Board, Finance Committee, the HOS, and Business Manager regularly. Cost per year = nothing

3.5 Institutional Advancement Plan (2016-18) est. cost = \$500-600k

Create a strategic Institutional Advancement Plan aligned with the school's strategic financial plan to provide necessary discipline and structure; clearly identify goals, implementation strategies, timeframe, staffing, delineation of responsibilities (professional and volunteers), and related costs. Transition the current capital campaign to an effective development office that continues annual fundraising by creating and funding the position of Development Director. Provide professional training for this position as necessary. Design and implement a multi-year capital campaign for facility improvements based on the Quest Campus Master Plan. Continue to strengthen the school's financial profile, reducing debt and planning for an endowment as appropriate.

Completed and in progress: A Development Director was hired during the 2014-16 school year that led to an increase in school-wide giving. Quest has a much clearer plan for Institutional Advancement but the conversation continues based on community and Board feedback. Cost per year = \$20-30k (Development Director and related marketing expenses)

Goal Four: Invest in People

Objective: Design and implement a professional development program that creates an avenue for sharing innovative instructional methods, provides support in securing resources and information, promotes collaboration among faculty, and makes connection between classroom and community. In short, invest in people.

Action Items:

4.1 Growth-oriented Faculty Culture (2014-20) est. cost = 1.5-2% expenditures

Create and support individualized, innovative, and ongoing professional development plans for each member of faculty and staff. Provide for teacher preparation and planning time outside the classroom. Fund teacher participation in AMS and other conferences. Provide for continuing education and Montessori certification for all Quest faculty. Hire talented staff who are passionate about Montessori education and love of learning. Support faculty and staff interested in assuming leadership roles. Build faculty recruitment programs (i.e. Montessori internships) to expand pool of qualified applicants for teaching positions.

In progress: Each year Quest examines its training needs. Cost per year = \$15-20k



4.2 Budgeted Support for Faculty Professional Development (2014-20) est. cost = \$15k
Budget a separate line item each year for financial support of a growth-oriented professional development program to meet over time the ISM benchmark of 1.5% to 2.0% of total budgeted expenditures. Fund consultations with Montessori experts, both individuals and organizations.
In progress: Each year Quest encourages staff to attend professional development conferences and seminars. Plus, teachers are asked to visit other schools and create connections with other professionals. Cost per year = \$20k

4.3 Trustee Education (2014-20) est. cost = \$5k
A Board that functions professionally and strategically is one that is directed by designated leaders who discipline themselves and the Board, as an organization, to “take viability-focused action on behalf of the next generation of students.” As such, the Board’s core activity is the quadrennial strategic/financial planning event. Therefore, the school budget will include a line item to educate Trustees regarding all things strategic, how to conduct strategic financial planning , and the implications of the fundamental distinctions between governance and operations.
In progress: Budgeted line item = \$2k

4.4 Fair and Competitive Salaries and Benefits (2016-18) est. cost = minimal
Assure a competitive and appropriate faculty and staff compensation package to attract and retain the best teachers and staff. “Fair and competitive faculty salaries” must be viewed by the teachers themselves as adequate when compared to known salary markers that the teachers view as “good.” Compensation reviews may need to include local public school medians or ranges, or published private-independent school figures pertaining to meaningful referent groups. Employee benefits refers to the adequacy (in the eyes of the employees themselves) of the breadth of offerings in the school’s benefits package.
Completed: Board and HOS review of faculty and staff salaries during the 2014-15 school year led to significant salary adjustments for faculty salaries that saw an average salary increase of 32%. Cost = \$230k (this also includes adding new positions)

Goal Five: Accreditation

Objective: Use the process of accreditation to establish a vision for the school in collaboration with the Quest stakeholders, including administrators, governing board members, faculty, staff, parents, students and community. Use this process to guide the school in capturing the core reasons for its existence, distinguishing it from other schools, and defining its educational purposes.



Action Items:

5.1 Revisit the Mission, Develop a Purpose and Outcome Statement (2016-17) est. cost = no cost

Revisit the school mission statement, develop educational goals and articulate a philosophy appropriate to the needs of the school population in harmony with Montessori's descriptions of the nature of the student, the needs of the family, the prepared environment and the needs of the staff. Create three definitive documents: the mission statement, the Portrait of the Graduate, and Characteristics of Professional Excellence. Communicate the vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support. Identify, document and monitor goals to advance the vision.

In progress: To be examined during the accreditation process.

5.2 Accreditation (2017-18) est. cost = \$5k

Undertake dual accreditation process with American Montessori Society and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Start the accreditation process by conducting the self-study required by the NEACS and AMS accreditation process which will help to identify opportunities to improve our program and to reflect on our educational approach.

In progress: Cost = \$15k

5.3 Implement a Continuous Process of institutional Self-reflection and Improvement (2017-18) est. cost = no cost

Use the accreditation process to promote the sharing of new ideas that enhances the professional expertise and judgment of the community by examining the institution's purpose and identifying and correcting weakness. Use the outcome of the accreditation process, the School Improvement Plan, to differentiate the two major planning structures of the school. Institutional advancement as detailed in the Board Strategic Plan, and the Instructional Improvement Plan as developed through the accreditation process.

In progress: To be determined.