

THOMAS MACLAREN SCHOOL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2023

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APPROVED JANUARY 26, 2023

PART 1: VISION AND MISSION

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VISION STATEMENT

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We believe all students should be immersed in the best our tradition has to offer. We believe all students can be active and useful participants in the ongoing and enduring conversation that is a vibrant civilization. We believe all students can be formed in a habitual vision of greatness that makes lifelong learners of the doctor and the mechanic, the homemaker and the professor. Thomas MacLaren School strives to build a lasting community of learners in which each student is the agent of his or her education.

MISSION STATEMENT

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From the seminar to the science lab, from the music room to the playing field, we begin with the conviction that **all human beings can know truth, create beauty, and practice goodness.** To that end, we expect students to develop basic tools of learning, ordered basic knowledge, moral seriousness, breadth and depth of imagination, artistic ability and sensitivity, and a sense of wonder.

We believe all students can be active and useful participants in the ongoing and enduring conversation that is a vibrant civilization. Jacques Maritain, the French philosopher, described education as a human awakening. The goal of Thomas MacLaren School is to develop young men and women who are fully human and fully awake to the world.

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## PART 2: GOALS

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### STRATEGIC GOALS

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The following goals are intended to focus the attention and efforts of the Board of Directors and the Executive Director on particular objectives critical to the long-term health and success of the School. They are not intended to reduce or restrict the responsibilities of either (see below) or to articulate all the initiatives and activities undertaken in pursuit of the School's mission. Their purpose is to help the Board and administration as they prioritize their use of time and resources.

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#### ANNUAL GOALS

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1. To consistently graduate students who excel according to MacLaren-specific standards.
2. To continue to receive the highest evaluation for academic, financial, and operational performance from our authorizer.
3. To consistently place in the top ten of Colorado schools according to state performance measures and college placement.
4. To build on the base of \$100,000 in fundraising revenues via the Annual Appeal.
5. To expand the Masters Fund proportional to the growth of the school.

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#### ONE-YEAR GOALS

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1. To maintain academic excellence and diagnose root of academic gaps.
2. To revitalize the culture of liberal arts learning in a community.
3. To raise faculty salaries.
4. To implement and expand the Development program and strategy.
5. To expand and develop Board understanding of the mission of the school.
6. Research and update demographic goals.
7. Complete Special Education Mission and Vision Plan.
8. Implement targeted facility upgrades.

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#### TWO-TO-FIVE-YEAR GOALS

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1. To develop a set of student and faculty performance measures for the MacLaren-specific mission and program objectives.
2. To provide market-competitive base teacher salaries, salary increases tied to Per Pupil Revenue (PPR), and bonus/merit pay tied to MacLaren-specific performance criteria.
3. To achieve the academic success in the K-5 program experienced in the 6-12 program.
4. To develop a strategy to address short- and long-term facility needs.

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#### FIVE-TO-TEN-YEAR GOALS

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1. To expand the K-5 program into a full four-strand program.
2. To move towards full plan for facility development.
3. To provide attractive base teacher salaries with salary increases and merit pay tied to MacLaren-specific performance criteria.
4. To provide a salary scale that encourages a career at MacLaren.

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## PART 3: CONTEXT

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### S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

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REVISED NOVEMBER 5, 2022

The following is the inventory of internal School strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and challenges, conducted by the Board of Directors at its annual retreat.

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#### STRENGTHS

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- Campus in the heart of an established D11 neighborhood
- Offer a K-5 program that aligns with 6-12 program
- Excellent curriculum
- Excellent student performance
- Rated "Performance with Distinction" by authorizer (CSI)
- Good reputation and recognition for excellence
- Strong Executive Director and leadership team
- Committed administration and excellent faculty
- Board commitment
- Administration focused on the right priorities
- Strong academic leadership pipeline, including expanded leadership team
- Strong organizational and financial management
- Sound risk management
- Meeting enrollment goals K-12
- Demand for the school allows for a third strand in the Lower School
- High parent satisfaction and trust
- Growing community engagement
- Attention to strong culture amid high student enrollment and faculty growth
- Ability to respond nimbly to challenges as they arise
- Recognized athletic program

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#### WEAKNESSES

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- Salaries that are not competitive enough relative to faculty hiring and retention needs
- Lack of a salary structure contributing to competitive weakness
- Administrative and faculty leadership understaffing
- Turnover of staff
- Challenging faculty recruitment owing to unique academic program and current educational market
- Have not yet attracted strong philanthropic attention
- Fundraising trends low relative to future needs
- Aging campus and facility systems

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## OPPORTUNITIES

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- K-5 expansion for revenue and increased at-risk population recruitment
- Connection with the immediate neighborhood
- Enhance connections with other school communities and advocacy groups– charters and classical schools
- Partnerships with mission-compatible organizations
- Marketing potential of academic performance
- Student and alumni advocates
- Contacts made through athletic and extracurricular programs
- Growing networking capacity, including strategic relationships with vendors/parents
- Growing alumni population
- Increased presence in the community through MacLaren Society and MacLaren String Quartet
- Advocacy at the state level
- Continued diversification of fundraising pipelines and donors
- Student recruitment and retention
- Pre-K programming
- Educating parents in the liberal arts mission and the goal of a MacLaren education
- Leverage alumni community to create buy-in to our culture for parents and students

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## THREATS

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- Unfunded Mill Levy Override Equalization (MLOE) resulting in inequity in per pupil funding
- Rising mental health and behavioral needs
- Competition for students and faculty, particularly in tight hiring market
- Variation in state funding
- PERA and health insurance rate increases
- Financial sustainability
- Burden of compliance reporting and state required testing
- Unfunded mandates from the state requiring increased hiring and increased work load
- Legislation unfriendly to charter schools or to single-sex education
- Risks associated with rapid growth
- Known and unknown threats in the aftermath of COVID—academic, financial, operational, social-emotional, political
- External pressure to be a college-prep school

## PART 4: KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

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### KEY BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

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The MacLaren Board of Directors has the following responsibilities:

- to safeguard the school's mission and vision;
- to select, direct, and evaluate the Executive Director;
- to provide proper financial oversight;
- to provide adequate resources for the school to fulfill its mission;
- to ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability of everyone else in the school through the proper chain of command;
- to ensure effective long-range planning;
- to recruit and orient new board members and periodically assess its own performance;
- to contribute to school fundraising efforts;
- and to continually enhance the school's public standing by clearly articulating the school's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public and garner support from the community.

### KEY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

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The Executive Director is the chief administrative officer of the School, charged with

- faithfully implementing the design and mission of the school;
- executing all phases of the School's operation;
- leading the faculty and staff, which includes leading the community of learners and teaching at least one course per year;
- hiring, firing, evaluating, and disciplining faculty and staff, as necessary;
- looking ahead strategically in all areas: academic, operational, financial.

The Executive Director reports directly to the Board of Directors.