



Grace Christian Education Association (GCEA) BOARD OF DIRECTORS seeks to demonstrate GCEA accountability and effective stewardship of Grace Christian School (GCS).

A **2017-2010 GCS Strategic Plan** was adopted by the GCEA Board of Directors on 2/27/17.

The GCEA Board of Directors, nine volunteers dedicated to maintaining the trust and managing the investment GCEA members have made in GCS, govern the school and its interests. To fulfill their obligations to GCEA members, the Board of Directors have used strategic planning to create a long-term vision of the Board and the school; to establish the course by which the Board and the school will achieve that vision; to maintain strategic focus and high-quality programs for the future; and to ensure GCS will provide students a Christian education and spiritual experience based on a solid academic foundation, through the use of a faculty committed to the Christian philosophy of education, with Christ as the center of our curriculum.

Why is this important to GCEA members? The Board's strategic plan, in concert with GCEA members, GCS faculty and staff, students, alumni and all other stakeholders, enables the Board to carry out its mission effectively, efficiently, and to the benefit of all members. As the needs of GCEA change, as funding sources fluctuate, and as new discoveries spark exciting opportunities, the Board of Directors will work to ensure that the school continues to serve our members.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for this opportunity to serve.

Joe Pepple
Chairman
GCEA Board of Directors



Grace Christian School Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Mission

Inspiring students to impact the world for Jesus Christ through an excellent educational experience from a Biblical worldview.

Vision

Grace Christian School will provide students a Christian education and spiritual experience based on a solid academic foundation, through the use of a faculty committed to the Christian philosophy of education, with Christ as the center of our curriculum.

Our Guiding Principles

- Academic Excellence – recognizing our students as individuals and helping them to meet their God given potential, all of our classes and programs must be of the highest quality.
- Inspiring Students – with Christ as the foundation, we must develop students to have the hallmarks of a Christian education instilled in their lives.
- Family Atmosphere – we must foster an environment that supports a family atmosphere.
- Engaging Activities – we must offer activities to students that provide enriching experiences.
- Attitude of Service – we must provide opportunities for Christian service to students of every grade level.

Grace Christian School

2017-2020 Strategic Goals

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PLAN FOUNDATIONS

Measurements of Success

- Students graduate as godly leaders, with a deep love for the Lord who make an impact on the people they touch for Jesus Christ.
- Graduates have a profound Christian worldview.
- Graduates openly share their faith and impact others for Jesus Christ.
- Graduates excel in academics and have strong biblical knowledge while being able to defend and explain their faith in a hostile culture.
- Graduates go on to attend major colleges.
- Alumni return to support the school with time, finances and their own children.
- Strong school financial health.
- Increased student enrollment and robust promotion of the school.
- Actively engaged parents, volunteers, local churches and the Parent Teacher Fellowship group.
- Facilities and maintenance needs and plans are being met.
- Board engagement in proactive policy governance.

Guiding Principles

- Seek God's truth and righteousness first and all these other things will be added.
- Non-denominational and grounded in the basic tenets of the Christian faith.
- Keep tuition affordable for a wide range of income levels.
- Impact the lives of as many children as possible without sacrificing quality.
- Maintain strong financial health.
- Maintain high level of parent involvement
- Serves as the framework through which all decisions and activities at the school must adhere to.
- Assists in prioritizing competing objectives.
- Seek activities that help to achieve the school's Vision, Mission or Guiding Principles.

STRATEGIC GOAL #1: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We will provide an excellent academic environment of teaching and learning excellence by fostering and promoting faculty growth and self-analysis, continuous program review and improvement by refining our methods for how students learn, and by implementing and improving our best practices, wherever and however our classes are delivered.

Objectives

- Achieve re-accreditation through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), and remain recognized by the State of Michigan Department of Education.
- Restructure high school curriculum to improve educational efficiency.
- Develop and promote a strong dual enrollment option.
- The Academic Committee will identify, define, develop and implement a metrics tracking system to gauge student learning to ensure quality and consistency of instruction.
- Cyclically review all curriculum areas every five years.
- Strive to stay ahead of the mean with regards to technology in the classroom.
- Remain strong in our elective opportunities.
- Continue efforts to develop a support program to assist students with special needs.
- Design and implement an academic accountability plan for struggling students.
- Continue to focus on “out of school” academic programs to include Accelerated Reader, vocational technology partnerships and utilization of other classroom delivery methods.
- Create course/grade specific academic excellence improvement plans.

STRATEGIC GOAL #2: SPIRITUAL CLIMATE

To maintain our focus on Jesus Christ so that He remains the center of all we do, we will nurture a climate for student spiritual growth and seek to bring them closer to Jesus Christ.

Objectives

- Build a strong Biblical studies curriculum and philosophy that teaches the truths of the Bible and God's redemptive plan through understanding and the application of God's Word.
- Build a strong chapel program that involves faculty and staff, local church leaders, passionate worship music and prayer.
- Teach each subject from a distinctively Christian discipleship perspective.
- Help students form a Christian discipleship worldview where they learn to read, listen, think and communicate as Christian disciples in all areas of life.
- Grow and foster strong relationships with local churches and Christian organizations.

STRATEGIC GOAL #3: FACULTY AND STAFF

We will retain, hire, and develop outstanding teachers and school staff, and ensure that academic, student outcomes, and spiritual climate goals are being met

Objectives

- Offer competitive salaries and benefits to faculty and staff.
- Enable faculty and staff to continuously grow through professional development opportunities.
- Persistent effort on faculty and staff formal and informal observations focused on student engagement that provides candid feedback for re-enforcement and growth to the instructor.
- Strategic industry partnerships in place to support all faculty and staff initiatives.
- Develop and organize a Faculty Executive Team to help steer academic goals and assist the Head of School in achieving re-accreditation.

STRATEGIC GOAL #4: FINANCIAL HEALTH

We will strengthen the School's financial health and seek ways to secure funding, outside of tuition and fees, to balance the budget and fund long term initiatives.

Objectives

- Meet all basic financial needs through tuition and fees and fundraising.
- Enhance the school's fundraising function to be more effective and acquire a wider scope of sponsorship for the ministry.
- Establish a plan for strategic fundraising to meet specific needs such as building projects, technology and financial aid.
- Offer financial aid to families demonstrating financial needs.
- Prepare the organization for more effective and efficient fundraising.
- Develop staffing and resource plan to ensure that a more robust and successful fundraising function can be implemented and maintained.
- Financial integrity, accountability and transparency to all school stakeholders.
- A strong financial and operational foundation to enable future growth and realization of the school's long-range vision.

STRATEGIC GOAL #5: STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Increase student enrollment and effectively promote the school.

Objectives

- Maintain our focus on the product – excellent academic programs and a Christ-centered experience.
- Develop a more robust and integrated marketing plan that will grow with the field of qualified prospective students applying to GCS and assist in fundraising networking.
- Sustain marketing focus on re-enrolling current GCS families.
- Sustain marketing focus on new student enrollment at 10% each year.
- Effectively promote the school to families in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties through strategic marketing and events.
- Maintain effective and efficient website.
- Continue emphasis on communication with current families.
- Continue development of athletic camps, fine arts camps and summer programs.
- Continue to build and foster relationships with local pastors and churches.

STRATEGIC GOAL #6: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

We will continuously strive through school-wide collaboration to understand and support the needs of all students for the purpose of fostering student success. We will seek ways to expand our activities to enhance the school experience for each student.

Objectives

- Continue excellence in athletics, fine arts programs, and extracurricular activities.
- Develop a volunteer program that seeks to actively engage parents for involvement in school activities.
- Actively engage the Parent Teacher Fellowship with parents, volunteers and each classroom.
- Develop active alumni follow-up program.
- Develop methods to assist new families in becoming quickly assimilated and plugged into the community at the school.
- Grow and enhance athletic programming at all grade levels.
- Grow and enhance fine arts programming at all grade levels.
- Develop program that will engage STUCO in the administration and operation of the school.

STRATEGIC GOAL #7: FACILITIES

Continued attention on the maintenance on expansion and of school facilities.

Objectives

- The Building & Grounds Committee will ensure the school facilities continue to meet the needs of students by developing a physical plant needs assessment and improvement plan.
- Concentration on school security with the development and implementation of a Safety & Security committee.
- Updated classrooms to enable 21st century learning strategies.
- Appropriate facilities for early childhood education.
- Multi-purpose space(s) to accommodate fine arts, athletics and extracurricular activities.
- Engage volunteers to assist with the maintenance and facilities needs of the school.

STRATEGIC GOAL #8: GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

We will regularly examine the board of directors and school administration structure to maintain the school's mission, vision and values.

Objectives

- Engagement and proactive policy governance.
- Implement a comprehensive plan to establish standard internal controls, procedures and processes to ensure:
 - A strong financial and operational foundation to enable future growth and realization of the school's long-range vision.
 - IRS tax and state law compliance.
 - Financial integrity, accountability and transparency to all school stakeholders.
 - Governance and oversight integrity.
 - Good stewardship of fundraising activities and donations.
 - School maintains appearance of integrity to all stakeholders and third parties.
- Enhance monthly communication with the board via school newsletter.
- Development and implementation of Board Member training plan.
- Systematic annual GCEA By-Laws and policies review.
- Annual Board self evaluation.

STRATEGIC GOAL #9: COMMUNITY AND CHURCH ENGAGEMENT

We will seek ways to develop and foster relationships with the Southwestern Michigan community and local churches.

Objectives

- Plan and hold an annual Pastor's event.
- Active engagement in local churches through regular visits to highlight successes at the school.
- Patriots In Action Day – engagement with broad church support.
- Active engagement in community events to enhance school promotion.
- Develop a local church leader focus group to assist in the promotion of the school.
- Seek the input of local community leaders for school service initiatives and marketing of the school.
- Active involvement in local Chamber of Commerce and begin networking at the events.