



THE  
**MERIDIAN**  
SCHOOL

**Five Year Strategic Plan**  
(2007-2012)

Preparing Students For The World Ahead

# Our Mission and Philosophy

## **Mission**

The Meridian School promotes a balance of mind and heart, of contemplation and action, of individuality and a commitment to the community.

## **Philosophy of Curriculum**

At Meridian, education is engaging. Small class sizes ensure that students are well known and individually heard. A thematic curriculum fires imaginations and weaves academic learning together. Dedicated teachers care about our students, encourage self-expression, and enjoy sharing multiple approaches to academic excellence.

## **Philosophy of Community**

Students, staff, and families create a welcoming and inclusive environment throughout Meridian. Parent involvement is a critical component of the school's strength and vitality. Our setting is an urban oasis, a multi-use park and historic building we share with neighbors for work and play. Students have on-site opportunities to interact with members of other non-profit groups including senior citizens, professional artists, and environmental educators.

## **Philosophy of Citizenship**

Integrity, compassion, and responsibility are essential to the mission of Meridian. Students are guided toward self-discipline and thoughtful decisions, mindful of both themselves and the community. By promoting a kind, courteous, and emotionally safe atmosphere in which to grow, we help students develop a positive self-image and confident attitude toward learning.

# **FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE WORLD AHEAD**

**(2007 – 2012)**

Strategic vision and direction for our future is one of our Board's primary responsibilities. In order to ensure a vibrant present and future for our school, the Board set as one of our primary goals to imagine how Meridian might look, in both the short and long term, with respect to our programs, resources, and community.

This strategic plan is the culmination of over nine months of discussion, collaboration, reflection, and various board and committee meetings. We collected input from parents, staff, students, Board members and outside educators, and looked at published demographic and futurist trends to see how we might best position our school to prepare our students for the world ahead. This plan is congruent with our mission and philosophy, and emphasizes three principle areas: academic excellence, stewardship and sustainability, and our vibrant and inclusive culture.

Our governing framework for implementing this strategic plan is the Principles of Good Practice of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), of which we are a member. As a board, we commit to oversight and maintenance of this plan. Our Head of School, Ron Waldman, will be given the charge of developing its strategies and implementation. This document will inform annual work plans of both Board committees and school staff, and together we will monitor progress and relevance of our goals. This strategic plan will be appropriately dynamic as we progress.

We thank the volunteer Strategic Planning Committee, and in particular its leadership under Committee Chair Peter Selby, as well as our consultants, Steve Boyd and Norma Straw of Macdonald Boyd & Associates, for the many hours put into this process:

**Mary Allen**, Technology Teacher  
**Roger Cibella**, Educational Consultant  
**Marilyn Easton**, Director of Development  
**Sonja Gustafson**, Board Chair  
**Anne Heil**, 1st Grade Teacher  
**Ted Holmes**, Director of Admissions & Marketing

**Tuney Kannapell**, Middle School Dir.-The N.W. School  
**Mark Muzi**, Former Trustee  
**Peter Selby**, Committee Chair  
**Ron Waldman**, Head of School  
**Regan Wensnahan**, Director of Studies  
**Christine White**, Chair-elect  
**Jim Woeppel**, Trustee

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of The Meridian School, we are proud and eager to share our plans for the next five years.



**Sonja Gustafson**  
**Chair, Board of Trustees**



**Ron Waldman**  
**Head of School**

# HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

Structure of the Strategic Plan is hierarchical, as depicted below.



## IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The work of implementing the plan will involve several components.

**Developing Strategies** – The Plan includes Goals (things we want to accomplish) and Objectives (specific, measurable mileposts). Strategies are needed to realize our Objectives. Strategies will be developed annually under the direction of the Head of School by appropriate Board and staff committees and work teams.

**Developing a Feasibility Plan** – As strategies are developed, a fiscal plan will be developed to accompany the Plan’s Objectives and Strategies.

**Indicators of Success** – Along with strategies, the Plan will be supported by defined benchmarks and intermediate outcome markers. These will allow the staff, Head and Board to track progress along the strategic path to realizing the Goals of the Plan.

# FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

## PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE WORLD AHEAD

(2007 – 2012)

### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Developing engaged learners through a dynamic curriculum

#### VISION:

The Meridian School will have a strong, balanced and continually evolving academic program that prepares students for middle school and the world ahead.

#### GOAL 1:

Dynamic Curriculum – Students learn through an innovative, global, mission-congruent curriculum.

*An abundance of educational research suggests that students better understand, apply, and retain information when subject matter from various traditionally discrete disciplines (math, language arts, science, music, physical education, etc.) are 'integrated' or interconnected.*

Objective 1: **Strengthen the areas of math, reading, writing and science.**

Objective 2: **Strengthen the integration of all facets of our curriculum through a thematic approach.**

Objective 3: **Ensure program continuity across all subject areas and grade levels.**

Objective 4: **Incorporate critical and creative thinking skills across subject areas.**

Objective 5: **Develop and implement a character education program emphasizing social and emotional development.**

Objective 6: **Implement a comprehensive service learning program.**

Objective 7: **Define and implement a curriculum review process.**

Objective 8: **Create and implement a comprehensive information technology resources plan.**

#### GOAL 2:

Co-curricular Programs – The Meridian School offers additional learning opportunities that engage and support our students and families.

*Our extended day and summer programs offer both Meridian and non-Meridian students the opportunity to explore learning beyond the classroom. Under the umbrella of our mission and philosophy, our co-curricular programs will become more of an extension and enhancement to our programs offered during the regular school hours rather than a discrete program.*

Objective 9: **Provide an extended day and summer program that is integrated with our core academic program and congruent with our mission.**

Objective 10: **Create a feasibility plan for a pre-kindergarten program.**

## STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

Taking care of our human, fiscal, physical, and environmental resources

### VISION:

The Meridian School will engage in proactive stewardship of its resources.

### GOAL 3:

Fiscal Prudence – The Meridian School effectively manages its financial resources.

*We recognize that financial sustainability will depend on our ability to balance competing priorities. We are committed to offering quality programs, maintaining competitive salaries and benefits, building healthy reserves, and developing long range facilities improvements while supporting socio-economic diversity in our school community.*

Objective 11: **Develop short and long-term financial strategies (based on the NAIS model) that balance the needs for a quality program with sustainable tuition levels and adequate reserves.**

Objective 12: **Maintain salaries and benefits for faculty and staff that are competitive with our peer schools.**

Objective 13: **Build a sustainable, broad, and engaged network of funding sources to supplement tuition.**

Objective 14: **Develop a long range facilities financial plan to fund facility improvements.**

### GOAL 4:

Staff Support & Professional Development – The faculty and staff are supported in their work to promote academic excellence.

*Continuing to build quality programs demands that we expand professional and collegial opportunities for the staff and provide enhanced classroom support for teachers. In the next five years we will explore creative and cost effective ways to accomplish both.*

Objective 15: **Develop and implement a plan for enhanced classroom support.**

Objective 16: **Increase opportunities for professional collaboration.**

Objective 17: **Provide comprehensive professional development opportunities.**

## **GOAL 5:**

Facility Planning & Development – The School’s facilities support academic excellence, health and safety.

*Developing a long-range facilities plan is a necessary step in realizing capital improvements to our instructional spaces in both the short and long term future of our school. As part of our long-term vision, we will partner with Historic Seattle and Seattle Parks to best house our current and future program.*

Objective 18: **Develop a short-term (1-5 years) facilities plan.**

Objective 19: **Develop a long-range facilities plan.**

Objective 20: **Review and update the emergency preparedness and critical incident response plan.**

## **GOAL 6:**

Environmental Stewardship – The Meridian School demonstrates commitment to preserving the natural environment.

*Shaping our academic program for students to understand global challenges and creating pathways to solve them is a school imperative.*

Objective 21: **Choose, when feasible, more energy efficient, eco-friendly, and sustainable options for facilities, operations, and programs.**

Objective 22: **Foster environmental stewardship throughout the academic program and educate the school community about “green” practices.**

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## VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE CULTURE

Fostering the value of community and citizenship

### VISION:

The Meridian School will be respected for our culture of community contribution and participation.

### GOAL 7:

Inclusive & Diverse Culture – The Meridian School is a welcoming, inclusive and diverse environment.

*We recognize that a school community and learning environment that is inclusive and more diverse will promote a deeper understanding of, respect for, and perspective on varying points of view and the world-at-large.*

Objective 23: **Define diversity for the Meridian School community.**

Objective 24: **Develop and implement a Diversity Plan that includes financial support; curriculum integration; capacity building; and recruitment and retention of staff, families, students and board members.**

Objective 25: **Update school policies and procedures to ensure congruence with the Meridian School's Diversity Plan.**

### GOAL 8:

Community Engagement – The Meridian School is actively engaged in the internal and external community.

*Our engagement with community is the heart and soul of our school. Students thrive on the growing relationships we foster with our neighbors in The Good Shepherd Center and Wallingford. Connecting on a global scale with students in other parts of the world brings the realities and needs of our increasingly interdependent world back to the classroom.*

Objective 26: **Preserve and enhance our core strength of community.**

Objective 27: **Engage the Good Shepherd Center, other local organizations, and the community in civic partnerships, school events, and joint projects.**

Objective 28: **Build a strong community of alumni and create opportunities for long-term participation in the Meridian community.**

Objective 29: **Establish and maintain relationships with local and international educational institutions and programs.**