



Strategic Plan Lyme School 2019 – 2024

In the fall of 2018, the Lyme School Board charged a committee with developing its next five-year strategic plan. This new document, compiled over the course of one year, is the fourth strategic plan developed since 2001. Our planning process initiated by inviting defined stakeholders in our school's success--parents, educators, community members, and alumni, to complete a survey to help guide the plan. The survey aimed to gather input on the perceived strengths of the school, to identify areas for improvement, and to understand our community's collective hope for the school's future. We extracted themes and trends from the survey data to form a blueprint for the strategic plan. We then turned to the Lyme School faculty and administrative staff, whose unique insights helped hone and prioritize the plan. Additional conversations included consultation with selected faculty members at local high schools, to get their sense of how well prepared our students are entering high school. The culminated Strategic Plan outlines a forward path for the school and delineates goals and priorities for the school to achieve over the next five years.

The School Board voted to approve the new strategic plan, as presented in the following document, in October of 2019.

I. Mission and Values

Recommendation 1: As the mission of the school evolves to address the needs of a changing world, the school must clearly articulate what it means to succeed, both in terms of what it will demand from its students as well as how it will measure the success of its efforts as an institution.

- a. **Action:** *Define the criteria and terms used to determine our success as the Lyme School, and determine the process by which we will communicate this to the community.*
- b. **Action:** *Collect data and communicate to the community on a regular basis.*

II. Curriculum and Instructional Practice

Recommendation 2: Continue to improve curriculum and instruction to lead students to the regular application of the Principles of Learning¹ and Habits of Mind and Efforts² that will enable them to be successful as they progress in their education.

- a. **Action:** *Explore with faculty the various components of an inquiry-based curriculum that emphasizes self-directed learning and authentic assessment.*
- b. **Action:** *Design a long-term plan for subject area and grade-level curriculum review.*
- c. **Action:** *Develop a common understanding of deeper learning and what we are promoting in learning*
- d. **Action:** *Continue to integrate Design Thinking into the regular curriculum.*

¹ Higher Order Thinking Skills, as identified in the Lyme School Principles of Learning: analyze and evaluate information; make connections between concepts and subjects; solve problems practically and creatively; communicate clearly and effectively to a variety of audiences; reflect on needs as a learner.

² Habits of Mind and Effort (HoMEs): Works effectively with others; works well independently; takes care in completing work; perseveres in learning new skills; seeks help when appropriate; and maintains adequate attention span.

Recommendation 3: Refine the school's philosophy and approach for how technology will be implemented to promote learning.

- a. **Action:** *Develop a technology philosophy statement*
- b. **Action:** *Define how we use technology in practice and include a developmental progression of skills.*
- c. **Action:** *Develop a process for providing professional development to support the implementation of technology practices and philosophy.*

Recommendation 4: Identify and implement strategies of differentiation in both curriculum and instruction that enable every student to achieve his or her potential.

- a. **Action:** *Clarify the working definition of differentiation as it is applied within the school.*
- b. **Action:** *Define the scope of service of differentiation teachers and their role in advising classroom teachers.*
- c. **Action:** *Develop means to establish entry benchmarks (data points) for literacy and math and how we monitor progress.*
- d. **Action:** *Develop strategies for differentiation to be provided by classroom teachers.*
- e. **Action:** *Develop a process to orient classroom aides to their specific assignments.*
- f. **Action:** *Evaluate scheduling needs to support differentiation.*
- g. **Action:** *Align Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals with classroom learning objectives whenever possible.*

Recommendation 5: Develop an annual school-wide professional development plan that aligns with the institution's instructional goals.

- a. **Action:** *Develop a process to collaborate on the development of the institutional instructional goals.*
- b. **Action:** *Individual teachers and the Academic Director will meet annually to identify individual professional development goals aligned to the institution.*
- c. **Action:** *Develop a means by which faculty can demonstrate and celebrate the implementation of the school's initiatives.*

III. Stewardship

Recommendation 6: Ensure the financial sustainability of the school's resources are sufficient to meet its mission.

- a. Action: Build annual school budgets that strategically limit controllable costs.*
- b. Action: Articulate a rationale and construct for the decision-making process around class size and structure.*
- c. Action: Develop strategies to advocate for and defend proposed school budgets.*
- d. Action: Establish an ad hoc board committee to investigate fund-raising as a means of leveraging the school's non-profit status*

Recommendation 7: Develop procedures that ensure that the school board stays current with any potential external threats or challenge (i.e., school privatization efforts, heightened school safety concerns, state-mandated curricula or assessments, local impact of state stabilization grants, etc.).

- a. Action: Charge a board committee with gathering information on potential threats and opportunities.*
- b. Action: At the annual board retreat, include an update on potential threats and opportunities by the superintendent.*

IV. Community Engagement

Recommendation 8: Implement more effective communication strategies from the school board and the administration to the parents and community members.

- a. Action: Establish a formal board committee for communication and outreach.*
- b. Action: Design an appropriate and regular public forum as a means of fostering community engagement.*

Recommendation 9: Offer more opportunities for community members to engage in school activities and witness student work

- a. **Action:** *Invite parents and community members into the school to serve as panelists and/or audience for student presentations, including through a virtual presence.*
- b. **Action:** *Connect parents and community members to student projects through units involving community groups.*
- c. **Action:** *Each teacher will create opportunities annually which will engage the community in the learning process and/or product of their students.*
- d. **Action:** *Develop consistent practices of regular communication between each classroom and the greater school community.*
- e. **Action:** *Agree upon the means by which the institution communicates with the community.*
- f. **Action:** *Explore how the Lyme School can become a community learning hub, in collaboration with local organization.*