



OAKWOOD SCHOOL

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2013

Updated October 2016





OUR SCHOOL MISSION

Oakwood School provides a multisensory educational program in which students with learning differences are guided to achieve their unique academic and social potential in a nurturing community environment.



Dear Oakwood School Community,

Oakwood School was founded in 1971 to fill an educational void – to be a school where bright students with learning differences could be instructed and nurtured in ways meaningful to them. Many years later, Oakwood School thrives as a learning community of dedicated staff committed to serving the needs of these students.

As we look to the future and make our **big plans**, as Harry S. Truman called them, we dedicate ourselves to continuing our mission and expanding our ability to serve more students and their families in the same nurturing way. We remain committed to our core values – the worth of the individual, the empowerment of community, the foundation of tradition, and the progress of innovation.

We understand the changes and challenges since 1971 and look forward to continuing to foster the potential of each student who studies at Oakwood, as well as continuing to assist their parents. In order to continue and expand our influence, we have undertaken this self-study. Beginning with a survey of our community - alumni and their families, current families, current and former staff, and other professionals – we gathered information about our strengths and areas of improvement. Concurrent with this survey, staff at the school spent hours discussing and defining these internal and external goals.

We combined this wealth of information into the Strategic Plan to which this letter is attached. This plan is our way of looking at a future “which we can’t... foresee now.” What we do know is that there are many more students with learning disabilities for us to serve. Therefore, we continue to offer a unique educational experience which focuses on remediating, integrating, and equipping our students with strategies, which is as important today as it was in 1971.

We also know that we can’t meet all these needs on our own. Parents who bring their children to us do so with great sacrifice. We need the support of the wider community to help our students meet their potential – which is greater than any of us can see now.

We encourage you to explore our ABC’s: Advance, Build, and Connect. These are the building blocks of our Strategic Plan for the future of Oakwood School. This is our **big plan!**

Sincerely,

- Oakwood Strategic Planning Team



*You can always amend a **big plan**, but you can never expand a little one. I don't believe in little plans. I believe in plans big enough to meet a situation which we can't possibly foresee now.* **-Harry S. Truman**





VALUES OF OAKWOOD SCHOOL

WE BELIEVE IN THE...

WORTH OF THE INDIVIDUAL

We believe each child is created with unique potential.

- *Oakwood unlocks the potential in each child by recognizing and addressing his or her challenges while discovering and developing personal strengths.*

EMPOWERMENT OF COMMUNITY

We believe in the power of a nurturing environment.

- *Oakwood works as a team including the student, parents, teachers, and other professionals, creating a family-like community to serve the whole child.*

FOUNDATION OF TRADITION

We believe in the strength of tradition in our values and our teaching.

- *Oakwood provides students with a solid educational foundation based on proven teaching methods and principles.*

PROGRESS OF INNOVATION

We believe in the continual pursuit of excellence and effectiveness.

- *Oakwood integrates innovative educational strategies and technology to empower students to become effective learners.*



ADVANCE...

...to accelerate the growth and impact of our program through the development of our staff and enhancement of our program.

While the commitment and expertise of our staff and program to serve our students is unparalleled, we must continue to move forward.

As the first building block, Oakwood will Advance our program and staff to even greater heights.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The field of education is changing rapidly with increased brain research and improved technology. While we need to continue to use the best of traditional and proven educational methods, exploring and adding new approaches is essential.

STRATEGIC GOAL

In order to remain at the forefront of special education, Oakwood School will further invest in the continued training and education of the faculty in the areas of learning disabilities, reading, writing, math, dyslexia, ADHD, social development, and brain-based research.

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **COMPLETED** *Increase the amount of funding allocated to Professional Development for 2013-2014*
- ✓ **COMPLETED/ONGOING** *Pursue further training for our faculty in programs that are based on Orton-Gillingham methodology*
- ✓ **COMPLETED/ONGOING** *Ensure that all faculty members keep abreast of developments in the field of special education by supporting attendance at conferences, workshops, and professional meetings, inviting in outside experts, and increasing faculty-based internal training*
- ✓ **COMPLETED/ONGOING** *Increase the training of faculty and staff in the use of new technologies, methods, and programs appropriate to our student population*

PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT

Students need a balance between core academic skills and an enhancement of their inherent strengths. While we have recently added new programs, such as our Summer Program, Extended Day, and Enrichment Clubs, we continue to look at further enriching our programs to meet the needs of our students.

STRATEGIC GOAL

Building on the strength and integrity of our current mission and program, Oakwood School will research and implement additional programs and services to enrich the educational experience for our students and their families.

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **COMPLETED** *Continue to enhance our after-school program through additional offerings*
- ✓ **COMPLETED** *Increase counseling support for students and parents*
- ✓ **COMPLETED** *Research the potential development of a tutoring program for current and outside students by 2014-2015*
- **ONGOING** *Explore the feasibility by 2015-2016 of adding a high school for students with learning disabilities*
- **ONGOING** *Enrich our current program through further integration of technology, art, music, and physical education*



...to develop our campus, infrastructure, and organization according to a systematic plan, by a definite process.

Although a school is more than its brick and mortar, designing, building, and maintaining its structures are important.

As the second building block, Oakwood will Build a comprehensive campus plan in order to facilitate the significant work that goes on inside our walls.



BUILDING WITH A PURPOSE

An optimal educational environment maximizes the learning opportunities for students. Renovating and reorganizing existing space will enhance our multisensory teaching. Expanding our facilities will allow us to better serve our current students and enable us to serve additional students.

STRATEGIC GOAL

Oakwood School will conduct a feasibility study to determine the potential of our current properties and develop a master Campus Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **COMPLETED** *Initiate the feasibility study in 2013-2014*
- **ONGOING** *Update the current facilities*
- ✓ **COMPLETED** *Form a task force to research all options for expansion of our facilities*
- ✓ **COMPLETED** *Select a site planner and an architect with experience in building educational spaces*
- **ONGOING** *Redesign classrooms based on research of best practices for students and teachers*
- **ONGOING** *Determine how to best utilize the Regent property*





CONNECT...

...to establish Oakwood School in a stronger relationship with the greater community.

While our academic expertise and the support of our nurturing environment have impacted many students, we must extend our reach and service to even more people.

As the third building block, Oakwood will Connect with our community by purposefully raising our public profile as a resource to families in need.



VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Oakwood School is often referred to as “the best kept secret” in the Washington DC area. Many students miss the opportunity to receive an Oakwood education because parents and professionals are not aware of our services. Other students are unable to access Oakwood’s program because it is financially out of reach. Connecting with our community will allow us to become better known as leaders in the field of learning disabilities and to reach more students in need.

VISIBILITY

STRATEGIC GOAL

Oakwood School will broaden its impact on the greater community and better serve as a resource to families in need by increasing public awareness of our program and sharing our knowledge and expertise in the field of learning disabilities.

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **COMPLETED** Enhance communication to current parents and the larger community by improving our website, publications, and use of social media in 2013-2014
- **ONGOING** Conduct educational workshops and seminars for families, schools, and professionals
- ✓ **COMPLETED/ONGOING** Organize and host presentations and workshops by outside professionals
- ✓ **COMPLETED/ONGOING** Foster our relationships with professional organizations (CHADD, IDA, etc.)

ACCESSIBILITY

STRATEGIC GOAL

Oakwood School will increase the amount of financial aid available and actively seek additional sources of funding for students in need.

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES

- **ONGOING** Continue existing development efforts
- **ONGOING** Pursue multiple sources of funding (grants, partnerships, endowments, etc.)
- **ONGOING** Consider financial aid for related services





*We are excited by the ideas contained in this Strategic Plan.
Though aggressive, they are important and achievable
through partnerships and cooperation.
Together, we can accomplish our big plan!*

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving: To reach the port of Heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it – but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor.

-Oliver Wendell Holmes



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