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Le Jardin Academy

Learning Community
Council -
Strategic Planning

Report to Board of Trustees

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Introduction & Executive Summary

The Le Jardin Academy (LJA) strategic planning process was initiated by the Board of Trustees & Head of School in Spring 2016. The Board believed that the school had grown and changed significantly since the last plan was completed in 2010, and that it was an appropriate time to reassess the school's direction and objectives. Additionally, the accreditation review conducted in 2016 by the Western States Association of Schools and Colleges and the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools recommended that the school engage in a strategic planning process.

In May of 2016, the Head of School D.J. Condon, acting on consent of the Board of Trustees and in alignment with previous accreditation recommendations to engage in more inclusive communications and decision-making, constituted a Learning Community Council (LCC) comprised of representatives from each of Le Jardin Academy's stakeholder groups-- faculty, staff, administration, trustees, parents, and students. As an advisory body, the LCC, met to discuss the process for renewing the school's Strategic Plan and its role in that process and overall school improvement efforts. It was decided that the LCC would meet throughout the fall 2016 in preparation of a three day February 2017 "Advance" meeting at which it would generate a new Strategic Plan to present subsequently to the Board of Trustees. Moving forward, the LCC will monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan, consider long-term futures planning, review and develop school-wide capacity for organizational learning, and make recommendations for annual operational plans.

In January 2016, Chief Financial Officer Patrick Boyce contacted Tom Barkin, a Senior Partner with McKinsey & Company, a leading global management consulting firm, regarding its potential interest in assisting the school with the strategic planning process on a pro bono basis. Prior to joining Le Jardin, Mr. Boyce worked with Mr. Barkin on multiple engagements as a client of McKinsey. Mr. Barkin contacted colleagues across the firm and recommended that the school speak with one of its consultants, Rebecca Millman. Ms. Millman enthusiastically agreed in March 2016 to support and guide our community-based strategic planning renewal process. From then until the February Advance meeting, Millman, CFO Boyce, and Condon held near weekly conference calls to discuss the process and progress of the strategic planning.

Over the summer of 2016, Millman conducted telephone and online interviews with a

number of people affiliated with LJA. She shared her findings with the Learning Community Council during her first visit to the school in October. The LCC met a total of five times to discuss various trends likely to influence LJA's future, to develop the strategy for the planning process, to collect information, and to develop the plan submitted here.

The LCC members initially contributed their own input regarding the challenges facing the school in the form of a World Cafe session led by Condon in spring 2016. Condon also collected and shared background data about the school as well as research materials relevant to planning for the future. The committee also determined that it was essential to obtain input from all segments of the school community including faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and students. To that, a variety of opportunities to provide input was implemented, including the following:

1. An online survey was conducted in December 2016. Approximately 449 constituents responded from the 3,968 emails sent to faculty, staff, students, alumni, alumni affiliates, parents and other stakeholders. In addition to answering survey questions, constituents were invited to offer comments and suggestions about the school.

The response turnout breakdown was as follows:

- 52% Current Parents
- 15% Former Parents
- 13% Current Students
- 15% Faculty/Staff
- 1% Board
- 1% Alumni
- 3% Other

2. Over a two-year time period prior to the November 2016 WASC/IB visit, faculty and Staff engaged in a formal Self Study process as part of its WASC/IB accreditation process.

3. A meeting for parents held at LJA in May 2016 with approximately 35 participants including students, parents, faculty and staff members, administrators and Board Members. This World Cafe session was lead by Condon.

The LCC met in February 2017 to begin preparing the plan. Six groups of five to six participants from various constituencies were formed. Each group included an administrator, faculty member, parent, and a student.

As reflected in the goals, rationales, and recommendations that follow, the planning process identified the attributes that have attracted families to the school and that provide the basis for a vision for the future. The committee has made recommendations that provide a roadmap for the Board of Trustees to use in making decisions to achieve that vision, within a six-year time frame.

In broad outline, the LCC recommends that LJA should provide educational excellence in a nurturing, small school environment, which enables each student to reach his or her fullest potential. "Educational excellence" means educating the whole child -- academically, socially, emotionally, and ethically. LJA should offer a rigorous academic program based on the internationally recognized International Baccalaureate program, together with a wide range of opportunities for students to participate in sports, arts, music, and other extracurricular activities that contribute to their complete development.

In order to ensure that the goals of the Strategic Plan are realized and, if necessary, that changes are made as conditions evolve, it is recommended that the Plan is reviewed annually by both the LCC and the Board of Trustees.

Head of School's Message

It is with both pleasure and pride that I present the new Strategic Plan for Le Jardin Academy. Generated by an extremely committed and talented group of volunteers from each of our community stakeholder groups, this document will guide our school improvement efforts for the next six years. It articulates who we are now, what we do now, who we wish to become, and what we will do to become so. As such, rather than just some binder on a shelf, the Strategic Plan is a living document that informs both yearly planning and daily decision-making. I feel confident that if we implement the Plan well, we can feel assured of reaching its lofty goals, thereby taking LJA to the *Next Level of Excellence*.

What will characterize that *Next Level of Excellence*? The Strategic Plan calls for the provision of unique experiences that will challenge students academically, facilitate their social-emotional-ethical growth, promote their sense of international-mindedness, and cultivate their abilities to be active, responsible stewards of our resources--human, financial, physical, cultural, and natural. It remains a "just the right-size" school, a place where everyone knows you, where the sense of ohana is so strong it seems palpable. It is an institution on secure financial footing.

In short, the Strategic Plan is a source of inspiration and guidance and I feel fortunate to have been part of its formation.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary effort and hard work of many members of the LJA community who contributed to the Strategic Plan. First, I wish to thank CFO Patrick Boyce and consultant Rebecca Millman for their extraordinary collegiality and expertise throughout the process. I also want to thank Melissa Handy for her good work with the surveys and all things AV. I also wish to thank the members of the Learning Community Council for their significant contribution to the school and its future. Each of the members of the committee expended many hours of time and made many valuable suggestions how the school may reach its Next Level of Excellence. No doubt all LCC members will join me in specially recognizing the contributions of the students on the LCC. The students inspired us to do our best.

D.J. Condon
Head of School

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

The Mission of Le Jardin Academy, as approved by the Board, is:

Globally oriented with a strong sense of community, Le Jardin Academy equips students to achieve individual excellence, develop sound character, and positively impact the world.

Vision Statement

The Vision of Le Jardin Academy, as approved by the Board, is:

Le Jardin Academy will be known as Hawaii's leader in international education. We will be recognized for academic excellence and for providing extraordinary teaching and learning experiences that ignite creativity, passion and initiative while deeply engaging with cultural and natural resources. We will have a solid financial foundation that will support growth in innovative programming, state of the art facilities, and local and global community partnerships.

Values

The Values of Le Jardin Academy, as approved by the Board, is:

LJA adopts and endorses the IB Learner Profile goal: to be knowledgeable, open-minded, courageous, principled, reflective, and caring thinkers, inquirers, and communicators valuing intellectual, physical, and emotional balance.

Strategic Initiatives

Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Rationale

We need to ensure that we keep student and adult learning at the forefront of our daily operations. For our students to achieve academic excellence, we need to deliver the highest quality curriculum and pedagogy, take responsibility for knowing our impact on student learning and make adjustments to our practices in order to achieve continuous improvement in student learning results.

Primary Desired End Results

1. Provision of professional development in research-based best teaching and assessment practices with a particular emphasis on increasing academic rigor and differentiation.
2. A strong culture of learning through continual collection, analysis, and use of evidence of student learning.
3. A clear process for on-going review and revision of a fully articulated and assessed preK-12 written curriculum to ensure that it remains relevant and rigorous.
4. Creation and implementation of a comprehensive plan for recruiting and retaining high performing faculty and staff, particularly those with international and/or intercultural experience.
5. An audit of the school-wide annual calendar, six-day schedule, and daily classroom activities to ensure that time is effectively used across all grades and accommodates teacher collaboration.

Extraordinary Experience

Rationale

Quality of experience equates to quality of education. As part of the school's holistic educational approach, it seeks to provide students with a wide range of learning experiences that will affect not only their academic growth, but also their social-emotional-moral growth. At the same time, we seek to empower our students to choose and direct their own learning experiences. Finally, we want everyone who interacts with Le Jardin, in any capacity, to experience the highest quality care and attention.

Primary Desired End Results

1. A program that provides students with opportunities for self-directed, inquiry-based experiential learning.
2. A research-based recommendation regarding the suitability of the IB Career-related Program (CP) as an authorized fourth IB program offered by Le Jardin.
3. A coordinated PK-12 experiential learning program that articulates the range of learning opportunities that exist for LJA students outside the classroom.
4. A shared understanding of "highest quality care and attention" across all departments and facets of operation and implementation thereof.

Responsible Stewardship

Rationale

We need to be good stewards of all our resources – human, financial, physical, cultural, and natural. Ensuring the financial stability of the school is essential to fulfilling the school’s mission for generations to come. A Master Facilities Plan is equally essential. Advancement Office functions need to continue to develop to establish a culture of giving. We also want to promote a strong environmental ethos by modeling good environmental stewardship and providing our students opportunities to be actively engaged with environmental issues.

Primary Desired End Results

1. Implementation for a plan for ongoing financial efficiency and stability.
2. The creation of a ten-year master facilities plan that involves input from all LJA stakeholder groups.
3. Increased Advancement Office capacity related to fundraising, grant writing, alumni relations and communications.
4. Increased opportunities to build LJA programs and practices around student leadership, activism, and environmentalism.
5. Alignment of the LJA campuses with best environmental practices for schools, to include healthy food production and consumption.
6. A capital campaign in support of the Strategic and Master Facilities plans.

International-Mindedness

Rationale

The concept of international-mindedness lies at the heart of the International Baccalaureate philosophy. Manifested in particular knowledge, skills, habits of mind, and behavior, it can be developed in individuals through exposure to diverse cultures and people. The ongoing development of international-mindedness is a key aspect of our global orientation.

Desired End Results

1. A comprehensive in-school program for the development of intercultural competence / international-mindedness.
2. Increased number of international students.
3. The development of a homestay program for international students.
4. A robust, varied international experiential learning program that includes service learning opportunities.
5. Establishment of global partnerships that lead to sustainable in person and virtual exchanges of students, staff and ideas between LJA, national and international entities.

Community Engagement

Rationale

The concept of international-mindedness lies at the heart of the International Baccalaureate philosophy. Manifested in particular knowledge, skills, habits of mind, and behavior, it can be developed in individuals through exposure to diverse cultures and people. The ongoing development of international-mindedness is a key aspect of our global orientation.

Desired End Results

1. Establishment of local partnerships that include community-based internships, mentorships, and service.
2. Increased opportunities in applied science that make use of our local physical environments—marshes, mountains, ocean.
3. Establishment of a curriculum that teaches students how to be involved with local, state, and federal governments along with increased opportunities for community activism.
4. Increased opportunities for on-campus engagement with Hawaiian cultural experts.
5. A program for supporting the assimilation and involvement of families in our ohana
6. Development and implementation of a program for increasing awareness of the “LJA story” both inside and outside LJA

Innovation and Initiative

Rationale

Le Jardin Academy seeks to empower students and staff to develop, share, and evaluate novel ideas, practices and products. We wish to provide the conditions and opportunities for “passion work” and imaginative thinking. We want to role model creative thinking and innovative practices.

Desired End Results

1. Explicit instruction in creative thinking and learning skills.
2. Establishment of partnerships with local and global educational organizations to increase STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) curricular programs, to include Robotics.
3. Development of a signature LJA arts-based community event.
4. Implementation of innovative, flexible scheduling that allows individuals to pursue their “passion work.”