



st. thomas more
collegiate
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Strategic Plan

2003 to 2013

“STMC...A PLACE FOR ALL TIME...”



INTRODUCTION

As the first Board of Directors of St. Thomas More Collegiate Ltd., we offer the community this strategic plan as a source of inspiration and a roadmap to STMC's future. We are comprised of STM parents, alumni and administrators, from a variety of backgrounds in teaching, ministry, accounting, law, human resources, and business, and we hold as our common cause the wellbeing of a unique community and a fine institution which has touched all of our lives.

Your involvement with St. Thomas More for these many years means that you already know some of the challenges we face, but what you may not have considered is the opportunities for growth and development that have been born (as is often the case) from some of our darkest hours. In the development of this plan, Knights from every era have stepped forward to ensure that our community not only remains strong but will emerge better than ever.

We have now chosen to plan proactively and ambitiously for all that STMC can become. This vision is an ambitious, exciting and even daunting at times but one that includes such things as new and improved physical facilities, enhanced technology instruction, the preservation of our Catholic faith, community service programs and professional development opportunities for teachers. In drafting this plan it became very clear that STMC is not only a school but a place of Catholic, Christian and family values - and that all of us have a responsibility to give back a small part of what we have taken away.

This plan was developed over the course of nine months through a series of volunteer and staff work groups. The process began in Summer 2003 with STM's first Strategic Planning Retreat. Approximately forty people representing every facet of the STM community gathered at Trinity Western College in Langley for a two-day retreat, and began the large-scale thinking that forms the Strategic Plan's foundation. We revisited our mission statement, created vision and values statements, and brainstormed future possibilities for our facilities and programs. Finally, to guide our planning for STMC's future, we created a series of "global strategies." The work begun at the retreat was carried forward by several small work groups, and refined through a series of editorial discussions and revisions.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



As a first step, we, the Board of Directors of St. Thomas More Collegiate Ltd. would like to clarify the principles which guide us. These principles are deeply rooted in the STMC community and have been the foundation for this Strategic Plan. We commit that these principles must be the driving force behind the priorities and plans we will share and are always of higher import than any individual goal.



1) STMC'S MISSION

"Teaching Young People How To Learn And Grow, Supported By A Welcoming Catholic Community."

2) STMC'S VISION

"For Every Knight to Make a Positive Contribution to the Earth and its People"

3) STMC'S CORE VALUES

LIVING FAITH

- Gospel Values
- Vibrant Liturgy And Religious Education
- Joyful, Loving Service

SENSE OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

- Welcoming Feeling
- Pride and Ownership
- Sense of Belonging
- Respect for Individual Dignity

EXCELLENCE IN ALL ENDEAVORS

- Challenging Oneself and Others
- Readiness to Risk
- Celebrating Success

4) ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A CHRISTIAN BROTHERS EDUCATION:

The Mission, Vision, and Values are built upon the essential elements of a Christian Brothers education and as the Board of Directors of St. Thomas More Ltd., we commit that STMC should always embrace those elements as integral to the school's operations.

Blessed Edmund Rice - businessman, husband, father, widower, religious brother, teacher, and founder - set a powerful example by identifying with Christ in the poor and needy. His actions reminded all who came into contact with him of God's loving presence, and inspire "the Essential Elements of a Christian Brother Education":

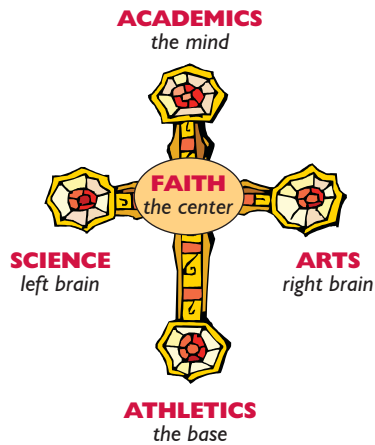
In ministry begun by Jesus Christ and inspired by the vision of Blessed Edmund Rice, a Christian Brother education . . .

1. Evangelizes youth within the mission of the Church.
2. Proclaims and witnesses to its Catholic identity.
3. Stands in solidarity with those marginalized by poverty and injustice.
4. Fosters and invigorates a community of faith.
5. Celebrates the value and dignity of each person and nurtures the development of the whole person.
6. Calls for collaboration and shared responsibility in its mission.
7. Pursues excellence in all its endeavors.



5) THE KNIGHT'S COMPASS:

Centers of Excellence



The Knight's Compass is a graphic and tangible symbol to help guide our decisions and organize our thinking about specific school programs. By capitalizing on STMC's existing strengths, and concentrating our energy, creativity, resources into building specific "Centers of Excellence," STMC will be further recognized in local, regional and even national circles.

We will build our Centers of Excellence around the five areas of education which we believe to be the foundation of a well-rounded individual and a well-balanced life: *Faith, Academics, Athletics, Arts, and Science/Technology.*

We believe that by fostering excellence in each of these areas, both in our organization and in our students, we will develop a system that inspires meaningful lives and helps all Knights truly make a difference in the world.

The dynamic balance created by these five areas can be illustrated as a cross, or what we have labeled "The Knight's Compass," as shown at right.

GLOBAL STRATEGIES



We have defined "global strategies" in three major areas. Each strategy is discussed in detail in subsequent sections and is part of a broad outline of our plan for STMC's next ten years:

I. STUDENT PROGRAMS

- A) Improve Academics
- B) Support Athletics
- C) Expand Clubs
- D) Expand Fine Arts
- E) Empower Students

II. COMMUNITY LIFE

- A) Enrich our Catholic Identity
- B) Establish a Community Outreach Program
- C) Improve Communication with the Whole STMC Family

III. DEVELOPMENT (CAPACITY-BUILDING)

- A) Capital Campaign - Restore Financial Solvency & Facilities
- B) Create Staff/Faculty Development Programs Establish a Development Office
- C) Establish a Development Office



I. STUDENT PROGRAMS



At the very heart of St. Thomas More Collegiate are its student programs. The quality of any school's student programs are largely determined by the talent of individual teachers, the department heads and the resources made available to them. While we are already pleased with many of the programs in place, the Board also feels that by focusing on the Centers of Excellence and the values of the attributed to the Knights Cross, we can consistently give the direction necessary to capitalize on our faculty's talent and create an optimal learning environment.

(A) ACADEMICS

St. Thomas More Collegiate prides itself on providing our students with a fundamentally strong secondary education. In recent years, STMC administration and staff have quietly but continuously strived to set the bar even higher - resulting in an academic ranking among the top 40 schools in the province. Our next goal is to build off this level of success and continue to monitor our progress carefully in the coming years. STMC also had a 100% graduation rate in 2003.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

1. To have STMC students graduate with an excellent academic foundation providing the widest range of opportunities and choices for their future
2. To have STMC students acquire a holistic base of knowledge that contributes to healthy self-esteem, respect among their peers, and a meaningful career
3. To ensure STMC students who pursue post-secondary education have the foundation and requisite skills upon which their success depends

POSSIBLE TACTICS:

- Reduce class size and teacher-student ratio
- Increase use of technology in teaching
- Expand and diversify methods used to evaluate student performance
- Focus on professional development of faculty
- Enhance college and career preparation support to students
- Track post-graduate performance
- Develop global education and current affairs programs
- Establish a Science and Technology Council composed of staff and volunteers to keep STMC on the leading edge in technology and science.

(B) ATHLETICS

A strong athletic program builds community, ignites school pride and aids in teaching sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline. We will fine-tune our program by focusing on the factors that currently influence the quality of the athletic program and by looking for news ways to improve.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure strong student participation levels
2. Focus on training and certification for coaches
3. Improve athletic facilities
4. Foster strong community support of athletic programs

(C) CLUBS

Student clubs promote community, empower students and enhance STMC's overall range of offerings. By expanding our student activities we will empower students while helping STMC pursue institutional goals.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Creating new clubs that serve students' need and interests
2. Involve faculty and parents as advisors
3. Engage the student leadership council in organization and oversight

POSSIBLE TACTICS:

- Community Service Club
- Writers Club
- Drama Club
- Environmental & Naturalists Club
- Model United Nations / Current World Affairs Club Environmental Club
- Career Clubs (Business, Technology, Pre-Law, Pre-Medical/Health Sciences)

(D) FINE ARTS

Exploration of the Fine and Performing Arts is an essential component in the education of well-rounded students and we have developed some excellent programs in this area. To build on these programs and position our school as a leader in the arts, STMC will pursue the following goals:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Enhance the elective curriculum with various arts classes
2. Improve performing arts facilities on campus
3. Increase public performance opportunities for students
4. Introduce an arts mentorship and career awareness program
5. Create new vehicles to spotlight and foster literary arts (poetry, prose and script-writing)

POSSIBLE TACTICS:

- Courses on Music Technology and Composition, Broadcasting and Studio Recording and Stage Craft
- Plays, musicals and performances
- Annual student poetry/prose publication



- Annual “Poetry Slam”
- Continue to develop the media arts program
- Employ a full-time drama instructor

(E) EMPOWER STUDENTS

We believe that the degree to which we empower our students is another of STMC’s greatest strengths. Our students run pep rallies, orientations, “Spirit Weeks” and assist with Religious services. We believe such empowerment fosters the strong sense of community, student-ownership and self-confidence that is so unique to STMC and makes a fundamental contribution to our student’s formation as young adults. Such practices have long been part of our culture.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Institute a yearly school-wide meeting
2. Institute coaching, tutoring and mentoring programs with feeder schools
3. Conduct age-appropriate leadership training for all students

II. COMMUNITY LIFE



We are extremely proud of the unrivaled sense of community and school spirit which has been characteristic of STMC for as long as any can remember. It is paramount that we preserve these social “fundamentals” as STMC grows into the next decade.

(A) ENRICH OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY

While STMC welcomes families from all faiths, we are proud of our Catholic heritage and believe that the active practice of our faith is an integral part of our mission. Naturally, we intend to build on our past efforts and constantly improve in the years ahead.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the participation of students in school-wide celebrations of the Eucharist and Reconciliation
2. Enhance instruction in Religious Education Classes, placing special emphasis on assisting students to develop a fuller understanding of the place of Eucharist, Reconciliation and personal prayer in their lives.
3. Provide teachers with resource materials beyond the prescribed textbooks and provide in-service opportunities for Religious Education teachers
4. Conduct a review of the current retreat program, through a representative group of teachers and students



(B) ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

STMC seeks to be a collective force for good in our world, as evidenced in our vision that “every Knight make a positive contribution to the earth and its people.” While community service has long been part of STMC students’ school life, it is now time to create a formal community outreach program through which we can realize our full collective potential.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Modeling our faith through community service
2. Instilling altruistic values in our students
3. Providing valuable and measurable assistance to those in need

POSSIBLE TACTICS:

- Form a standing Community Outreach Committee composed of one staff person and approximately 5 volunteers with one-year terms
- Create a Community Service student club, which will collaborate with the committee to implement initiatives within the student body
- Establish partnerships with local community service organizations and/or elementary schools to facilitate STMC student participation as volunteers
- Revamp and revitalize the existing community service hours program as part of the students’ curriculum and coursework.
- Increase education about STMC’s missions and “Service Learning” in religion classes and encourage participation from entire families
- Develop a database of volunteer opportunities which students can access for ideas to earn service hours.

(C) IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE WHOLE STMC FAMILY

With STMC’s growth and increasing complexity of our organization, the need for a formalized communication plan has increased. We must ensure timely and thorough sharing of relevant information.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES/TACTICS

1. Develop a communication protocol to define regular and appropriate information-sharing between our internal groups - the STMC Ltd. Board, STMC Trustees, STMC Foundation Board, Administration, Faculty, Staff and Parents Association
2. Develop a public communication calendar to delineate information-sharing with our external groups - all parents, students, alumni and friends. Build an accurate current email list, use it with appropriate regularity, and develop our capacities to send graphically enhanced messages
3. Publicize the school website and develop online parents and alumni bulletin boards to facilitate communication among constituencies
4. Explore feasibility of an annual pictorial directory of current families and alumni.
5. Institute new annual all-inclusive community events



III. DEVELOPMENT



In context of this Strategic Plan, the term “Development” takes on three distinct definitions. In the short term, the most high profile component is the Capital Campaign which is critical to every aspect of STMC. Of equal importance in the mid-term are the Staff Development Programs and finally, the establishment of a permanent Office of Development and Community Relations. The “ODCR” will be the catalyst for all future programs and will be responsible for developing detailed tactical plans for the years ahead.

(A) CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

The purpose of the current Capital Campaign is to re-establish financial solvency by reducing debt to a manageable level, completing deferred maintenance and planning for future growth.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Restore and upgrade both interior and exterior facilities
2. Upgrade electronic capabilities to better utilize modern technology
3. Construct a multi-purpose facility with spaces (such as:) for:
 - Additional classrooms
 - Athletic facilities (convertible double gym, locker rooms, weight room)
 - Performing arts facilities
 - Multi-function gathering space
4. Engage professionals to consider future development

(B) CREATE FACULTY/STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

We recognize that capable, creative, dedicated staff is the very lifeblood of the programs and courses we present. In fostering professional development, we aim to hone our collective skills, improve our program quality, support personal ambitions and reward our faculty in their drive to excel.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Continue to attract top teachers provincially and nationally
2. Assume a leadership role in local, regional and international Catholic School Associations and Conferences
3. Set the highest possible standard for professional development of faculty

POSSIBLE TACTICS

- Create a standing staff committee on Professional Development
- Create a standing Board committee on Board and Organizational Development
- Encourage the pursuit of higher education and help subsidize faculty who want to earn advanced degrees
- Establish a mentoring program for faculty



(C) ESTABLISH AN OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

For many years, dedicated part-time staff and volunteers have coordinated all fundraising and alumni-relations activities. Their outstanding service has provided a crucial foundation upon which it is now time to build. A key to realizing the overall vision in this strategic plan is the creation of a vibrant and effective professional development operation.

The Office of Development and Community Relations (“ODCR”) will serve as the hub of organizational development and community-building efforts. Development efforts will eventually account for a percentage of the school’s operating budget, and provide funds for capital and endowment

For 2004 and much of 2005, the ODCR will focus on completing STMC’s Capital Campaign, an effort which requires full-time attention. The ODCR will begin to expand its development and alumni relations programs in 2005-06. The ODCR will report to the STM Foundation Board, and work closely with the STMC Ltd. Board and Administration. The Director will help craft a comprehensive development plan beyond the Capital Campaign which considers the suggestions as possible future programs.

Specifically, the ODCR will oversee a comprehensive fund-raising and community relations program.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Oversee all fund-raising activities, volunteer-run annual activities and special events including the phone-a-thon, auction, and alumni newsletter, basketball and golf tournaments
2. Create new fund-raising and relationship-building vehicles and increase philanthropic support
3. Expand alumni relations, community relations and communications efforts
4. Serve as primary staff liaison to the Parents’ Association and Alumni groups
5. Facilitate planning and implementation for capacity-building and development projects such as implementing the strategic plan

POSSIBLE TACTICS:

- New fund-raising events such as a parent-child banquet
- Legacy Club for planned giving
- Regular donor statements on cumulative charitable giving
- Volunteer and donor appreciation initiatives
- An Annual Report
- An Alumni Association Board
- Semi-annual neighborhood newsletter



CONCLUSION: IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN



“Even a good plan can never be sold....only bought”

Anonymous

The real work must now begin. We are challenged to come together as a community and build the model we now envision. This plan was designed only as a general guide for the growth and development of STMC and as such is expected to be interpreted differently from many points of view. History is rich with successful examples of plans and constitutions that allow for the widest possible latitude of individual creativity and we will encourage the contribution of many voices in the years ahead.

To track and ensure progress towards fulfilling our Mission and Vision, STMC will conduct an annual Strategic Planning Session in which all stakeholders within our community will meet to continue to refine the direction of the school community.

Prior to the annual strategic planning session, smaller work groups will provide recommendations and feedback to the strategic planning group. Given resources available to the community (people, facilities, funding) the strategic plan group will establish the priorities and focus of STMC in the coming year to ensure that the school continues to grow and improve.

Additionally, STMC will take a comprehensive look at the results of this plan at its Third Annual Strategic Planning Retreat in August 2005. By that time, we will have seen two years of implementation. In order to accurately measure our effectiveness then, we will need to put measures in place now that will provide objective data along the way.



Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we are very proud of the resiliency of the STMC community. From very humble beginnings to now, the beginning of the next era, our students and teachers remain inspired and committed in ways other schools could only dream of. We also hope that through this plan our vision will encourage others to preserve the passion of Edmund Rice, the dedication of Sir Thomas More and the Christian values that form the cornerstone of all we believe in.