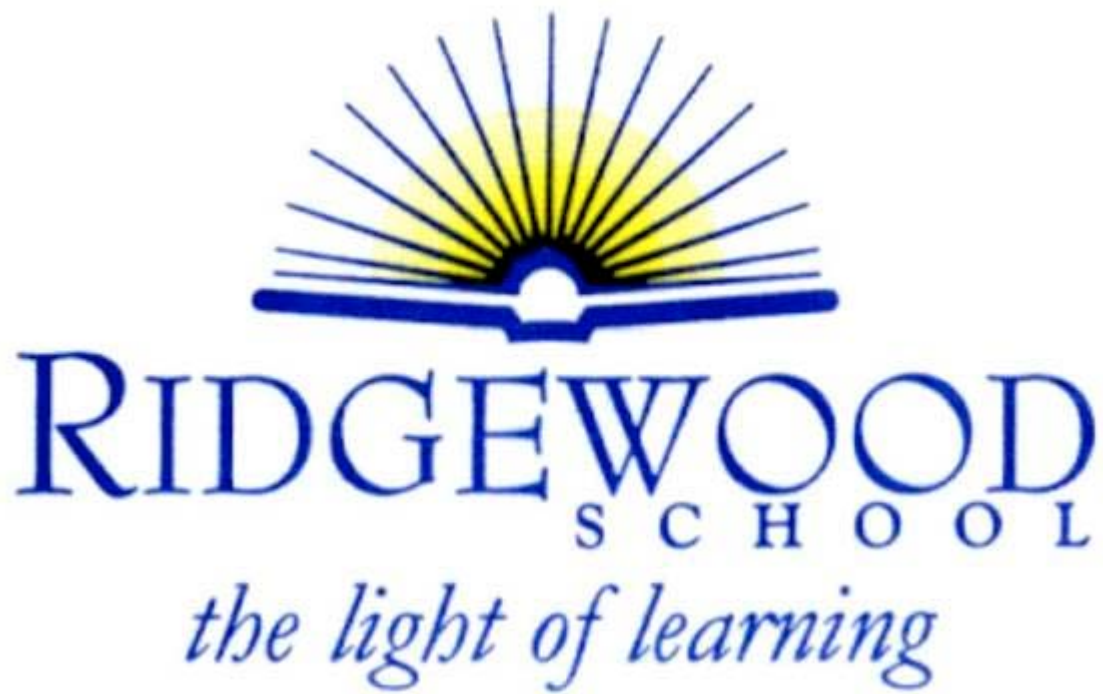


Ridgewood School Strategic Plan
2008-2011



Adopted April 2008

Ridgewood School Strategic Plan

Introduction

In preparation for the hundredth anniversary of Ridgewood and the search for a new Head of the school, the board of trustees determined that a strategic plan would be a valuable tool to guide the school forward. The board created a planning committee consisting of parents, teachers, established alumni, a recent alumnus, and a past parent. Acorn Consulting led the planning work.

To gather information in preparation for the plan, the planning committee worked with the full board, with teachers, alumni, and parents to gather perspectives on Ridgewood today and in the future. Acorn Consulting also researched trends in private education, Ridgewood statistics, and the competitive environment in Clark County.

Foundational Strengths

- ◇ Ridgewood's position as a private, secular school committed to academic excellence in a structured environment sets it apart from the other private and public schools in Clark County.
- ◇ Ridgewood's reputation remains strong. When people hear of Ridgewood, they tend to think of it as an academically strong school.
- ◇ The quality of Ridgewood's education is high. Alumni agree that the Ridgewood education positioned them well for the future.
- ◇ The Ridgewood curriculum is comprehensive and includes the essential components of English, mathematics, natural science, social science, arts, and foreign language.
- ◇ The environment is supportive of student learning in multiple ways. Ridgewood is welcoming, nurturing, safe, and focused on the value and joy of learning.
- ◇ Finances are well managed, with a small endowment.
- ◇ Ridgewood parents are actively engaged in many aspects of the school, bringing a wide range of skills and talents to support Ridgewood.
- ◇ The diversity and opportunity for close relationships with people of different faiths and ethnicities at Ridgewood is unique in Clark County, and provides students with a valuable world view. This contributes to the outcome of graduates as world citizens.
- ◇ Ridgewood's location and property provide unique opportunities for outdoor learning.



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Vision of the Future

Ridgewood board and planning committee members described the following vision of the ideal future.

In 2018, as Ridgewood celebrates its 100th anniversary, the future will be bright.

Ridgewood will have full classes in every grade, with waiting lists of students who want to join the Ridgewood family. The outreach and marketing activities will be systematic and effective, and will result in strong community awareness of Ridgewood and strong parental interest in Ridgewood. Ridgewood's strengths will be widely understood, and Ridgewood will provide compelling evidence to support its claims for excellence.

Ridgewood will attract and retain the best teachers in the community because of the teaching and learning environment, the commitment of our students and parents, and because compensation is strong. Faculty and staff compensation will be in the top half of Ohio independent schools.

Ridgewood's strong history of a diverse student body will expand to include economic diversity and diversity in faculty and staff. Economic diversity will be supported through a well-defined financial aid program addressing financial need. Diversity will continue to be a strength at Ridgewood, and will contribute to an understanding of the interconnectedness of all parts of the world.

The Ridgewood curriculum and extra-curricular activities contribute to outstanding student learning, within the classroom and outside the classroom. Our students will continue to excel in language arts, math, and science, and the fine and performing arts will continue to be an important part of the curriculum. Additional foreign languages will be offered to strengthen the students' global understanding, and technology will be used to bring the world to Ridgewood and to develop an attitude of world citizenship in our students. The following extra-curricular activities will be consistently offered to teach teamwork and persistence and to enable students with special interests to explore them.

- ◇ Science competition
- ◇ Writing competition
- ◇ Sports
- ◇ Outdoor activities
- ◇ Music and art

Ridgewood will be known for outstanding education in a holistic sense. Graduates of Ridgewood will be well-rounded citizens of the world. They combine factual knowledge with real skills in a variety of subjects. Their experiences with diverse populations, including their fellow students and their contacts with students around the world, enable Ridgewood graduates to understand and appreciate the differences in cultures. Ridgewood graduates succeed in high school, in college, and in life.

Ridgewood alumni will be strong supporters of the school in many ways. Where possible, they will give their time and expertise to serve as role models or mentors to our students. Recognizing that their current success is due in part to what was learned at Ridgewood, they will contribute financially to support the Ridgewood education tradition and to enable future generations to benefit from Ridgewood.



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The Ridgewood facilities will be enhanced by the addition of new classrooms and dedicated space for sports and arts. The property will continue to maintain the beautiful grounds surrounding the buildings that provide space for science, play, privacy, and relaxation.

The Ridgewood parents and extended family members remain vital contributors to the success of Ridgewood, freely sharing their time and expertise to support school activities, serve as mentors to Ridgewood students, and raise funds.



Ridgewood's location in Springfield provides it the unique opportunity to establish close relationships with Wittenberg University and Clark State Community College and to also benefit from relationships with nearby colleges such as Wright State and Urbana University. These partnerships provide Ridgewood with access to student mentors, global studies and foreign language expertise, educational leadership expertise, student teachers, and much more. Springfield's rich cultural opportunities ranging from the Springfield Symphony and Springfield Museum of Art to the Annual Fair at New Boston provide a wealth of hands on learning opportunities for Ridgewood students.

Financially, Ridgewood will be stronger than ever. Full enrollment will contribute to the operating budget and to the ability to provide need-based scholarships. A strong endowment will contribute significantly to the operating budget as well. Alumni and foundation support are strong, reflecting commitment to the quality education provided by Ridgewood.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

Ridgewood School creates a vibrant learning environment to cultivate the intellect, imagination, and character of our students.

Vision

Ridgewood alumni excel in learning, achieve in life, and engage in the global community.

Values

Ridgewood creates its vibrant learning environment through the teamwork of committed students, staff, and parents. Our learning environment:

- Inspires the joy of learning and discovery
- Celebrates diversity
- Fosters respect
- Expects integrity
- Embraces responsibility
- Instills citizenship
- Promotes a balanced life

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Strategic Goals

Goal A: Fill every class with qualified, diverse students

Through our admissions process we strive to enroll students who love learning. We actively seek students throughout Clark and surrounding counties who will benefit from the vibrant Ridgewood learning environment.



Objective A1: Develop and implement an Enrollment Marketing Plan to systematically drive future enrollment

Objective A2: Increase the number of students enrolled at Ridgewood

Objective A3: Establish financial aid policies and guidelines that support the enrollment goals

Objective A4: Enhance the prospective student qualification and acceptance process to ensure that students who are accepted will succeed at Ridgewood

Goal B: Improve the financial strength of Ridgewood

Our vision for Ridgewood is strong, and we want to maintain the excellence of Ridgewood today and for generations to come. We are strengthening our financial base to reduce our reliance on tuition, to enable scholarships for deserving students, to improve faculty and staff compensation, and to complete our building projects.

Objective B1: Hire a staff person to drive Admissions and Fundraising

Objective B2: Develop an annual fundraising plan and schedule, identifying all parent led and student led fundraising activities

Objective B3: Establish a mechanism for accepting planned gifts and gifts of securities

Objective B4: Launch and maintain a formal Annual Fundraising Campaign

Objective B5: Launch a pilot summer program to be held in summer 2009

Objective B6: Prepare for and launch a comprehensive campaign addressing capital needs and endowment needs

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Goal C: Strengthen the overall learning experience



Ridgewood is an educational institution dedicated to helping students excel in learning, achieve in life, and engage in the global community. Our curriculum is comprehensive, well rounded, and relevant to an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. We enable our students to discover and develop their strengths and interests.

Objective C1: Refine the overall curriculum and curriculum maps to ensure all subjects are current, technology is integrated, teaching is grounded in best practices, and skills and competencies build from grade to grade.

Objective C2: Increase foreign language offerings

- ◇ Start foreign language education in earlier grades
- ◇ Provide additional language offerings



Objective C3: Integrate service and service learning as a formal part of the curriculum

Objective C4: Formalize partnerships with local higher education institutions in Clark and surrounding counties to enrich the learning opportunities at Ridgewood

Objective C5: Build on current teacher practices to develop a consistent program for students needing special assistance to excel at Ridgewood

Objective C6: Strengthen extra-curricular activities:

- ◇ Sustain academic competitions
- ◇ Establish performing arts program (music or theater as first offerings)
- ◇ Establish sports program (golf, tennis, volleyball, or basketball as first offerings)

Objective C7: Define the Ridgewood learning experience at all grade levels, with explanation of how Ridgewood students learn what is expected.

Objective C8: Formalize early interactions with parents and students on an annual basis

- ◇ Meet with parents in first two weeks of school to explain how the grade/classes will work
- ◇ Meet with students/parents early in semester to discuss progress and an individualized learning plan



Objective C 9: Explore development of a pre-school program

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Goal D: Recruit, develop, and retain outstanding faculty & staff

Ridgewood's quality of education depends on the excellence and commitment of our faculty and staff. We are enhancing our ability to attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff. We will ensure that faculty and staff continue their education to model lifelong learning and to remain current in their fields. We will actively promote the excellence of our faculty.



Objective D1: Foster and support professional development activities

- ◇ Identify learning goals and opportunities for faculty & staff
- ◇ Establish a budget to support individual teacher training and development

Objective D2: Establish a program for individual teacher in-service opportunities consisting of a day off during the year for a learning experience such as observation at another school

Objective D3: Establish a fund in the Ridgewood endowment to support staff benefits

Objective D4: Strengthen the Master Teacher program

Objective D5: Promote the excellence of our faculty

Goal E: Strengthen and sustain relationships with our outstanding alumni and our community

The success of our alumni is a strong testimonial to the quality of the Ridgewood education. We are enhancing our ability to connect with alumni and to benefit from what they have learned and accomplished since leaving Ridgewood. We are also enhancing our connection with the Clark County community. We will be an integral part of the success of Clark County.

Objective E1: Enhance Ridgewood school spirit.

- ◇ Develop Ridgewood branded clothing program
- ◇ Establish a school spirit day

Objective E2: Sustain and develop the Ridgewood Times.

Objective E3: Launch a “Ridgewood family reunion” campaign

Objective E4: Establish annual alumni events for alumni, former students, and parents (one to begin)

Objective E5: Strengthen our connection with the business community

Objective E6: Strengthen our connection with the Clark County community through school and student participation in community service and community activities

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Goal F: Ensure facilities support high quality education



Ridgewood is fortunate to have sufficient land to support not only our buildings and recreation, but also our hands on learning programs. In the coming years, we will update our buildings and grounds to enhance their contribution to the outstanding Ridgewood education and to lessen our environmental impact.

We will strengthen our use of technology to improve teaching, learning, and administration.

Objective F1: Ensure technology infrastructure supports curricular, pedagogical, and administrative needs.

- ◇ Policies
- ◇ Computers
- ◇ Networks

Objective F2: Implement the alumni/contact/donor database.

Objective F3: Redesign website and incorporate into all aspects of Ridgewood

- ◇ Integral part of marketing/recruiting activities
- ◇ Class activities & plans, tests, assignments
- ◇ Communication with parents

Objective F4: Develop and implement a long-term building plan

- ◇ Define useful improvements and upgrades (smaller projects)
- ◇ Define timing and purpose of needed building additions.
- ◇ Incorporate ecologically sound building practices, make the existing building more efficient

Objective F5: Develop and implement an overall site plan

- ◇ More attractive, ecologically friendly, and learning friendly landscaping
- ◇ More useful and usable recess area



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Appendix: Ridgewood Curriculum

The Ridgewood curriculum includes:

- a. Science
- b. Math
- c. Language arts/writing
 - i. Public speaking
 - ii. Debate
- d. Foreign languages
- e. Global studies, global understanding
- f. Arts
 - i. Visual
 - ii. Performing
- g. Physical education
- h. Health
- i. Technology