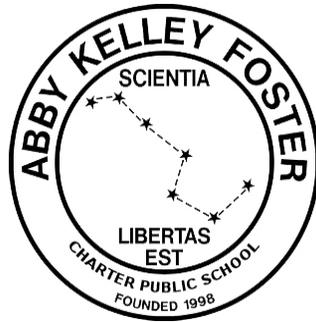


Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School

Strategic Plan

2012 – 2015



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The Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is pleased to present our Strategic Plan for the 2012-2015 school years. The strategic planning process provides stakeholders the collaborative opportunity to reflect on the schools' achievements and challenges and to frame the foundation for leadership in the near future.

The success of our students is a direct function of how well stakeholders work effectively on their behalf. These stakeholders included administration, faculty, parents and board members whose consensus around Abby Kelley Foster's strategic needs are the core values and objectives outlined here. Administration is charged with executing action plans annually that support this plan, which focuses on academic achievement, financial stability, preservation of instructional staff and enhancing school culture.

As we conclude our fourteenth year as a charter school, we are so proud of all we have accomplished. With a student population of 1,426 students and 200 staff we have grown both academically and professionally. We have added the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme which enables us to academically challenge high school students in their preparedness for college. By having the IB program in the upper grades we use the backwards design model for our K-12 curriculum. A curriculum written through backwards design moves away from activity based lesson plans, which is typical in curriculum planning of the past. With the backwards design model, you begin by determining the end goal based on high academic expectations and state standards, and then select appropriate modes of assessing student mastery of these standards. Lessons are then written to help students achieve these goals. Backwards design allows us to start with our end goal in sight: that all students will be prepared and have the opportunity to participate in IB when they reach the high school level. This is possible because the backwards designed curriculum is not only aligned within each grade level, but across the grade.

We welcome your ideas and feedback at anytime and will continue to work together to ensure a high quality education for every student.

With Gratitude,

Kathleen M. Greenwood
Executive Director

Our Mission

The mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is to assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing a classical liberal arts education grounded in the great works of Western Civilization and aimed at academic excellence, musical competence and character formation.

Our Vision

Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School partners with parents, faculty and community members to provide students with a rigorous academic experience that inspires lifelong learners and good citizenship.

Core Values

As members of the Abby Kelley Foster community we value:

- ***A Comprehensive Classical Education:*** We provide our students with a challenging rigorous, well-rounded education that includes the arts, humanities, mathematics, the sciences, foreign language and technology, which fosters each student's academic success.
- ***High Expectations:*** We hold our students and ourselves to high standards of behavior and performance.
- ***Accountability:*** We establish clear measurable goals; we take responsibility for results and measure progress. We teach our students to become self motivated learners that can think critically.
- ***Collaboration:*** We partner with parents to support our students' learning growth, and we teach our students to work cooperatively with others in reaching their goals.
- ***Life-long learning:*** We instill a love of learning in our students and challenge ourselves to continue to grow professionally.
- ***Respect:*** We model a high regard for others and an appreciation of their differences. Through our character education program we teach respect for ourselves and others, both as the people we are and the people we strive to become.

The following objectives, which frame the new initiatives of the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan supports and compliments the existing practices and policies:

- I. Academic Rigor
- II. Financial Stability
- III. Preservation of Highly Qualified Faculty
- IV. School Culture of Excellence

I. Academic Rigor

Abby Kelly Foster Charter Public School will provide a challenging and integrated K-12 classical education that supports 21st century learning, which includes critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity.

A. Priority Initiative: Middle and High School Programs of Study

Goal: By June of 2015, 100% of courses in the Middle and High School Programs of Study will be evaluated for rigor and alignment with 21st century learning skills, in accordance to state and national standards.

B. Priority Initiative: Rigorous Academic Curriculum

Goal: Utilizing the *Understanding by Design (UbD)* model and the Atlas Rubicon curriculum database, 100% of the K-12 curriculum will include learner outcomes, assessment evidence, and essential questions. Learner outcomes are defined as those skills and concepts that all students are expected to take with them at the culmination of each unit of study. Teachers will employ a wide range of formative assessments to ensure that feedback is timely and provides the greatest opportunity to impact learning. Formative assessments will include, but are not limited to: exit cards, observation, questioning, discussion, learning response logs, think-pair-share, and peer/self assessment. Teachers will also assess students through the administration of quizzes, chapter/unit tests, differentiated project menus, and research projects. Teachers will use data from all classroom and school-wide summative assessments to inform their instruction and identify specific areas of concern. Essential questions allow teachers to focus on the most critical skills necessary for mastery of state curriculum standards and the development of enduring understandings.

This curriculum is the basis for our goal of teaching students of teaching students to read, write and think critically.

C. Priority Initiative: Continued implementation of the International Baccalaureate program

Goal: By the fall of 2014, 65% of the grade eleven and twelve students will participate in the IB program. The IB Diploma Programme is designed as an academically challenging and balanced Programme of education with final examinations that prepares students for success at university and life beyond.

D. Priority Initiative: Interventions to Improve Academic Performance

Goal: By June of 2014, students will be identified for academic intervention, enrichment, or acceleration in grades K -6; and will participate in the Response To Intervention (RTI) program and will demonstrate a 10% improvement on their grade level performance. Response to Intervention/Instruction (RTI) is a multi-tiered approach to help all learners succeed. Student progress is closely monitored at each stage of intervention to determine the need for further research-based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education, or both. Research has demonstrated that most reading problems can be prevented by providing high-quality early literacy instruction in the classroom, along with supplemental intervention for students. The heart of any RTI model lies in the use of tiered instruction. In the RTI framework, the instruction delivered to students varies on several dimensions that are related to the nature and severity of a student's difficulties or their successes. RTI will allow us to focus on the academically advanced students as well as those requiring additional support. This approach will allow us to focus on all students and tailor a success plan to their needs.

E. Priority Initiative: K-12 Technology Plan

Goal: By June of 2013, the school-wide Technology Committee will revise and implement a Technology Plan that will enable the school to better leverage technology to improve student achievement.

F. Priority Initiative: Assessment

Goal: By June of 2015, an analysis of all instructional units in the curriculum database will demonstrate a balanced system of assessments (e.g., performance tasks, written assessments, oral assessments, etc.). The database will include a wide range of formative assessment options for teachers to choose from, allowing them to select assessments that will best evaluate their specific group each year. These options will include, but not be limited to: journal topics, differentiated project menus, research projects, observation and discussion rubrics, and self assessment guides. Common assessments (quizzes and tests) will provide the opportunity to collect data on student level of skill mastery across a grade, regardless of what class they are in or who their teacher is. This will be an in-depth evaluation of the use of critical thinking skills in all subjects across the curriculum.

I. Financial Stability

Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School will operate and manage in a fiscally responsible manner that ensures stability, success and sustainable growth.

A. Priority Initiative: Development

Goal: The Board of Trustees and administration will identify development strategies for additional sources of income. During the 2012-2013 school year administration will establish a fundraising committee that will develop an action plan with a goal of implementing at least one idea. Additionally, the administration will assess the feasibility of hiring or contracting with a development director or event planner.

B. Priority Initiative: Use of Unfinished Space

Goal: The Board of Trustees and administration will assess the feasibility of the physical plant as an additional source of income. Administration will work with the Facility & Finance Committee to identify potential uses of the excess space that remains unfinished in the High School building. By March, 2013, the committee will present a usage proposal to the Board of Trustees for review and consideration.

C. Priority Initiative: Restructuring School Debt

Goal: The Board of Trustees and administration will actively work toward restructuring the school's debt. By December 31, 2012, the Board Treasurer and the Business Manager will explore financing options in an effort to stabilize borrowing costs, allowing the school more certainty in addressing the operating challenges of the school including the compensation structure of the school's instructional staff.

II. Preservation of Highly Qualified Faculty

Administration will recruit and retain highly dedicated and qualified staff members who are supported in their work, and are compensated fairly and competitively.

A. Priority Initiative: Compensation and Morale

Goal: The salaries of teachers and administrators will be analyzed annually to continue to be competitive with similar schools in the region and instructional staff will continue to be engaged in professional development.

B. Priority Initiative: Professional Development

Goal: By June of 2015, 75% of instructional staff will utilize the allocated professional development money for development opportunities; in addition to those mandated by administration.

Goal: By June of 2013, 80% of instructional staff will indicate annually that school based professional development has been effective and useful to remain current on curriculum instruction and assessment.

C. Priority Initiative: Staff Communication

Goal: By June of 2013, 90% of school instructional staff will respond to the annual staff survey that they have been informed about the school's strategic plan, its key initiative for the current school year, the school's action plans, and the schools progress toward those initiatives.

IV. School Culture of Excellence

Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School will continue to encourage a partnership with parents to create a culture and community that supports our students in their academics, character formation and musical competence.

A. Priority Initiative: Character Formation

Goal: By June of 2015, the school will integrate the character virtues into all subject areas K-12. This will be evidenced by lessons input into the Atlas Rubicon curriculum data base.

B. Priority Initiative: Musical Competence

Goal: By the fall of 2013, the elementary school will add an additional music teacher in order to provide more musical opportunities for our younger students particularly in the area of instrument lessons. This will enable us to distinguish ourselves from other schools and enable us to grow a strong foundation for our music program.

Goal: By January of 2014, faculty and students will share their knowledge with the local and state communities of music and the fine arts through performance, instruction, presentation, and publication.

C. Priority Initiatives: Parent Communication

Goal: By June of 2013, 90% of parents will indicate annually that they have been effectively informed about the school's strategic plan, its key initiative for the current school year, and the school's progress towards those initiatives.

Goal: By the fall of 2012, continued implementation of the AKF Community Council. The purpose of this forum is for administration to share ideas and visions for parent contributions and feedback.

D. Priority Initiatives: School Community Cultural Competency

Goal: Beginning in 2012-13, the school will provide staff with training regarding the cultural backgrounds, experiences and available community resources for possible referrals of our diverse student population.

Goal: On an annual basis, parents will be offered four workshops on how to help their child be successful in school.

Conclusion

Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is faced with the challenges of 21st Century education. This plan is a response to emerging trends, challenges and opportunities consistent with our mission statement. With a focus on student learning, we should keep the words of Helen Keller in our minds, "alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."