

The Strategic Plan  
For  
Wilmington Christian School  
*Hockessin, Delaware*  
2010 to 2015

Adopted by the Board of Directors  
2010

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## **I. Introduction**

As of 2009, Wilmington Christian School celebrates sixty-three (63) years of ministry in Christian education. With a long and blessed heritage of building faith and learning in young people, and with a solid base from which to develop, we anticipate the continued enhancement of our facilities, enrichment of our programs, and expansion of our enrollment base, in order to honor our historical and spiritual mission **to teach, influence, and encourage each student to effectively integrate Biblical truth into his/her daily life and to impact the culture for Christ.** The plan encompasses three major components:

- 1. Strategic Analysis – our mission**
- 2. Strategic Formulation – our goals**
- 3. Strategic Implementation – our action plan**

The **Strategic Analysis** segment of this document outlines the mission of Wilmington Christian School. It also includes the school's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

The **Strategic Formulation** portion of this plan includes the WCS vision statement, as well as our goals for the future.

The **Strategic Implementation** section states the action plan of initiatives in seven (7) major focus areas.

- 1. Monitoring our Accreditation for Growth (AFG) action plans in the areas of: Biblical Worldview, Language Arts, and Middle School program development.**
- 2. Growing and developing our Advancement program to include: promotion and marketing, planned giving, diversification of population and program, and fund raising.**
- 3. Solidifying our financial operation in the areas of: policy and procedure formation, budget preparation and maintenance, tuition assistance program, and faculty/staff compensation.**
- 4. Bringing diversification to our student population, faculty and staff, curriculum, awareness training and scholarship programs.**
- 5. Assessing our present academic offerings and developing new instructional programs that will enhance our curricular program.**
- 6. Strengthening and expanding the schools' present athletic, fine arts, and drama programs.**
- 7. Renovate and upgrade several specific areas of our facilities and grounds.**

## **II. Strategic Analysis**

This section of the Strategic Plan describes the **strategic position** of Wilmington Christian School at this time. It seeks to be an assessment of the school's **mission** and provide the basis upon which the Strategic Plan is founded.

- A. Mission: Wilmington Christian School provides a Christ-centered, challenging academic program with instruction based on the Biblical**

*view of God and the world. WCS teaches, influences, and encourages each student to effectively integrate Biblical truth into his/her daily life and to impact the culture for Christ.*

**B. Strengths:** These key factors make our school distinctive and competitive institution among educational resources:

- **Education that seeks to develop a foundation of faith and learning, with a Biblical perspective from which to view the world**
- **Integration of Biblical principles as the basis of instruction**
- **Quality Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 academic program with the focus on preparing students for continuing education after high school**
- **Fully accredited (K-12 program) by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools**
- **Dedicated and qualified instructional staff**
- **Strong Board governance, support, and unity**
- **Administrative experience, leadership, and vision**
- **Financial stability and accountability**
- **Educational program that includes learning support and enrichment**
- **Modern campus and excellent support facilities**
- **Strong extra-curricular program including the Fine Arts and Athletics**
- **Summer camp program that serves as a community outreach**
- **Parental involvement and support**

**C. Weaknesses:** These conditions within our organization represent areas for growth or disadvantage to our present program.

- **Insufficient salary compensation for faculty and staff**
- **Limited church relations and exposure to the ministry of WCS**
- **Lack of giving above tuition from our constituencies**
- **Fragmented fundraising and Annual Fund strategies**
- **Weak alumni base from which to develop advancement and funding resources**
- **Limited scope of course offerings and programs**
- **Lack of recreational space for elementary and athletic programs.**

**D. Opportunities:** These factors can serve our school as avenues to capitalize upon for the growth of our educational program.

- **Excellent facilities to serve our population and the surrounding community**
- **Secularization of the culture**
- **Parents looking for better educational opportunities for their children.**
- **Parents desiring a safer, secure environment where quality learning takes place.**

### **III. Strategic Formulation:**

The formulation of our Strategic Plan includes the **vision** of WCS, the **current status** of the school, and the **major goal areas** that will bring the vision into reality.

**A. Vision Statement:** The vision for Wilmington Christian School emphasizes our commitment to be a distinctive Christian school that seeks to prepare students for college and for life after high school.

We seek to accomplish this vision in partnership with Christian parents, qualified administrators and teachers, and a committed Board of Trustees, with the goal of graduating students who will use their God-given talents to impact the world for Christ.

***Wilmington Christian School will strive to be an educational institution where young people receive a Christian education that will lead to further education and training. This will be accomplished in an environment that is rooted in God's Word and an atmosphere that promotes discipleship in a process of faith/learning development. The ultimate goal is to provide the facilities, program, instruction, and spiritual/developmental support that will graduate students who are moving to maturity of faith, thinking biblically about life, responding critically in word and deed, and impacting the culture in which they live.***

#### **B. Current situation at WCS**

Wilmington Christian School is ideally situated in a major population corridor between Philadelphia and Baltimore. Located just eight miles northwest of Wilmington, DE (Hockessin), the school has a clientele that draws from the tri-state area of Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Hockessin is part of a fairly affluent area with a population that possesses a strong academic and technological orientation. This focus causes WCS to maintain a strong academic program, which gives it an excellent standing in the educational community of Delaware.

We presently serve 455 students, represented by 380 families that subscribe to the school's mission, statement of faith, and philosophy of education. Our population has declined over the last several years due to a number of factors. The present economy in the area is in decline, the demographic of students is down, and the growth of charter schools has affected enrollment. In addition, the cost of tuition, along with inadequate resources for tuition assistance and a small school endowment, are the chief financial hurdles to overcome. Aggressive admissions and advancement programs must continue to be developed in order to increase the student population and financial partnerships.

WCS' fiscal position is sound, with tuition providing the majority (93%) of funding to support the operation of the school. Currently, the school operates with a 5.2 million dollar budget, which includes awarding over \$250,000 in tuition assistance to families in need. In addition, WCS provides \$250,000 in tuition discounts to faculty and staff, as well as to families with more than one student. Due to the decline in enrollment over the last few years, the school has had to rely on current cash reserves in order to supplement the budget. In the past two years, cuts in staff and program were made in order to bring the school's budget into balance.

From an internal perspective, Wilmington Christian School has been blessed in a number of ways. The school has built a solid reputation in both the educational and Christian communities. The members of

the faculty and staff are well qualified and fully committed to the philosophy of Christian education. The Board of Trustees guides and governs the school with a strong commitment to the mission, as well as a spirit of unity and progress. Among the school's constituents, there is a deep sense of community and loyalty to the ministry of WCS. Our graduates are successful academically and have a high acceptance rate (95% or better) at the colleges and universities to which they apply.

One of the main pillars of our school is the instruction in the Christian faith and with that, the nurturing of the spiritual life of both students and staff. In holding to the philosophy that *a cord of three strands is not easily broken (Ecclesiastes 4:12)*, WCS must constantly and consistently move toward the high calling given to us in Christ. This involves a growing relationship of the school with families and churches. Creative and constructive ways to enhance these relationships, must continue to be sought so that the school's on going and ultimate vision, to have students *impact the culture for Christ* may be realized.

In cultivating these relationships, the school must place in motion a program for greater diversity among the student body, faculty and staff. As Christians with a Biblical perspective of the world, we are spiritually responsible to reach out to all the young children of our world. Our school, with its richness in Christ, needs to advance that responsibility into action; forming a strategy to expand its sphere of influence into every community we serve, making possible a Christian education to as many as desire it.

While it is difficult to fully compensate faculty for teaching in a private Christian school, our commitment is to offer our faculty and staff an appropriate salary and compensation package. This requires a well thought plan that sets as priority the goal of gradually raising the salary level in our yearly budget formation. While in previous years, the school was able to give raises to its staff; the recent financial climate and budgetary restraints has kept that from continuing. The establishment of endowment funds, an increase in annual giving support, and a return to increased enrollment, would solve this dilemma.

To effectively grow and develop as a school, we need a strong advancement program to build relationships with friends and raise additional funds from our various constituencies. With the recent addition of a Director For Advancement, along with the realignment of some staff to form an advancement team, the school has set the stage for a comprehensive, consistent program of promoting, marketing, and developing both enrollment and donor acquisition. Creative and constructive advancement strategies and programs must be formulated for the future of our school. Our school's advancement program is a key element to both advancing our vision and achieving our goals.

Accreditation is a vital evaluative tool that calls our school to a self-study that validates that we are who we say we are, and that we do what we claim to do. Accreditation also solidifies our standing in the educational community. Our full approval (K-12) by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools was a major accomplishment in the academic development of Wilmington Christian School. The process of accreditation produced a document, with action plans to assist in the achievement of our strategically planned initiatives. The accreditation process assisted in the development of this new Strategic Plan. We are presently progressing through this action plan of improvement initiatives.

The primary challenge for Wilmington Christian School in the coming years, portrayed in this Strategic Plan is to continue to provide and expand academic, social, and spiritual excellence, maintain an affordable cost to our families and developing additional funding resources. In addition, we want to focus on and increase the diversity of our population to represent the culture around us, and seek to offer a solid Christian education to all those families desiring this for their children. The goals and strategies that WCS pursues must balance its distinctive strengths and developmental growth, with affordability. This can be achieved only through effective stewardship, full utilization of our facilities and resources, proper compensation of our people and an active advancement and financial support program.

### **C. Strategies for the Future: Goals**

Wilmington Christian School will focus on the following seven (7) goals over the next five-year period (2010-2015):

- **To implement the action plans as directed by the Accreditation for Growth self-study and report, with specific attention to**
  - **Biblical world view teaching.**
  - **Language Arts/Written communication.**
  - **Enhancement of a distinctively Middle School program.**
  - **Communication with and among the school's constituencies.**
- **To implement, and grow our Advancement program to meet the needs of our school in promotion, donor acquisition, endowment growth, diversity, and general fundraising for the school.**
- **To assess and develop the financial state of the school as it pertains to budget preparation and implementation, tuition planning, the tuition assistance program, and a staff compensation plan.**
- **To enhance our school atmosphere with a culturally diverse population and program that reaches out to all sectors of the community we serve and to the broader international Christian community.**
- **To expand the school's academic program and course offerings to offer a more distinctive and challenging education for all of our students in preparation for future study after high school.**
- **To evaluate the schools athletic, fine arts, and drama programs, and improve the school's recreational facilities in these areas.**

- **To renovate and upgrade specific areas of our facilities and grounds.**

#### **IV. Strategic Implementation:**

The phase of implementing our Strategic Plan comes out of an expansion of the listed goals in the Strategic Formulation stage. These goals are expressed as **strategic initiatives** (SI) for each of the major goal areas. These strategic initiatives will be formatted into an **action plan** that states specific objectives for each initiative addressed. The action plan will then be assigned to various committees formed for the implementation phase of this strategic plan.

#### **Goal 1: To implement the action plans as directed by the Accreditation For Growth self-study and report.**

- SI 1.1 – Accreditation For Growth Committee plan will implement the school's AFG report with specific attention to:
  - Biblical world view instruction
  - Language Arts/Written communication
  - Development of middle school program
- SI 1.2 – Board will establish better ways to communicate with the staff and parents to apprise them of the board's plans and decisions.
- SI 1.3 – Administration will set up a system of reporting and accountability of the progress of the AFG action plans and the implementation of specifically designated initiatives.

#### **Goal 2: To implement, and grow an Advancement program that will meet the needs of our school in the areas of promotion, donor acquisition, endowment growth, diversity, and general fundraising for the school.**

- SI 2.1 – Board will assess the needs and direction of development at WCS and incorporate this plan into the overall strategic plan of the school.
- SI 2.2 – Administration will establish the work and direction of the Admissions Office as it corresponds with the responsibilities of the Advancement Office and Business Office.
- SI 2.3 – Board will develop the make-up, function, and operating plan of the endowment committee, commissioned to grow the school's endowment and increase the number of friends and donors to the school.
- SI 2.4 – Board will create a program for planned-giving that includes trusts, living wills and insurance policies.
- SI 2.5 – Administration will evaluate and develop a consistent program with procedures for general fundraising in the school.

#### **Goal 3: To assess and develop the financial status of the school as it pertains to budget preparation and implementation, the tuition assistance program, and a staff compensation plan.**

- SI 3.1 – Board will commission the Finance Committee and administration to assess the methodology, implementation, and communication of budget formation.
- SI 3.2 – Board and administration will analyze and recommend a new/revised salary plan and total compensation package for faculty and staff.
- SI 3.3 – Board and administration will develop a consistent, comprehensive plan of communication where decisions, policies, procedures, and plans are made known to those having budget oversight, and to the school's constituents in a timely manner (See also: SI 1.2 & 1.3).
- SI 3.4 – Finance Committee will produce a comprehensive policy & procedures manual to be incorporated into the school's financial operations.

**Goal 4: To enhance our school atmosphere with a culturally diverse population and program that reaches out to all sectors of the community we serve, and to the broader international Christian community.**

- SI 4.1 – Board and administration will establish a subcommittee to evaluate the school's present situation and recommend a course of action to expand our cultural diversity.
- SI 4.2 – This subcommittee will develop an action plan to address diversity in the following strategic areas:
  - Enrollment
  - Staff development/Recruitment/Awareness
  - Curriculum
  - Scholarship
  - Church relations
- SI 4.3 – The Administration will develop a plan and process for enrolling international students in the school as fully integrated members of the WCS community.
- SI 4.4 – The Administration will implement a curriculum review with a view to integrate diversity instruction and awareness throughout the curriculum.
- SI 4.5 – Establish another foreign language offering in the school, as well as acquire a program of English as a second language (ESL).

**Goal 5: To expand the school's academic program and course offerings to be more distinctive and to offer more challenging opportunities for our students.**

- SI 5.1 – Board will commission the Academic Affairs Committee to develop a course of action that assesses our present high school course offerings with the view to revise/increase elective courses.
- SI 5.2 – Study, develop, and implement a program of summer school that will address the needs of students for remediation, enhancement, and make-up, as well as partner with homeschoolers in order to promote the school in the community and better utilize our facilities.

- SI 5.3 – Develop an additional track of courses with a business orientation to meet the needs of students outside of the existing college-prep program.
- SI 5.4 – High school administration and guidance will build stronger relations with colleges and universities to make them aware of the quality of our program and the caliber of our students so that we are known and recruited by more quality institutions.
- SI 5.5 – Build a foreign language program in the elementary school.
- SI 5.6 – The administration and the board's Technology Committee will develop an overall plan to provide our students with the resources and training to be competitive in the area of computer technology.
- SI 5.7 – Commission a study and develop a plan to enhance our school's math and science programs.

**Goal 6: To evaluate the school's athletic, fine arts, and drama programs.**

**Athletics:**

- SI 6.1a – Develop a strategy for our sports program (grades 6-12), by evaluating our present program, assess the possibilities of additional sports, and promote athletics among the school community.
- SI 6.2b – Develop an intramural sports program in the upper elementary grades (grades 3-5).
- SI 6.3a – Assess the feasibility of developing football at WCS.

**Fine Arts:**

- SI 6.1b – Strengthen our present music department by offering more courses and developing a fully integrated strings program.
- SI 6.2b – Develop a stronger vocal music program including voice and performance electives.
- SI 6.3c – Develop promotional events and opportunities for our choral and instrumental groups.
- SI 6.4 – Develop more courses and opportunities for students to express their gifts in the visual arts.

**Drama:**

- SI 6.1c – Expand our present drama program by offering courses and producing more performances, becoming an integral part of the school's academic program.

**Goal 7: To renovate and upgrade specific areas of our facilities and grounds.**

- SI 7.1 – Commission an architect to submit plans for the upgrade of our main lobby in order to better promote the school "Brand" to outsiders and visitors.
- SI 7.2 – Renovate and upgrade the vestibule of our Fine Arts Center to enhance the overall appearance.
- SI 7.3 – Acquire additional land that would allow for expansion of our athletic fields and program.
- SI 7.4 – Build a new recreation area for our early childhood classes (PreK–grade 1).

- SI 7.5 - Expand the present art room to provide more space for equipment and different art medias for our students.
- SI 7.5 – Reconfigure and resurface our school parking lot and driveway.

**V. Conclusion:**

The Administrative Team of Wilmington Christian School recommends this Strategic Plan for adoption by the Board of Trustees.

While there are numerous worthy projects that could be valuable to the school's operation and growth, this plan represents vital activities that will have the greatest impact on the future development of the Wilmington Christian School mission, vision, and goals for its ministry.

**This Strategic Plan is to be reviewed, evaluated, and updated on an annual basis.**

Respectfully submitted,  
William F. Stevens, Jr.  
Headmaster