



2026

# *Strategic Plan*



#### MISSION STATEMENT

***Gulf Stream School empowers  
children to succeed, inspires  
intellectual curiosity, and celebrates  
both effort and accomplishment.***

#### VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to enrich and expand opportunities within our whole-child program, ensure an aligned curriculum that exceeds top educational benchmarks, and blend traditional academic tracks with innovative methods of instruction. We are committed to cultivating an outstanding faculty and developing modern facilities to support excellence in education. Our graduates, distinguished by exceptional character, thrive at their top-choice high schools.





## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD

John Backer, Chair  
Carly Bellis  
Katie Orthwein  
Denise Burns  
Charles Hagy, Jr.  
Marc Julien

## THANK YOU

Our gratitude to the parents,  
grandparents, and alumni  
who participated in the  
strategic planning process.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Gray Smith, Ed.D., Head of School  
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#### IMPERATIVE

***Offer a relevant, innovative,  
and enriching whole-child  
educational program.***

#### RATIONALE

A dynamic school aligns with the needs, challenges, and interests of its students, and it innovates by introducing new methods, ideas, and perspectives to move beyond outdated formats. With alignment and innovation as the basis for developing our full school program, we will ensure an enriching experience with long-term benefits for our students.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Gather feedback from students, teachers, and parents to understand evolving interests, challenges, and needs.
- Use focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and observation to understand students' academic preferences, extracurricular interests, and socio-emotional needs.
- Measure progress across all programmatic areas with an emphasis on academics, character development, athletics, and the arts, both visual and performing.
- Vary instructional techniques and methodologies, deploy a diverse array of assessments, and tailor each child's educational experience to his/her individual learning plans to personalize the educational experience.

## IMPERATIVE

# *Attract, Develop, and Retain Exceptional Educators*



## RATIONALE

Faculty are the cornerstone of a thriving academic community. To fulfill our mission and provide students with an outstanding education, we must attract, develop, and retain top-tier educators who are deeply committed to our school's values and vision. A faculty with a strong sense of purpose fosters an engaging learning environment, drives innovation in teaching, and builds lasting relationships with students and families.

## ACTION STEPS

- Remain dedicated to faculty development that is aligned with top educational benchmarks, curriculum innovation, and academic excellence.
- Attract high-caliber, mission-aligned educators.
- Continue cultivating an environment where top talent is valued, developed, and retained.





#### IMPERATIVE

***Develop, build, and maintain  
a network of collaborative  
learning partnerships.***

#### RATIONALE

Collaborative learning partnerships enable the sharing of knowledge, skills, and perspectives that enhance problem-solving and innovation. Building such networks foster unique and meaningful learning experiences that help our students stand out as top candidates for high school admissions.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Identify and connect with partner organizations, being mindful of the opportunity for our students to work in environments with people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and areas of expertise.
- Recognize and showcase the outcomes of collaborative projects, highlighting the unique contributions and innovations that emerge from partnerships.
- Ensure ongoing communication with partners to maintain and expand learning networks, fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous learning beyond the classroom.



IMPERATIVE

*Amplify  
communications  
and marketing.*

## RATIONALE

Widely sharing the GSS experience and showcasing the value of graduating from GSS strengthens brand awareness, deepens community connections, attracts new families, and retains current students.

## ACTION STEPS

- Showcase stories of personal growth, student achievements, alumni achievements, and the unique aspects of the curriculum, culture, and community at GSS.
- Deepen our alumni network; create opportunities for alumni to engage with current students and young alumni.



## IMPERATIVE

*Ensure financial stability through responsible stewardship and strategic long-term planning.*



## RATIONALE

Developing multiple financial and investment models allows the school to mitigate risks, secure long-term growth, and maintain the flexibility needed to innovate and thrive in an ever-changing educational landscape. By prioritizing financial resilience, GSS will continue providing high-quality education and serving its students, faculty, and community for years to come.

## ACTION STEPS

- Regularly examine tuition rates; thoughtfully determine GSS's place in the market.
- Examine fundraising levels, develop multiple budget scenarios, evaluate the growth of the endowment, steward contributions, build and maintain philanthropic relationships with all constituencies.
- Showcase our campus and facilities on both campuses, ensure a modern and safe place for students and faculty, and continually evaluate possibilities for improvement.





***Our legacy shines.***

**MAIN CAMPUS**

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**DELRAY BEACH CAMPUS**

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