**Ridgewood School**

**Strategic Plan**

**2022 through 2025**

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**Approved by the board May 19, 2022**

# Letter from the Head of School

Ridgewood School has developed outstanding citizens and leaders for 100 years. Today members of the Ridgewood School family are embarking on our second century of providing outstanding education. To ensure we remain strong and relevant in our second century, we developed this strategic plan.

We assessed relevant internal and external data; analyzed current local and national trends; and conducted wide-ranging discussions with all constituencies. Using the information from the assessment, analysis, and discussions, we set aggressive and measurable goals.

This strategic plan builds on our strengths. We expect it to guide us into the future to enable us to continue to educate the whole person; to continue preparing our alumni to excel in high school and college; to continue developing artists, scientists, business leaders, and community leaders with a global perspective; and to continue Ridgewood’s long tradition of award winning student achievement.

I invite you to join us on the journey to our even more successful future.

Aliya Ranginwala

Head of School

# Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

Ridgewood School creates a vibrant and personalized learning environment that cultivates the intellect, creativity, 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
* Encourages academic excellence
* Celebrates diversity
* Fosters respect
* Expects integrity
* Embraces responsibility
* Promotes leadership
* Instills citizenship
* Engages the whole child

# Strategic Goals

**Goal 1: Continuously improve the overall learning experience to ensure ongoing relevance as we develop alumni who excel in learning, achieve in life, and engage in the global community.**

Ridgewood is 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 and to be confident in their abilities.

Objective 1A: Continuously improve the curriculum to build on our strengths and maintain top to bottom alignment.

* Cross-curricular connections
* Curriculum maps for subjects across grade levels
* Ridgewood School Values throughout the curriculum
* Hands on, interactive, project based learning
* Consistent student expectations and accountabilities at each grade level

Objective 1B: Enhance our strong service learning program.

* Provide a capstone service learning project for 7th-8th graders.

Objective 1C: Strengthen focus on developing life skills.

* Organizational, time management, and personal responsibility skills
* Social and emotional resilience; coping skills
* Critical thinking and problem solving skills
* Using technology
* Personal finances
* Real world connections (ex: mentorships, business connections)

Objective 1D: Expand collaborations with professional arts groups and neighboring colleges to enhance student academic and extra-curricular experiences.

* Wittenberg education, sports management, and exercise science departments
* Wright State University
* Clark State College
* Westcott House
* Springfield Museum of Art
* Springfield Arts Council
* Springfield Symphony Orchestra

Objective 1E: Expand continuing professional development for faculty.

* Include Ridgewood provided as well as programs through external organizations.
* Visit ISACS accredited schools to learn from others.

Objective 1F: Incorporate student activities and achievements in student record or student resume.

* Activities and achievements could include:
  + Leadership activities
  + Competitions such as Science Fair and Power of the Pen
  + Sports participation
  + Public speaking and performance activities
  + And more

**Goal 2: Fill every class with qualified students**

We actively seek students throughout Clark and surrounding counties who will benefit from and contribute to the vibrant Ridgewood learning environment. Through our admissions process we strive to enroll students who are ready to learn. Our students grow and thrive through our academic and extra-curricular experiences.

Objective 2A: Achieve full classes of 16 qualified and diverse students in all grades with students from Clark, Champaign, and Greene Counties.

* Develop a strategic, comprehensive, and consistent approach to marketing in all three counties.
* Secure and share testimonials from alumni and parents about their Ridgewood education (quotes or videos).
* Increase applicants to enable more selectivity.

Objective 2B: Retain all qualified students who enroll at Ridgewood.

Objective 2C: Implement a targeted effort to recruit and retain middle school students.

Objective 2D: Network throughout the counties to recruit qualified students.

* Pre-schools
* HR departments
* Guidance counselors
* Provide materials to trustees, staff, and parents.

Objective 2E: Monitor and report metrics that will enable us to take appropriate action.

* Number of students and waiting list at each grade level
* Number of scholarship students (RW provided and Ed Choice)
* Ethnicity of students
* Number of students from each county represented
* Number and grade of students leaving with reason(s) why

**Goal 3: Develop and implement a sustainable financial model to enable Ridgewood to achieve its long term vision.**

*As we move from reliance on tuition and continue addressing capital needs, our budgeting is becoming more complex. The financial model will enable us to prepare for the future while meeting current needs.*

Objective 3A: Develop and maintain a long-term (five or ten year) strategic Financial Plan including assumptions related to staffing, compensation, tuition, endowment, unearned income, and economy.

The plan will address:

* Planned tuition increases over time
* Minimum goals for enrollment over time
* Minimum goals for endowment, annual fund, business campaign, and fundraisers over time
* Ongoing facilities maintenance and improvements
* Ongoing technology replacements and improvements
* Ideal staffing model
* Goals for faculty and staff compensation
* Cash reserves
* Endowment spending

Objective 3B: Continue to increase faculty and staff compensation.

* Competitive with compensation at public schools
* Reduce turnover caused by low compensation

Objective 3C: Set and achieve endowment goals

* Reach endowment goals set in 2020 by the RSA Board of Trustees. (Ridgewood Forever-$1million, Academic Excellence-$1 million, Facilities Endowment-$500,000)
* Create and initiate a plan for increasing faculty and staff compensation.
* Increase H. S. Kissell Legacy Society members.

Objective 3D: Maintain a Director of Development position to ensure that organizational fundraising goals are met at a reasonable and increasing rate:

* Establish with Board of Trustees annual fundraising goals.
* Construct and implement fundraising campaigns and strategies.
* Identify and connect with potential donors.
* Plan and host events designed to encourage donations.
* Secure grants to support educational mission and operations.
* Explore and establish a non-profit CRM.

**Goal 4: Strengthen and sustain relationships with our alumni.**

*We have accomplished alumni living and contributing to their communities throughout the world. The success of our alumni is a strong testimonial to the quality of a Ridgewood education. We will work to enhance our ability to connect with our alumni, to celebrate them, and to benefit from their support and what they have learned and accomplished since leaving Ridgewood.*

Objective 4A: Deepen relationships with alumni during their high school and college years.

* Continue to recognize our alumni at their high school and college graduations.
* Continue to engage our high school and college-age alumni in Ridgewood programs and activities.
* Continue to communicate with our high school and college-age alumni via newsletters, birthday and new year cards, Facebook, Instagram, etc.
* Hold at least one special event annually for Ridgewood’s alumni now in high school and another for our alumni attending college.
* Explore establishing a mentor program for upper-level Ridgewood students using our alumni who are high school students.

Objective 4B: Engage our alumni in Ridgewood activities and the support of our students, not failing to recognize our alumni’s accomplishments and their support of Ridgewood School.

* Continue to enlist alumni participation in classes, extra-curricular programs, school assemblies, Summer Enrichment, career days and “workplace shadowing,” etc.
* Continue pen pal program between students. and alumni.
* Continue to recognize alumni for their achievements and support of Ridgewood School.
* Establish methods to use digital and social media to promote alumni volunteer opportunities and communication.

Objective 4C: Maintain regular and systematic communication, engagement, and networking with and among alumni, alumni families, and Ridgewood supporters using a variety of media and methodologies.

* Continue to provide timely updates about Ridgewood.
* Continue to provide graduates, their parents, and Ridgewood friends the *Ridgewood Times.*
* Continue to recognize our alumni, their families, and our supporters for their achievements and support.
* Continue to host an annual alumni dinner and recognize anniversary classes.
* Expand use of Ridgewood School alumni social media platforms.
* Explore and establish a non-profit CRM.

**Goal 5: Continue to Improve Operations**

*We are taking the opportunity of this strategic plan to examine every part of our operations. We want to ensure our operations will support our ability to thrive in our second century of operation.*

Objective 5A: Continue strong board governance

* Continue planning for board succession based on needed skills, needed connections, and reflection of the diversity of our community.
* Continue to provide board orientation.
* Utilize annual retreat as a continuing education opportunity for the board
* Ensure that the Board Committees meet regularly and provide the board with regular updates.
* Conduct an enterprise risk assessment to be used in developing a business continuity plan and updating our disaster preparedness and recovery plan.
* Continue efforts to make Ridgewood School financially attractive to potential employees.
* Develop a clear implementation plan and timeline for actions identified through the strategic plan.

Objective 5B: Continue strong administrative practices

* Delegate leadership roles to interested and capable faculty by identifying tasks that can be share and documenting what is needed.
* Continue supporting the ongoing ISACS accreditation cycle.
* Develop plans for potential loss of critical staff by documenting practices and protocols in areas such as service learning and science fair and provide existing faculty with mentorship opportunities in such areas.
* Ensure ongoing board, staff, and head of school involvement in the independent school movement by recommending and providing for professional development and ongoing training.
* Increase student and family accountability by enforcing policies for tardiness, absences, and failure to submit homework.
* Continue offering behavior support program for lower-level students