



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT CARD

Subjects	F	W Term	S	Progress / Next Steps
A+ to A- = 100-80% B+ to B- = 79-70% C+ to C- = 69-60% D+ to D- = 59-50% F = 49% and below Effort: E = Exceptional G = Good NI = Needs Improvement				
Times late this term:	Times late this year to date:		Days absent this term:	Days absent this year to date:



March 2010

Dear Sterling Hall School Parents,

Almost three years ago, our Board of Governors approved The Sterling Hall School five-year Strategic Plan. This plan was created to guide us in our decisions, helping us to maintain the values and culture of our school, while strengthening it and positioning it for a brighter future over the next several years and beyond.

The Strategic Plan provides a touchstone that helps us weigh and measure each decision we make, thus ensuring that everything we do at SHS is for the good of our school and of benefit to our boys. Our success is due, in no small measure, to the extraordinary efforts, dedication, creativity, and passion of the remarkable team which is the SHS Faculty and Staff. We at The Sterling Hall School are, in addition, fortunate to be guided by the strong, committed individuals – all current or Alumni Parents – who are the members of the SHS Board of Governors. Last but definitely not least, I should add here that our constant inspiration remains your sons who impress us day after day.

As we are approximately half way through the life span of our Strategic Plan, it is appropriate that we take stock and review our progress. On the following pages, you will find each of the eight goals highlighted in the plan, with notes on our key accomplishments, key metrics of which we are particularly proud, and areas where you can expect continued improvement over the next two years. I am pleased to note that, within each goal, we have met or exceeded almost all of the strategies that we established in the original Strategic Plan.

Our graduates continue to be in high demand, a fact that is not surprising to me. The strength of an SHS education goes far beyond what you should expect from academics, clubs, and teams. Indeed, unparalleled leadership and public speaking opportunities are created for our boys by unique elements such as student-led weekly Assemblies, a strong House System, and a Student Council that is available to every boy. Support for these important initiatives is offered by Character Education Service Learning, and Peer Mentorship programs that help to define our school and the capabilities and expectations of our students. These facets of the SHS experience, coupled with a strong academic and extra-curricular program, make our graduates very attractive candidates in the opinion of their high schools of choice.

The document you hold here is, so to speak, our Strategic Plan Report Card. I invite you to celebrate our achievements as we work towards an even stronger future.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Robinson, Principal

I. Engaged Students

Goal: SHS will develop well-rounded, confident, and forward-thinking young men who are sought out by their schools of choice.

Accomplishments

In this last year, 94% of the SHS graduates were admitted to at least one of their top two choices of secondary school. This figure is consistent with previous years.

We are proud of our highly successful Character Education Stewardship Program, which develops boys' co-operation and teamwork skills through global awareness activities and service learning initiatives. This program is emulated by many other institutions.

Our extra-curricular program is unparalleled. We have more than 40 teams and 35 clubs for our 307 students, far exceeding the ratios offered by other independent schools.

Enrolment at SHS is consistently at capacity, with healthy wait lists.

Priorities for 2010/2011

We will be implementing our new homework guidelines. These guidelines will help to ensure that homework is a meaningful exercise that emphasizes quality over quantity, and will encourage teachers to assign projects that can be completed at school whenever possible.

We continue to emphasize and develop ways to expand our secondary school transitioning program into a process that becomes the Gold Standard in the province.

We will continue to develop the initiatives that are already in place to support Grade 8 families during the secondary school application process. These include High School Fairs, a Parent panel evening, admissions interview rehearsals, and an innovative Faculty-Student Mentorship Program which has served as a model for schools internationally. We also have plans to add an SSAT Club.

We will continue to develop ways to foster diversity within our school. This includes attracting boys from a wider range of backgrounds and finding new ways to facilitate the different learning styles and abilities of our students.

***Visit www.sterlinghall.com for more information.**

MAKING THE GRADE

94% Percentage of SHS Grade 8 graduates accepted by at least one of their top two choices of secondary school

Our admissions rates remain stable:

2007 = 305 2008 = 307 2009 = 307

40 Average number of teams offered each year

35 Average number of clubs offered each year

2. Excellence in Program

Goal: In all disciplines, SHS will meet or exceed both the Ontario Curriculum and the curricula of competing local independent schools.

Accomplishments

SHS maintains small classes, with a maximum of 16 students in JK and Grades 1, 2, and 3, and 18 students in SK and Grades 4-8. We have one of the lowest student:teacher ratios (8:1) of any independent school in the GTA, so that students can receive individualized assistance and support.

We have developed and implemented the **SHS Academic Vision** based on research into effective practices in boys' education. It will be launched to the community in spring 2010.

Students at all levels have a Homeroom Teacher who monitors their progress across the subject areas. This model is supplemented by Specialist Teachers (from five to nine, depending on the grade level), who develop specific skills and knowledge.

We have improved the French curriculum. There is now a greater balance between oral communication, reading, and writing, focusing on practical skills.

Our strong IT infrastructure includes a laptop cart, projectors, in-class videos, SMART Boards, and software to enhance the learning experience, plus email and a web page for some grade levels.

Student behaviour is evolving in a positive direction. The Character Education Stewardship Program appears to be successful in enhancing this trend.

The Curriculum Steering Committee meets monthly to help direct the School's Academic Vision and make curriculum decisions based on research.

Priorities for 2010/2011

We will continue to increase collaboration between Homeroom and Specialist Teachers. Understanding one another's course requirements will enable teachers to co-ordinate efforts so that all of the curricular threads will be infused into the Academic Program.

Throughout the 2009/2010 academic year, we are conducting in-house Mathematics professional development, in order to grow and strengthen our current program.

We will provide education to the Parent body on the **Essential Skills*** so that the program is transparent.

We will further our IT progress with individual training for Faculty.

We will continue the new Secondary Tracking Education Program (STEP), which facilitates the collection of data from our graduates to help inform our curricular decisions.

The **Sterling Institute*** will continue to evolve as a research and development-based model, benefiting from collaborative work with members of other independent schools.

The Academic Team will continue to work collaboratively with the Admissions Team to ensure that new admissions to SHS are compatible with the mission of our school and will be successful in our program.

An **inquiry-based model for learning*** is suitable for students at all levels and is well-documented as a method for driving the professional development of teachers. As a Faculty, we are pursuing our own understanding of the diverse ways in which students use inquiry to aid their learning. Our responsibility is to identify and enhance their academic growth.

We are developing our assessment practices to ensure that each boy has the ability to take charge of his own learning and ask questions that drive the inquiry and discovery process.

We will educate the community on the elements of the SHS Academic Vision and monitor its effectiveness.

MAKING THE GRADE

16 Maximum class size, JK and Grades 1, 2, and 3

18 Maximum class size, SK and Grades 4-8

8:1 Student:Teacher ratio

MAKING THE GRADE

TECHNOLOGY 2007:

- Refreshed The Cheddie Lab with 18 new computers and SMART Board
- Added 2 classroom projectors
- Added Science portable SMART Board

TECHNOLOGY 2008:

- Installed Library Screen and AV cart
- Mounted 3 ceiling projectors in classrooms
- Installed 3 classroom SMART Boards

TECHNOLOGY 2009:

- Acquired laptop cart (18 MacBooks)
- Mounted 3 ceiling projectors in classrooms
- Installed 4 classroom SMART Boards
- Acquired a class set of digital cameras

3. Exceptional Faculty & Staff

Goal: SHS will attract, develop, and retain the very best people, because a dedicated, diverse, and accomplished Faculty and Staff are the essence of a good school.

Accomplishments

SHS Faculty are often invited to national and international conferences as speakers and workshop leaders.

Although we do not actively seek or apply for awards, our Faculty frequently receive external recognition: James Hay received the PM Award in Teaching in 2006 from MP and SHS Alumni Parent Dr. Carolyn Bennett. Tim Nahachewsky received the Adult/Coach/Mentor Award, Toronto Regional 2009, for his work with the Robotics Club.

Each year, Faculty members join TARGET (Toronto Action Research Group – Excellence in Teaching). They complete Action Research projects and attend conferences and workshops, and their research is used to help formulate decisions at SHS and at other schools. This year, seven SHS Faculty are participating.

Priorities for 2010/2011

We will continue to develop The Sterling Institute to offer opportunities for Faculty to publish their work and attract interest from educational leaders nationally and internationally.

We will continue to seek out excellent educators with strong character by conducting interviews throughout the year to ensure that we have a continuous pool of applicants. Candidates will have an

opportunity to connect with our school through substitute teaching roles and the Teach to Reach program.

Through the Master Facilities Plan, we are working toward a solution that will improve teaching spaces, as well as offices and other facilities, to enhance the quality of working life for our Faculty and Staff.

MAKING THE GRADE

2.5% Low annual Faculty turnover rate

4. Effective Communication

Goal: SHS's communication and marketing efforts will clearly define the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the school to its current and prospective constituents and will be designed to foster and stimulate relationships within the school community and with the community at large.

Accomplishments

Our new website was launched in September 2009. It more accurately reflects our brand and values to those outside the SHS community, while providing more and better information internally to Parents, Students, and Faculty and Staff.

Our Parents Association (PA) created a monthly newsletter (*The Link*) in November 2008 to keep Parents up-to-date on school activities.

We have implemented the Friday Memo. This weekly email to every SHS family provides their son's weekly schedule as well as reminders and announcements.

For the past three years, our students have been learning how to be responsible communicators in the digital age through discussions about safe and appropriate internet usage, as well as an Appropriate Web Use Agreement.

We have developed an Alumni communications strategy, which includes regular newsletters and the revitalization of the Alumni magazine, *The White & Blue*, which was distributed in May 2009 and is now an annual publication.

This year, we launched a new advertising campaign, "We see the world through the eyes of boys," and strategically streamlined our advertising channels to maximize impact while testing new markets.

Priorities for 2010/2011

We will continue to develop our communications strategy by developing protocols for discussing sensitive issues, and initiating an exit interview system for families.

We will continue informal communication channels that include: regular access to teachers; our Principal's open door communication policy; dinners with and talks from the Principal and the PA President to keep Parents informed; and a buddy system to help new SHS Parents.

We will update the progress being made on the Strategic Plan via the Annual Report Card.

We will request feedback from our constituents through satisfaction surveys.

5. Advancing the Mission

Goal: The commitment of our community to support the well-being and growth of SHS is, and will continue to be, essential to its future success.

Accomplishments

We have a well-structured and strongly supported fundraising program in place. Thanks to the generosity of our community and their belief in SHS, we have a high participation rate in our Annual Giving campaign, with 66% of Parents, 90% of Faculty and Staff, and 100% of our Board making contributions in 2009.

We are also thankful to our benefactors who have generously made major gifts to the School, thus funding capital improvements that will benefit our students for many years to come.

SHS benefits from an extremely high volunteer rate, with over 70% of Parents participating as volunteers.

We welcomed our first Old Boy to a Board Task Force this year, and look forward to more of our graduates joining the school government.

Priorities for 2010/2011

We will engage the volunteer services of the SHS community for annual fundraising campaigns, capital projects, and recruitment of students via the admissions process.

We will use the approved Master Facilities Plan to develop the next capital project and enlist the financial support of our constituents.

We will work toward building a scholarship fund to attract and retain a more diverse student body.

We will work with the Parents Association to streamline governance and best practices for Parent volunteer programs and activities.

We will continue to strengthen ties with our Alumni by providing age-appropriate opportunities and activities that include Board participation.

We will seek opportunities to keep Alumni Parents involved in the School in a volunteer, social, or financial capacity.

MAKING THE GRADE

70%+ Parents Association volunteer rates

Annual Giving Participation	2008	2009
Parents	55%	66%
Board	100%	100%
Faculty & Staff	57%	90%

6. Environmental Responsibility

Goal: SHS will ensure that all boys have a foundation upon which they can base gentler living on our earth.

Accomplishments

Our green initiatives extend across three areas of school life:

- **Curriculum.** Our Faculty and Staff have launched the “Breathe Life” movement. By building Earth citizenship as an ethical message into all subject areas, the environment has been made a focus for every grade level.
- **Students.** A group of older boys has revamped the school’s recycling program, instituted organics collections, raised money for a tree planting project, and organized a t-shirt contest to “Save the Sharks.” SHS is now a disposable plastic water bottle-free zone.
- **Facilities.** Our operations department has taken steps to lessen the environmental impact of our facilities by reducing energy and water use, minimizing the generation of landfill waste, and contracting some of our electricity from Bullfrog Power. A group of Parent volunteers are providing regular information on relevant environmental topics.

A Green Task Force was established at the Board level to investigate programs that

can be implemented by the school to reduce our environmental footprint.

Priorities for 2010/2011

We will continue to expand the “Breathe Life” project to enable our community to have a gentler impact on our Earth.

We will support ongoing student green projects: the Grade 8 class will plant trees; the Alumni Class of ‘09 is working to complete the “no idling” signs on the SHS driveway; a group of students will provide us with tools to measure our footprint; another group is working with The McCain Dining Hall to find ways to reduce food packaging.

We will use the tools in the Ecoschool portfolio to measure our environmental footprint.

We will ensure, as much as possible, that any new construction at SHS will be LEED-certified.

7. Financial Strength

Goal: SHS will manage its financial position prudently. Any surplus funds will be contributed to the SHS Foundation, thus building a capital reserve to enable the School to pursue and achieve its strategic objectives.

Accomplishments

We are debt-free and operate without a deficit.

Our tuition remains competitive with comparable schools, helping us to remain an attractive option in the independent school landscape.

The SHS Foundation now has a building reserve fund, which would allow us to purchase our current school property should it become available, or another suitable property for future development.

SHS now owns the 1.5 acres of property immediately to our west.

Priorities for 2010/2011

We will maintain our competitive tuition rate.

We will manage the capital reserve for facilities and the possible purchase of land, or call upon it if the economic environment requires.

8. Permanence & Growth

Goal: Under the strategic direction and oversight of its Board of Governors, SHS is committed to ensuring that the permanence of the institution is

secured for future generations and is responding to needs at all levels, whether elementary or secondary.

Accomplishments

We have developed a relationship with the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Lands Corporation and are engaged in ongoing negotiations with both regarding the purchase of our current school site.

In June 2009, the Master Facilities Plan (MFP) Rationale was approved with input from the Board, Staff, Faculty, and representation from the Parent community. The MFP Rationale provided the background information necessary for our architects to develop an MFP that is 100% program-driven and that will reflect the SHS strategic goals and address the security of the campus.

In June 2009, the Board passed a motion of the Strategic Planning Committee accepting a Vision for The Sterling Hall Secondary School and calling for the formation of a Secondary School Task Force. A Task Force has been formed.

A new keying system, which includes Parent security passes, has been implemented to increase security for our boys. In addition, better lighting, remote and local surveillance, and high standards of adult supervision emphasize the importance of having a safe and secure school.

We have made great progress in maintaining and adopting Board governance best practices through the formation of a Governance Committee that has assisted in the areas of recruitment, effectiveness, succession planning, risk management, and communication practices.

Priorities for 2010/2011

The Property Committee is working to develop and approve the next generation of the Master Facilities Plan.

We will evaluate the Secondary School Task Force Rationale for a recommendation on whether to remain an elementary school or add a secondary component.

We will continue to monitor security measures and implement additional ones as needed.

The purchase of our current property remains a top priority. We will also assess other local properties as they become available.

We will continue to revisit and update our long-term Strategic Plan.