

Exploris Strategic Plan

Draft 5

3/10/19

MISSION:

Exploris is a diverse learning community that engages students in a challenging, relevant relationship-based education. We do this through experiential, project-based learning that empowers students to foster a just and sustainable world.

VISION:

Empowering learners to make the world better.

CORE VALUES

Exploris is a school founded on the principles of Global Education. According to David Selby and Graham Pike, international leaders in this approach, Global education is based upon “the interconnectedness of communities, lands, and peoples, the interrelatedness of all social, cultural and natural phenomena, links between past, present and future, and the complementary nature of the cognitive, affective, physical and spiritual dimensions of the human being. It addresses issues of development, equity, peace, social and environmental justice, and environmental sustainability. It encompasses the personal, the local, the national and the planetary. Along with these principles, its approach to teaching and learning is experiential, interactive, children-centred, democratic, convivial, participatory, and change-oriented.”

Exploris’s articulation of its core values ground the school in this global approach.

INNOVATION - In a constantly changing world, the ability to approach challenges in a new way is vital. Exploris teachers and students design projects that encourage divergent thinking, creativity, ideation, and risk-taking.

SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT - Students learn best when they are exposed to meaningful, complex issues that are applicable to their own lives. Teachers engage students in current, relevant issues by solving authentic problems that are being addressed beyond the four walls of the school building. Students realize that they have the power to change how their world works. They know how to navigate public systems, lobby public officials, and present their research and opinions as responsible citizens. Student work is tangibly connected not only to the local community, but to other regions of the world and to past and future events.

RELATIONSHIPS - A nurturing school environment is one where students are encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships and collaborate with their teachers, parents, peers, and community. With a keen understanding of the unique developmental of the age group which they teach, teachers are intentional about the structures and relationship-building activities that they design. Positive relationships and collaboration results in a tapestry of learners who know they can depend on each other and work together in almost any situation. The end-product is deeper, and Exploris students experience a collective sense of accomplishment and ownership.

REFLECTION - In an ever changing world of new ideas, the importance of reflecting on one's own thinking and the thinking of others cannot be underestimated. Exploris values the creation of time to slow down, to reflect, and to build connections.

CRAFTSMANSHIP - Producing an exemplary product is challenging. It takes attention to detail, grit, perseverance, revision, and tenacity. It takes a growth mindset and a dedication to competing with one's own personal best.

CURIOSITY - True knowledge does not occur without curiosity. Students are empowered to ask questions about the world around them and to explore possible answers.

RESPONSIBILITY - Students will take ownership of their learning and accountability for their actions and behavior. Students will recognize the importance of character, integrity, and honesty.

CONNECTIONS TO NATURE - When students witness the power and elements of the natural world through adventure and stewardship, they begin to view themselves as just one species within a larger system.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Increase partnerships with community organizations and parents to support students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

Objective 1.1: Explore grant/research opportunities to support school vision.

Objective 1.2: Partner with local universities to increase education offerings.

Objective 1.3: Partner with community organizations to provide resources for family engagement and wraparound support for their families.

Objective 1.4: Support the development of an innovation center to assist in the transformation of education.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: FACILITIES

Transition successfully to a new K-8 facility that aligns with our core values and expansion needs.

Objective 2.1: Begin construction in spring 2019.

Objective 2.2: Complete and occupy new building by fall 2021.

Objective 2.3: Develop alternate plan if construction does not begin by September 2019.

Objective 2.4: Develop interior design that meets needs of students and staff learning.

Objective 2.5: Ensure technology and infrastructure support instructional strategies.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: FACULTY AND STAFF

Attract and retain innovative and collaborative educators who are involved in shared decision making about issues having an impact on the success of Exploris.

Objective 3.1: Pay salaries competitive with Wake County Schools pay scale.

Objective 3.2: Provide teachers with opportunities for professional development to remain innovative in education.

Objective 3.3: Implement a 360-evaluation process for faculty and staff.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: STUDENT SUCCESS

Strengthen K-8 curriculum and instruction to embrace diversity and differentiation for achieving academic, social, emotional, and cultural growth.

Objective 4.1: Increase academic support across all subgroups.

Objective 4.2: Create a curriculum matrix that guides K-8 instruction.

Objective 4.3: Align essential K-8 social and emotional competencies for successful development.

Objective 4.4: Build capacity to provide students with differentiated instruction.

Objective 4.5: Decrease disruptive student behaviors.

Objective 4.6: Strengthen project-based experiences to be more relevant, community driven, and hands-on.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: DIVERSITY

Increase the racial and socio-economic diversity of Exploris educators and students to reflect that of Wake County.

Objective 5.1: Develop recruitment plan to increase the racial and socio-economic diversity of students and staff.

Objective 5.2: Secure funding to support needs of diverse school community.

Objective 5.3: Increase support staff and resources to meet diverse population needs.

Objective 5.4: Develop strategies for helping students and families to feel welcomed, valued and supported.

Objective 5.5: Increase outreach programs and community partnerships to include online, phone, and translation media.

STRATEGIC GOAL 6: FINANCE

Acquire adequate financial resources to ensure long-term financial sustainability of Exploris.

Objective 6.1: Develop sustainable budget to support strategic goals.

Objective 6.2: Have no substantive audit exceptions.