

Confluence Charter Schools Strategic Plan



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Table of Contents

- Introduction**..... 3
- Teacher Recruitment, Retention and Reward**
 - Strategy 1: Recruitment..... 4
 - Strategy 2: Retention & Development 5
 - Strategy 3: Reward 6

- Curriculum**
 - Strategy 1: Complete the creation of the Confluence Curriculum 7
 - Strategy 2: Complete the creation of the Grand Center Curriculum 8
 - Strategy 3: Create a curriculum structure for ongoing curriculum development..... 9

- Finance**
 - Strategy 1: Increase Revenue 10
 - Strategy 2: Infrastructure 11
 - Strategy 3: Support Teacher Retention efforts 12

- Community and Family Engagement**
 - Strategy 1: Parent/Community Engagement 13
 - Strategy 2: Customer Service/Culture Development 14

- Index**
 - Members of Strategic Planning Committees..... 15

Introduction

In May 2015 the Confluence Board of Directors approved the implementation of a strategic planning process to encompass all of their buildings. Board member, Craig Larson, and Director of Curriculum, Louise Losos, were tasked with creating and implementing a process that would look at all aspects of the Confluence Network of Schools and create a plan that would set the course of Confluence for the next five years. Dr. Keith Marty, Superintendent of the Parkway Schools, was hired to work with alongside Drs Larson and Losos to guide them through the process. Over the course of 9 months a team of 50 Confluence employees met to revise the Mission and Vision statements, to create a SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis, and to determine guiding questions/strategy statements. These questions are:

1. We will maximize our network's financial resources, personnel and opportunities in anticipation of our students' changing societal and innovative needs.
2. We will develop a positive culture that invites, engages and retains students and staff in order to support the personal and academic growth of all of our youth in all the schools in the Confluence network.
3. We will devise a comprehensive system designed to attract and employ teachers whose commitment and outlook toward our students are a match for our mission and vision; develop and enhance the skills of those teachers; and identify incentives to retain talented and effective teachers.
4. We will prepare and implement a systematic and comprehensive pre-k through 12 curriculum that supports and develops the diverse needs of the whole child.

Another groups of Confluence teachers, administrators, and support staff spent 9 months taking these statements and creating the implementation plans that are contained herein.

These plans are designed to raise the level of achievement of our students, and to put Confluence on course to be the leading Charter School Network in the St. Louis region.

Teacher Recruitment, Retention and Reward

Goal: We will devise a comprehensive system designed to attract and employ teachers whose commitment and outlook toward our students are a match for our mission and vision; develop and enhance the skill of those teachers; and identify incentives to retain talented and effective teachers.

Focus Statement: Our business is developing teachers with a passion for students and a commitment to their craft.

Due to the high turnover rate in our schools, the following two objectives emerged as necessary for the network's future success:

- Develop a consistent, detailed recruitment and training program for new staff
- Develop quality teachers and create a professional, supportive culture that helps teachers commit to staying at Confluence long-term

Strategy #1: Recruitment: Get the best teachers (both new and experienced).

Objective: To hire highly qualified staff

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
1. Start earlier and cast a wider net: Regional recruitment HBCUs Job Fairs Advertising	Dion Edwards	\$18,000	1/3/17	Ongoing
2. Staffing becomes part of budget conversations beginning in November	Principals, Jeff Kuntze, Dion Edwards, Candice Carter-Oliver	\$0	2/1/17	Ongoing
3. Partner with university with a focus or experience in training for Urban Ed	Peter Kachris	\$0	2/1/17	
4. Hire full-time recruitment coordinator	Dion Edwards	\$60,000-\$80,000 plus benefits	3/1/17	7/1/17
Implications for professional development/training	1. Training for administrators for Job Fair responsibilities			
Evidence of success (how will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?).	1. Decrease in number of open positions in July and August 2. Increase in number of referrals by existing staff 3. Increase in hires from outside the St. Louis area			

Strategy #2: Retention: Provide training opportunities, both internally and externally, to help our teachers develop and grow and celebrate them when they do.

Objective: Keep the best teachers (both new and experience)

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
1. Teaching Fellowship-prek-8 Work 2-4 weeks during June session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with a mentor teachers • Targeted observations • Co-teach with feedback 	Sarah Lofton	\$1000 per teacher for 10 days	2/1/17	6/2017
2. Teaching Fellowship CPA/GCAA Convene a committee to determine a program that serves the same goals as the preK-8 program	Louise Losos	TBD	8/2017	6/2018
3. Confluence Teacher Academy 10 days prior to returning teachers Increased emphasis on training teachers on the expectations at the Confluence schools. Including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom management • Academics • Discipline • Content & engagement • Trauma-Responsive teaching • Teaching strategies focused on the NEE indicators • 	Louise Losos	\$1500 per teacher mandated to attend \$5000 pool for presenters	2/1/17	7/2017
4. Celebrate Excellence (non-monetarily)	Nez Savala	\$250	2/15/17	8/2017
5. Explore the structure of the elementary school day	Phil Kennedy	TBD	3/1/17	8/2017
6. Explore the structure of the high school/middle school day	Louise Losos	TBD	9/2017	8/2018
Implications for professional development/training	When implemented, items 1, 2 & 3 are intense professional development for teachers new to Confluence.			

	For items 5 & 6, PD around successful classroom practices may be necessary.
Evidence of success (how will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction in teacher turnover 2. Increase in teacher morale as evidence by quality of life surveys.

Strategy #3: Reward

Objective: Compensate teachers who perform

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
1. Student loan forgiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st day of 3rd year • 1st day of 4th year • 1st day of 5th year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For current teachers, eligibility would begin 1st day of the 2018-2019 school year 	Louise Losos	\$1,000 per year for 3 years	3/1/17	8/2018
2. Tuition Reimbursement	Dion Edwards	\$102,000 per year	2/1/17	8/2017
3. Performance Incentives	Candice Carter-Oliver	\$1000 to each employee for improved APR total percentage as per the MSIP 5 cycle (\$500,000)	3/1/17	8/2017
4. Extra-Duty Pay	Dion Edwards	TBD	2/1/17	8/2017
Implications for professional development/training	Professional Development around what student loans are available to teachers outside of Confluence and how to access them			
Evidence of success (how will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction in teacher turnover 2. Increase in teacher morale as evidence by quality of life surveys. 			

Curriculum

Goal: We will develop a vertically aligned, rigorous and articulated curriculum designed to meet the diverse needs of our PreK-12 students.

Strategy #1: Complete the creation of the Confluence curriculum

Objective: To create a viable, written, taught and tested curriculum

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
	Louise Losos			
1. K-5 Social Studies		1. \$125,000	1. 10/2016	1. 8/2017
2. 6 th grade social studies		2. \$25,000	2. 10/2015	2. 8/2017
3. High School Social Studies: AP Psychology, Psychology		3. \$25,000	3. 2/1/17	3. 8/2017
AP Government, Sociology, Current Events			2/1/17	8/2017
			8/2017	8/2018
			8/2017	8/2018
			2/1/17	8/2017
4. K-8 ELA: revision to new standards		4. \$7,500	4. 10/2016	4. 8/2017
5. High School English: revise 9-12, AP English Language		5. \$10,000	5. 2/1/17	5. 8/2017
		\$5,000	1/15/17	8/2017
6. K-5 Math: revision to new standards		6. \$17,000	6. 10/2016	6. 8/2017
7. 8 th Grade Math		7. \$75,000	7. 10/2016	7. 8/2017
8. High School Math: Geometry, Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, Consumer Math		8. \$17,000	8. 2/2017	8. 8/2017
		\$17,000	9/2017	8/2018
		\$10,000	9/2018	8/2019
		\$10,000	9/2018	8/2019
9. K-3 Science		9. \$30,000 annually	9. 10/2016	9. 8/2017
10. High School Science: Chemistry, Anatomy & Physiology, Physics		10. \$15,000	10. 2/17	10. 8/2017
		\$15,000	10/17	8/2018
		\$10,000	10/18	8/2019
11. CTE		11. Perkins	10/17	8/2018
12. PLTW Biomedical		12. Perkins	11. 2/17	11. 8/2017
13. Foreign Language		13. \$15,000	12. 10/18	12. 8/2019
14. Art K-12		14. TBD	13. 9/17	13. 8/2018
15. PE K-12		15. TBD	14. 9/17	14. 8/2018
16. Music K-12		16. TBD	15. 9/17	15. 8/2018
17. Counseling		17. \$10,000	16. 1/2017	16. 8/2017
18. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)		18. TBD	17. 2/2017	17. 8/2017
Implications for professional development/training	For most of these courses, training on the new curriculum will be necessary.			
Evidence of success (how will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?).	Common unit assessments that can be discussed in PLCs and monitored			

Strategy #2: Complete the creation of the GCAA curriculum

Objective: To create a viable, written, taught and tested curriculum

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
1. Personal Finance 2. World Religions 3. 8 th Grade Math 4. Upload the GCAA curriculum to the Google Curriculum Folder	Matt Frederickson	1. \$2000 2. \$2000 3. \$9,000 4. \$0	10/2016 3/1/2017	8/2017 8/2017
Implications for professional development/training	For most of these courses training on the new curriculum will be necessary			
Evidence of success (how will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?).	Implementation of curriculum occurs			

Strategy #3: Create an ongoing 6 yr-curriculum cycle

Objective: To ensure ongoing oversight of curriculum implementation and development.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
1. Create curriculum cycle for GCAA and Confluence curriculum	Louise Losos		1. 1/3/17	1. 7/1/17
2. Add 2 positions: ELA/Social Studies Coordinator Math/Science Coordinator	Dion Edwards Louise Losos	\$50,000-\$60,000 + benefits	2. 3/1/17	2.7/1/17
3. Designate curriculum coordinators to oversee curriculums (in addition to their other responsibilities—i.e. in addition to being a classroom teacher, or instructional coach, etc)* a. Practical Arts b. Fine Arts (art/music) c. PE/Health d. Counseling e. SEL/Trauma a. Solicit applications b. Interview applicants c. Coordinators begin working with Director of Curriculum to set course of curriculum	Louise Losos	\$2,500 each: \$12,500 (increase in stipend during curriculum revision year)	3. 2/1/17	7/1/2017
4. Write expectations of coordinators			4. 3/1/17	4/1/17
5. Create curriculum council to oversee direction of LEA curriculum a. Solicit applications b. Hold interviews where appropriate c. Hold first meeting			5. 2/1/17	7.1.17
Implications for professional development/training	Training in role of coordinator			
Evidence of success (how will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?).	1. Attendance at appropriate professional learning networks meetings 2. Transparent process for review and revision of curriculum 3. Greater teacher involvement in implementation and review of curriculum.			

Finance

Goal: We will maximize our network's resources, personnel and opportunities in anticipation of our students' changing societal and innovative needs.

Strategy #1: Increase Revenue

Objective: To improve the financial bottom line

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
1. Increase attendance rates at CPA to further reduce subsidy provided from three elementary schools.	CPA/Elite Administrators John Klein, Candice Carter-Oliver	Systems Training	Ongoing	Ongoing
2. Increase attendance rates at all schools	Administrators, John Klein, Candice Carter-Oliver	Systems Training	Ongoing	Ongoing
3. Look at enrollment potential at Elite Academy.	Jeff Kuntze, Phil Kennedy, Ron Ferrell		Completed	
4. Reduce attrition rates at all Confluence schools.	Building Administrators, Dion Edwards	Effective Communication, Earlier securing of teacher contracts	2/2017	Ongoing
Implications for Professional Development/Training/Etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systems training for administrators 2. Data training where appropriate 			
Evidence of Success (How will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in attendance rates 2. Increase in enrollment at Elite 3. Decrease in attrition rates 			

Strategy #2: Infrastructure

Objective: To improve the financial bottom line

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
1. Purchase the CPA Library building within the timeframe of the option to purchase.*	Jeff Kuntze	\$8,880,000	2/1/2017	8/2024
2. Purchase the GCAA Beaux Arts building in 2018 once option period has begun*	Jeff Kuntze/Board	\$10,742,000	1/2018	
3. Purchase the GCAA Sun Theater building in 2020 once option period has begun.*	Jeff Kuntze/Board	\$4,388,000	1/2020	
4. Make a decision on whether to merge the existing two LEA's into one.	Board			
Implications for Professional Development/Training/Etc.	None			
Evidence of Success (How will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?)	1. Financial decisions have been made 2. Where appropriate, buildings have been purchased			

Strategy #3: Support teacher retention efforts

Objective: To improve the teaching staff

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/ Implementation Date
Utilize \$1.8M of funds received from the State / DESE Prop C settlement to fund Teacher Quality and Retention efforts undertaken by the organization	Teacher Quality and Retention Committee Candice Carter-Oliver	\$1.8 Million from settlement	3/2017	3/2018
Implications for Professional Development/Training/Etc.				
Evidence of Success (How will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Money has been allocated. 2. Decrease in turnover rate of teachers. 			

Community and Family Engagement

Goal: We will investigate student and parent needs to develop meaningful partnerships that foster innovative learning experiences that drive student success from pre-k to post-graduation.

Strategy #1: Parent/Community Engagement

Objective: Improve the atmosphere around student recruitment and parent/family/community engagement

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/Implementation Date
1. Review/revise current parent coordinator position description. Determine what the role should look like and how many are necessary for effective implementation across the Confluence network of schools.	John Klein, Dion Edwards, Candice Carter-Oliver	\$45,000-\$55,000 + benefits per additional coordinator	3/2017	8/2019
2. Develop a Parent Academy	Parent Coordinator	\$4400 (Bus transportation, Food, Supplies)	8/2017	8/2018
3. Plan community service events to bring real world applications to lessons being taught in classroom (min 1 year).	Parent Coordinator	\$4500 (Bus transportation, food, supplies)	8/2018	10/2018
4. Maintain and create/strengthen parent organizations.	Parent Coordinator, Building Administrators	\$1000	8/2017	1/2018
5. Create a campus based parent/community advisory board for campus principal.	Parent Coordinator, Building Administrators		8/2017	1/2018
6. Create a homework hotline for parents/students needing help with homework.	Parent Coordinator, Building Administrators, Teachers	\$2000/yr	8/2017	1/2018
Implications for Professional Development/Training/Etc.	1. Training will be needed for any new coordinators. 2. Teachers, Admin and coordinators will need training in any technology involved in the Homework hotline.			
Evidence of Success (How will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?)	1. Increased attendance at parent events; 2. Decrease in student attrition rate; 3. Increase in academic performance.			

Strategy #2: Customer Service/Culture Development

Objective: Create a welcoming and friendly environment that is engaging at all campuses that focuses towards improved customer services at the building level in relation to parents, and community visitors.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Resources (available and needed)	Start Date	Completion/Implementation Date
1. Commit to continual support staff training and development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Book studies b. Training on dealing with “difficult people” c. Cross training to ensure continued successful operation of daily school functions d. Welcoming environment 	1. Candice Carter-Oliver, John Klein, Dion Edwards, Principals	\$1500	8/2017	Ongoing
2. Create parent communication tactics that meets the needs of families.	2. Nez Savala		4/2017	Ongoing
Implications for Professional Development/Training/Etc.	1. Training on front office customer service—possibly in conjunction with EdPlus; 2. Training on various technologies that the Network currently uses or will use; 3. Use of teacher PD days for training. 4. Training on approach/technologies of interacting with parents			
Evidence of Success (How will we know we are making progress? What are our benchmarks?)	1. Increase in parent attendance at school functions; 2. Decrease in attrition rates; increase in attendance rates.			

Index

Members of strategic planning committees:

Committee	Members	
Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Reward	Sarah Lofton, Co-Chair Denise Pranger, Co-Chair Steve Burgess Maria Casaleggi Dion Edwards Peter Kachris Deborah Meng Libby Murphy Reid Simpson	Assistant Principal, South City Teacher, GCAA Teacher, GCAA Instructional Coach, South City HR Director Interim CEO Teacher, South City Counselor, Aspire Assistant Principal, Old North
Curriculum	Phil Kennedy, Chair Louise Losos Robert Battle Travis Eubanks Casey McBride Julie Quintero Jennifer Susa Matt Frederickson	Academic Director Director of Curriculum Teacher, CPA Teacher, Elite Academy Teacher, Aspire Academy Teacher, South City Teacher, Old North Principal, GCAA (provided input)
Finance	Jeff Kuntze, Chair Roger Brock Michael Howe Rebecca Irving Bill Rebore Lisa Seligman	CFO South City Assistant Principal GCAA Chemistry Teacher GCAA Assistant Principal Consultant GCAA Parent
Community and Family Engagement	John Klein, Chair Vanetta Clark Dion Edwards Jennifer Luker Lakisha Martin Malissa Moore Nez Savala Janelly Villegas	Director of Operation Teacher, Aspire Director of HR Teacher, CPA Data Owner, ON Dean of Students, GCAA Director of Public Relations Office Manager, SC