

# SLIGO ADVENTIST SCHOOL: STRATEGIC PLAN, 2010-15



9/23/2010

## Educating for Eternity

This document is an updated version of Sligo Adventist School's 2005 strategic plan, subsequently revised in 2007. This updated plan is forward-looking, but focused as well on action plans and projects that we must complete in the near term to satisfy requirements specified in the accreditation Visiting Committee's March 2-3, 2010 report.



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EDUCATING FOR ETERNITY

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“STRATEGY BEGINS WITH THE MISSION...IT LEADS TO A WORK PLAN. IT ENDS WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS... [IT] COMMITS THE NON-PROFIT EXECUTIVE AND THE ORGANIZATION TO ACTION. ITS ESSENCE IS ACTION—PUTTING TOGETHER MISSION, OBJECTIVES, THE MARKET—AND THE RIGHT MOMENT. THE TESTS OF STRATEGY ARE RESULTS.” — **PETER DRUCKER** IN “*MANAGING THE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES*”

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## INTRODUCTION

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Peter Drucker in his book, *MANAGING THE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES*, advises that strategic planning must begin with the mission of the organization and that “the mission is always long-range. It needs short-range efforts and very often short-range results. And yet it starts out with a long-range objective...So we start always with the long range, and then we feed back and say, What do we do today?” This strategic plan aspires to put these principles into practice.

This plan is an updated version of Sligo Adventist School’s (SAS) 2005 strategic plan, subsequently revised in 2007. It is the product of a collaborative process, with input by the school’s board which represents a constituency comprised of the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, parents, school administrators, and faculty. This revised plan was prepared after a decision was taken by constituents of John Nevins Andrews (JNA) school to continue operating as a separate, independent entity, following on discussion and deliberations with their SAS counterpart about possibly merging to create a single new entity.

Another significant event that influenced the preparation and content of this document was the school’s accreditation exercise conducted on March 2-3, 2010. The required “self-study” prior to the arrival of the evaluation team provided opportunity for the board to look afresh at the school’s mission; review its objectives; examine its performance versus the objectives and expectations of its clientele; and develop specific actions to build on identified strengths, correct deficiencies, and define the measurable outcomes we want to achieve over the next span of years.

Considering the foregoing, the revised plan is forward-looking and strategic but focused as well on the concrete actions to be accomplished in the near term as specified in the Visiting Committee’s accreditation report. It is a ‘living’ document and as such it will be reviewed and revised as “facts on the ground” (i.e., existing conditions and forecasts) may warrant.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY, VISION & MISSION

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### EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

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Sligo Adventist School fully subscribes to the general philosophy of Adventist education articulated in the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists' *Journey to Excellence*, namely:

*"The holistic philosophy of Adventist education promotes an ideal educational program that balances student growth and development in all areas—academic, physical, social, and spiritual. Excellence in Adventist education demands a quality program of spiritual growth activities both in the religion courses and in co-curricular activities. It encourages excellence in traditional academic areas such as Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Modern Languages. But it insists on balancing these intellectual pursuits with worthy learning experiences that support all aspects of Adventist education—academic, physical, social, and spiritual.*

*"A strong co-curricular program is essential for balanced student growth. Recognizing that life-long skills are learned from all purposeful school activities, each school should seek to identify, achieve, and maintain balance for students in the curricular and co-curricular program. Adventist schools must seek to provide students with the well-rounded education identified in our unique philosophy of education."*

Consistent with this educational philosophy, Sligo teachers seek to develop a community of learners by effectively balancing explicit teacher-directed instruction with experiential learning and other instructional strategies.

### STRATEGIC VISION

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SAS is a school that values academic excellence and whose staff and students strive always to model grace-oriented behaviors within the school community and in interactions with others outside that community. Going forward we envision SAS as a place where the quality of its curricular and co-curricular programs and the results achieved by its students and graduates will continue to attract a diverse and motivated group of students who subscribe to the school's philosophy of excellence. We will maintain and enhance the school's reputation for graduating students that are well prepared to succeed and excel at the successive levels of education.

### MISSION

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The mission of Sligo Adventist School is to provide a relevant, Christ-centered education in an environment that is conducive to Spiritual Growth, Academic Excellence and Personal Accountability.

### CURRENT SITUATION

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#### SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

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In a back-to-school feature on August 23, 2007 the *Washington Post* reported that:

- a. School enrollment is in decline in many of the region's inner suburbs.
- b. The sharpest enrollment decline has taken place in comparatively poorer communities.

- c. Caucasian student enrollment has been declining for decades, partly due to declining birth rates in this population group.
- d. Schools in middle and upper income communities continue to gain enrollment.
- e. Enrollment of black, Asian and Hispanic students has increased.
- f. Private school enrollment has declined by almost 10% over the past two years. According to NCES in 2005-06 there were some 139 private schools in the county.

By October 29, 2008 *The Gazette* newspaper was reporting that for private schools in the Washington area catering for children from upper middle class families—schools such as Potomac’s Bullis School, Georgetown Preparatory School, McLean School in Potomac, and Bethesda’s Norwood—“the area’s priciest private schools are still seeing increased interest in enrollment despite the economic downturn.” The *Washington Post* meanwhile reported that “enrollment is declining across a broad range of other private campuses,” due to the economic slump. Schools not experiencing the enrollment slump were, however, receiving increased applications for financial aid. In Maryland “the share of students attending public school in the seven-county area reached 82.4 percent last fall, its highest level in 10 years.”

Fast forward to September 8, 2010 and *The Gazette* newspaper is reporting that Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) opened their doors to an enrollment of 145,000 students, 2,200 more than last year. Even taking into account the expected attrition (enrollment is expected to drop to 144,000) in the next few months, the enrollment will still exceed that of 2009 by over 700 students. Private schools, in contrast—especially parochial schools—continue to experience enrollment declines and resulting closures and consolidation.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

To grow SAS’s enrollment and stabilize it at a sustainable level for the foreseeable future requires us to size up and understand where the opportunities for growth may lie. Certainly, a more effective and sustained outreach to the Sligo Church and other Adventist church communities is the first order of business. In addition, there’s need to develop an endowment fund as a source of financial aid to more families needing such assistance. Beyond these efforts we also need an understanding of the wider demographic trends in the given geographic area and what these may suggest in terms of underlying opportunities for growth.

The Sligo Child Development Center (SCDC) was created by the Sligo Church board in 1990 to be a feeder to the K-8 program. (Twelve of the students enrolled at SAS for the 2010-11 school year matriculated from the SCDC whose year-round population is between 38 and 40.) As indicated in the following tables (courtesy of the *Child Care Demographics 2010* report), there would appear to be market potential to expand the SCDC, now that the State of Maryland is more actively promoting early childhood education.

TABLE 1

<b>Child Population</b>		
<b>Maryland</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
0-3 years	216,136	209,218
3-4 years	141,682	144,175
5 years	69,456	74,546
6-9 years	262,917	316,772
10-11 years	124,328	162,481
Total	814,519	907,192

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census Summary Tape File 1A (STF 1A), 1990, 2000 Censuses. Age breakdowns prepared by MFN.

TABLE 2  
Average Weekly Cost of Full-time Child Care

Maryland	Family Child Care Programs	Child Care Centers
	0-23 months	\$167.12
2-4 years	\$140.15	\$163.22
5 years <sup>1</sup>	\$129.41	\$153.53
School Age Full <sup>2</sup>	\$118.59	\$142.76
School Age B/A <sup>3</sup>	\$84.66	\$96.16

Source: MFN/LOCATE: Child Care, 7/09.

<sup>1</sup>Average cost of full time care for a 5 year old. Defined as child being in full time child care or being in kindergarten and out-of-school child care, i.e., holidays, school closures and summers. <sup>2</sup>Average cost of full time care for a 6+ school age child (out-of-school child care, i.e., holidays, school closures and summers). <sup>3</sup>Average cost of before and after school child care.

More work is required to determine the demand for center-based child care services by families in areas easily accessible to the SCDC. Data from the *Child Care Demographics 2010* report by the Maryland Child Care Resource Network would appear to be indicative of likely demand. According to the report, in 2009 there were 1,529 center-based child care programs in the state. Whilst the number of Family Care Providers is expected to decline from the 2009 level (8,786), center-based programs are projected to increase to 1,652 by 2014. The following tables show factors influencing the access to and parental choice of child care services.

TABLE 3  
Major Reasons Parents Could Not Find Child Care in Maryland

Reason	Count
Cost	472
Combination of ages	249
No vacancies for infant	204
Schedule	184
Other	153
Location	115
Quality of care	96
No vacancies for school age	53
No vacancies for preschool	49
Transportation/escort	42
Special needs experience	19
No part time	12

Source: LOCATE: Child Care, Maryland Family Network and The Maryland Child Source: LOCATE: Child Care, Maryland Family Network and The Maryland Child Care Resource Network (7/1/08-6/30/09).

TABLE 4  
**Major Factors Important to Parents Who Found Child  
 Care in Maryland**

Reason	Count
Proximity to home	1,629
Quality of care	1,376
Educational program	909
Cost	927
Appearance/facilities	667
Hours of operation	681
Family setting	580
Only provider/program with vacancy	317
Proximity to work	286
Group size	282
Escort	278
Proximity to school	240
Nearby transportation	83
Offered part time care	80
Special needs experience	75
Did not provide response	9
Environment	2

Source: LOCATE: Child Care, Maryland Family Network and The Maryland Child Care Resource Network (7/1/08-6/30/09).

## SLIGO SCHOOL: STRATEGIC ISSUES AND GOALS

### STRATEGIC ISSUES

Following is a summary of issues initially identified in the course of the 2005 *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats* (SWOT) analytical exercise. Whilst significant progress has been made in addressing the set of issues, many are of a character requiring a continuing level of attention. They include criteria that, according to research by Independent Schools Management consultancy organization, parents use when choosing a school for their children: safety, academic quality, character development, caring atmosphere, convenient services (e.g., ease of communication with faculty and administrators), and social mix.

The issues are grouped using a modified form of the 'standards' rubric used by the accrediting authorities in evaluating the school's programs and operations:

#### 1. Administration & Staff Development

- a. Although the school's financial condition is much improved over past years, there are remaining issues that warrant our continued attention. Issues include:
  - i. an inadequate level of cash reserves;
  - ii. the lack of major gifts and endowment building programs;
  - iii. insufficient hard income from which to fund professional development;

- iv. the lack of a program of outreach to alumni and other donors for financial support; and
- v. a high dependence on subsidies and other non-tuition income sources to cover operational expenses. In terms of its income sources, over the last four years only between 41% and 45% of the school's income has been provided by tuition; 14%-24% was provided by other sources, principally building rental. We believe the school's financial stability necessitates efforts on our part to reduce its dependence on this last income source for operating funds.

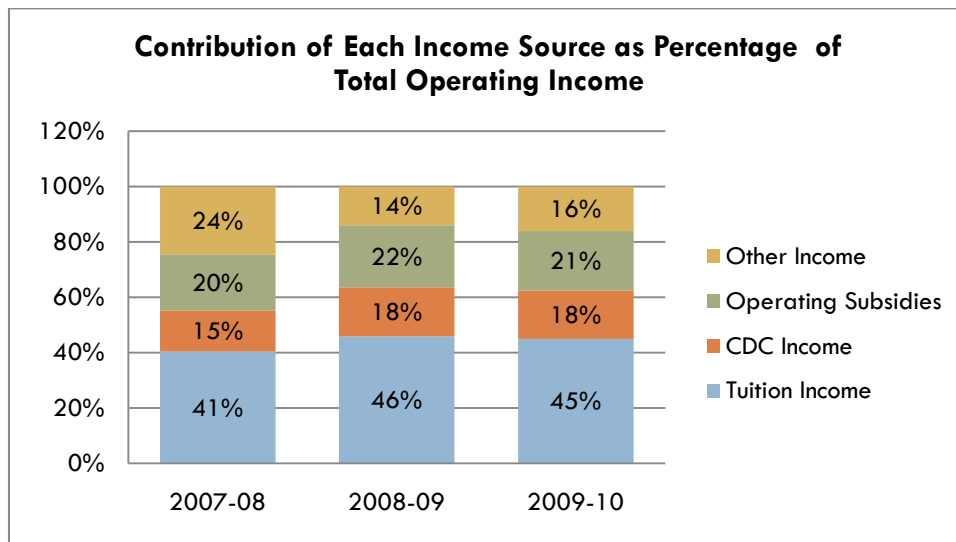


FIGURE 1

- b. The school has yet to take full advantage of opportunities, such as E-rate and other available governmental and non-governmental sources of gifts and grants that might be used to enhance its academic programs.

**2. Community & Constituency**

- a. A greater, more intensive effort needs to be made to more effectively track and publicize the placement and record of success of former SAS students at secondary and tertiary levels of education and in their professional lives.
- b. SAS must continue to cultivate a customer-friendly ethos. This includes taking concrete steps to make it easy for parents to keep in touch with the school, obtain timely and accurate feedback when they have questions, make suggestions, or volunteer for school activities.
- c. Make more effective use of the school's past investments in technology (i.e., School Minder, Edline, internet) to facilitate parent/teacher communication about all aspects of their children's school experience.
- d. Continue to broaden and strengthen the essential relationship between the church and school.
- e. The low level of parental involvement in volunteering at the school and supporting the Home & School Association (HSA) remains a matter of concern.

**3. Curriculum, Instruction & Media**

- a. A perception held by some segments of the Adventist community is that our schools' academic quality doesn't quite measure up to that of some parochial and non-sectarian counterparts.

While the data are not SAS-specific, we should nonetheless use the products of the *CognitiveGenesis* study<sup>1</sup> in our marketing efforts to correct these misconceptions.

- b. Making a foreign language(s) part of the core curriculum might be used as an added inducement to parents to send their children to SAS.
- c. Also needed is a plan to more effectively integrate technology into instructional strategies/practices.
- d. Intensify continuous quality improvement initiatives such as the Maths Learning Center and expand initiatives to other core curriculum subject areas such as reading, writing, Bible, and science.

**4. Marketing**

- a. SAS enrollment has stabilized, increasing slightly above the lows experienced over the period of 2007-08 through 2008-09. The overall demographic trends for SDA churches in addition to continuing economic recession and its impact on family budgets will likely exert a depressive effect on enrollment for the foreseeable future. We must therefore continue to maintain a conservative approach in operational budgeting.

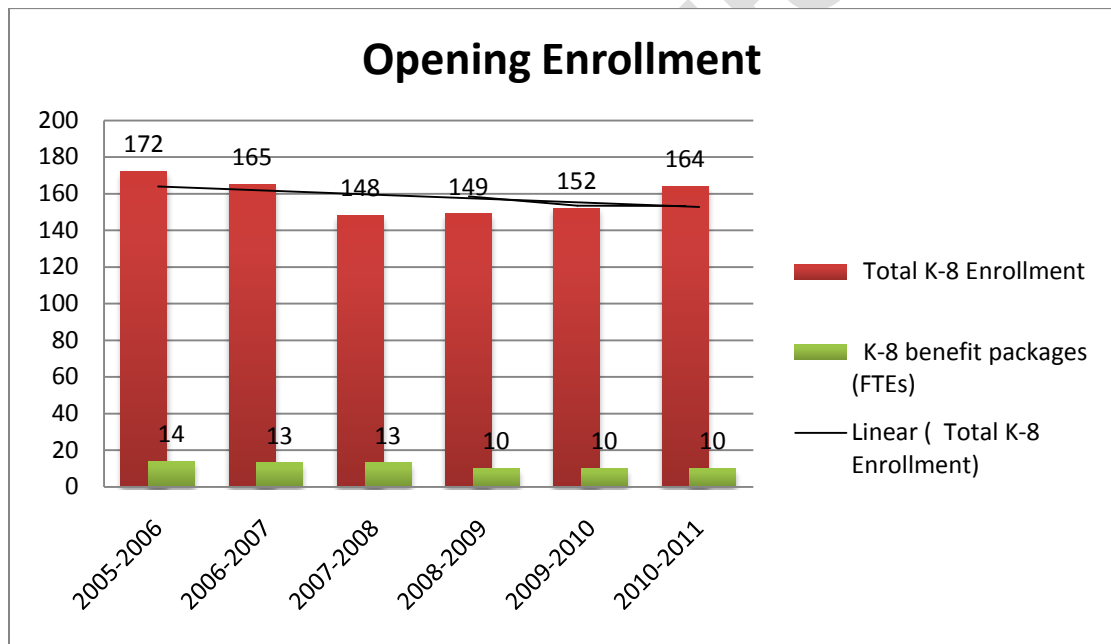


FIGURE 2

- b. There is an unknown number of school-age children in the Sligo Church fellowship who are not students at Sligo School. This is an opportunity that must be pursued.
- c. There's an opportunity and need to review SAS's admission policies and practices, as one step in the process of addressing the declining enrollment among certain population groups.
- d. SAS should recruit students in other Potomac Conference Adventist churches that are not constituents of other Potomac Conference schools in the Maryland district.

<sup>1</sup> *CognitiveGenesis* is a multi-year study assessing Adventist academics in the North American Division. More information about the study is available at the program Web site <http://www.cognitivegenesis.org/index.php>.

## 5. School Facilities & Information Technology

Cash reserves for preventive maintenance and equipment replacement have been depleted and must be replenished. A lack of such reserves also affects the school's ability to deal with facility safety and security issues that arise from time to time.

## 6. Student Activities & Services and Parental Involvement

What is referred to in some circles as 'character development' has come to be recognized as an urgent need by increasing numbers of non-sectarian private schools. While Adventist religious education remains at the core of SAS's academic program the specific efforts designed to enhance the school's spiritual atmosphere and each student's spiritual development should continue.

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## STRATEGIC GOALS

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The board supports the following strategic goals that are a response to the challenges and issues the school faces. They provide a focus for our efforts over the next few years. These goals also encompass "best practices" which the SAS board is committed to pursuing<sup>2</sup> in cooperation with the principal and faculty.

1. **Continue the emphasis on spiritual and character development.** Features of this emphasis include:
  - a. A full-time "Spiritual Coach" responsible for
    - i. Building relationships with students and families.
    - ii. Providing counseling to students/parents.
    - iii. Group assemblies and classroom worships.
    - iv. Discipleship programs for youth.
    - v. Coordination of spiritual programs of school — during school and weekends.
    - vi. Regular fall and spring weeks-of-prayer and follow-up Bible studies and baptisms as requested.
  - b. Participation by the school's music groups in daily worship services and in the worship services of area churches.
  - c. Continuation of the principal's excellent spiritual leadership that is noticed and appreciated by colleagues, students, parents and church members.
  - d. Regular participation by students and faculty in Sligo Church worship services.
  - e. Staff gathering for worship together at the beginning of each school day.
  - f. The whole school having chapel each Thursday.
  - g. School "family" groups having worship together as small groups every Friday.

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<sup>2</sup>The "best practices" presented here were identified when the merger of SAS and JNA was being considered by constituents of the two schools.

2. **Strengthen relationships with the community**, making use of resources such as the *Reaching out to the Community* provided at the National Science Foundation supported **Resources for Teacher Leadership** Web site<sup>3</sup>.
  - a. Develop and maintain strong and mutually supportive relations with parents and the church or churches from which the students are recruited.
  - b. Provide counseling for students/parents.
3. **Improve the school's financial condition.**
  - a. The measures we will use to judge the school's financial health and progress towards financial stability are as follows:
    - i. Income is growing faster than expenses.
    - ii. Most of the school's operating expenses are funded from tuition and fees.
    - iii. Unrestricted cash reserves are equal to 15% of the operating budget plus depreciation.
    - iv. The school has major gifts and endowment building programs in place.
    - v. Each year the school is able to earmark at least 1.5% to 2% of its operating budget for professional development.
    - vi. The level of expenditures, or contributions to reserves, is sufficient to renew and replace systems, facilities, and equipment and prolong their useful life.
  - b. Increase the involvement and financial support of alumni and friends.
  - c. Carry out capital fundraising to garner funds needed to maintain the integrity of the physical plant and repair/install infrastructure capable of supporting the school's curricular and co-curricular programs.
4. **Progressively increase enrollment** from the current level and stabilize it at a sustainable level. A subsidiary goal is to recruit and retain students such that the student body continues to reflect the social and economic diversity which is a strength of the school and its sponsoring organization.
5. **Improve academics.**
  - a. Improve standardized test scores in maths and update the science curriculum.
  - b. Implement differentiated instruction in all classrooms to meet the unique learning style needs of all children through in-service training, modeling, team planning and professional reading.
  - c. Improve student writing skills through writing tests (*Accelerated Reader*, ERB), writing curriculum mapping, and writing portfolios for grades 3-8.
  - d. Complete implementation of NAD Pathways Reading program K-8<sup>th</sup>, through in-service training of all teachers in the Pathways program, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) testing, and increased reading instruction time.

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<sup>3</sup> The Web address for the Resources for Teacher Leadership is <http://cse.edc.org/products/teacherleadership/default.asp>.

- e. Improve student achievement in math computation, concepts, and problem solving through in-service training, increased use of math manipulative materials, increased use of technology to build math skills, testing (*Accelerated Math*), and increased math instructional time.
  - f. Achievements will be measured by improvement of student and school scores on all three parts of ITBS test.
  - g. Students will develop study skills and use tutors and special education teachers.
  - h. Acquire and train instructors in using computers, *SmartBoards* and *I-respond* remotes.
  - i. Hands-on science lab.
  - j. Set a goal of eventually hiring full-time maths and reading specialists.
  - k. Departmentalization teaching.
6. **Develop co-curricular clubs and organizations and actively recruit student members.**
- a. Drama team, math club, science club, safety patrol club, reading club, praise team.
  - b. Choir, band, hand bells, chimes, strings, music lessons, art, media design.
  - c. Athletics: Varsity sports, cheer leading, intramurals.
  - d. NJHS, EHS, (National Junior Honor Society, Elementary Honor Society).
7. **Implement a sustained marketing program.**
- a. More effectively track and publicize SAS students' record of success at successive levels of education<sup>4</sup>. Adopt other measures that can be employed in "telling the Sligo story."
  - b. Attract and retain motivated students; grow enrollment.
    - i. Employ social media where feasible and practicable.
    - ii. Market to Sligo and non-constituent churches.
  - c. Ascertain what about SAS appeals to parents and recommend ways of enhancing and improving on such factors (see handout *The Admission Funnel: From Inquiry to Enrollment—ISM Publications*).
  - d. Improve parental participation in and support of Home & School Association.
  - e. Church visitations with music groups, praise teams, drama team.
  - f. School profile brochures showing achievements of students and school.
  - g. Publicize community service activities.
8. Recruit, retain, and **provide professional development opportunities for faculty** who are committed to the philosophy and mission of the school.

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<sup>4</sup> In the board's Executive Committee's view, this is a more useful measure of the school's academic quality than standardized tests.

9. **Identify and carry out needed infrastructure (i.e., physical facility & educational technology) improvements.**

The following is a preliminary list of facility upgrades and improvements that need to be further fleshed out in terms of their detail and likely cost. The figures provided below are gross estimates<sup>5</sup>.

- a. Upgrade technology: computers, overhead projectors, document cameras, classroom audio (≈\$35,000).
- b. Replace windows throughout the facility to improve energy efficiency (≈\$70,000).
- c. Install a new central HVAC system (≈\$150,000).
- d. Upgrade carpets and white boards, and reconfigure the library (≈\$7,500).
- e. Remodel/renovate the school's front entrance and offices (≈\$20,000).
- f. Install new window shades/treatments.
- g. Assess other capital improvement needs and the associated costs.

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## STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAM

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### STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

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Following are key assumptions and the expectations on which the strategic plan is based:

1. SAS will mount a sustained **marketing** effort to raise K-8 **enrollment** from its current level (≈160) to 210 students<sup>6</sup> and maintain this level of enrollment over the 5-year plan period.
2. **Full-time faculty** and **administrative positions** will not exceed 13, at least until such time as enrollment approaches and stabilizes at the 200 mark from some period of time. We certainly wish to avoid a cycle of increasing and reducing staff to cope with wildly fluctuating enrollment.
3. The minimum **rate of tuition increase** in each of the five years of the plan will be the rate of inflation (plus 2% if economic and other conditions permit and it is determined that the additional 2% increase to be both needed and wise).
4. The **pre-school program** (Child Development Center) will remain an independently strong, financially viable but integral part of the SAS community. However, concrete steps will need to be taken to ensure that the center can be/remain a consistent and effective feeder for the K-8 program.
5. A **foreign language** will remain part of the curriculum, eventually—as future conditions permit—to be added to the school's core curriculum.
6. The plan assumes that for the foreseeable future, SAS will remain at its present **location**.
7. The **operating subsidy** provided by **Sligo Church** remains at its current level of at least \$136,000 per SAS fiscal year.

<sup>5</sup> Figures are estimates from the June 2009 *JNA/SAS Merger Recommendations*.

<sup>6</sup> The figure of 210 is the sum of 20 students in each of grades K-2 plus 25 students in each of grades 3-8.

8. The addition of new programs or services will not impair the **quality of core academic subjects**. **No new program or service** will be undertaken, unless
  - a. it is consistent with the strategic plan;
  - b. it can be adequately funded;
  - c. its benefits equal or exceed ongoing operating costs; and
  - d. provision is made for associated staff development and program evaluation.

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## ACTION PLANS

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The following strategies and action plans are designed to address the needed changes identified in the course of the accreditation study as well as the challenges identified in the SWOT analysis and summarized in the foregoing sections of this document. Because of the amount of work involved, responsibility for carrying out the action plans is assigned to various individuals and/or board committees. The task assignments and completion timelines are detailed in the companion document, "Evaluation Recommendation Timeline and Progress Report," which will be used to keep track of our progress and report to the Potomac Conference Office of Education (PCOE). The major recommendations of the accrediting Visiting Committee are shown in red-lettered text.

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### ADMINISTRATION & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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#### STRATEGY 1: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION

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##### Standard

- *Ensure that administrative and professional staffing is adequate and policies geared to the effective and successful operation of the school.*

##### Objectives

- Develop a forward-looking strategic plan for a sustainable future for Sligo Adventist School.
- Strengthen the school's financial condition.

##### Action Plans

- 1.1 Explore additional avenues and programs to address the needs of English language learners and their *non-English speaking parents*.
- 1.2 Review the SAS School *Constitution* annually, revise as necessary and include the dates on which revisions are made.
- 1.3 Conduct surveys or use other means to assess the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) on an ongoing basis. Use the information as input to the annual reviews of the strategic plan.
- 1.4 Monitor and evaluate progress in executing the strategic plan and update the plan annually.

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#### STRATEGY 2: FINANCIAL STABILITY

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##### Objectives

- *Enhance SAS's financial stability.*

- *Narrow or close the gap between the actual cost of educating a student and the tuition charged for the student attending Sligo<sup>7</sup>.*
- *Build up working capital and capital improvement reserves.*

#### **Action Plans**

- 2.1 Use income from the facility rental program to build a capital improvement reserve.
- 2.2 As part of its strategic review, appoint a working group or task force to assess the school's current financial condition and identify specific actions and/or projects to improve the school's *financial stability* going forward.

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### STRATEGY 3: STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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#### **Standard**

- *Staff-development programs are funded, planned and implemented to enhance the professional development of school personnel, integrating new knowledge, information, and teaching methodologies identified through current research.*

#### **Action Plans**

- 3.1 As the school's financial situation allows, designate between 1% and 1.5% of each year's operating budget for staff development.
- 3.2 Allocate funding for all faculty to hold memberships in professional organizations.

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### CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND MEDIA

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### STRATEGY 4: CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

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#### **Standard**

- *The curriculum is the core of the school program and reflects the goals and needs of students, providing for their spiritual, social, physical, mental, and emotional development.*

#### **Action Plans**

- 4.1 Procure cross-curricula software (e.g., phonics, math, science, and writing) for Grades 3 through 5).
- 4.2 Administration and faculty to explore ways to offer more advanced coursework for qualified students.
- 4.3 Computer Education**
  - 4.3.1 Purchase durable headphones with attached microphones.
  - 4.3.2 Broaden technology offerings and application to help students apply math skills, reasoning and logic, i.e.: Robotics, programming, graphic design, generating a school newspaper, tech crew for a school play.
- 4.4 Language Arts/Reading**
  - 4.4.1 Implement more book reports and oral presentations into the language arts curriculum to better prepare students for middle school.

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<sup>7</sup> This is one of the three major recommendations relating to school finances that were contained in the Evaluation and Action Plan by the 2003 accreditation Visiting Committee.

**4.5 Mathematics**

- 4.5.1 Purchase computer-based individual math assessment and drill software.
- 4.5.2 Consider extending the curriculum to include Algebra I for advanced students.
- 4.5.3 Use study groups, workshops, school improvement teams, and professional learning communities to explore current and research-based instructional strategies for math in all grades to improve math test scores.
- 4.5.4 Collaborate with the Takoma Academy administrator and mathematics faculty to discuss the possibility of including advanced Sligo 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students in their math classes.

**4.6 Religion/Witnessing & Service**

- 4.6.1 Administration and faculty collaborate with Sligo Church to explore the development of spiritually focused clubs, such as outreach clubs.

**4.7 Science**

- 4.7.1 Allocate additional funds to purchase and implement science media to strengthen the science program.
- 4.7.2 Board, administration, and faculty provide additional resources for supplemental science supplies.
- 4.7.3 Board, administration, and faculty write an action plan to modernize the science lab with appropriate furniture and fixtures, LCD projector and Smart Board.
- 4.7.4 Board, administration and faculty consider acquiring additional software for science enrichment and remediation.
- 4.7.5 Administration and faculty explore the possibility of using the courtyard for a plant unit or any other relevant application.

**4.8 Social Studies**

- 4.8.1 Board, administration and faculty provide pull-down maps in all the lower-grade classrooms.

**4.9 Fine Arts**

- 4.9.1 Administration and faculty seek additional opportunities for students to demonstrate their talents.

**4.10 Physical Education**

- 4.10.1 Board and administration will study ways to provide funds to refurbish the playing field.

**4.11 Modern Language**

- 4.11.1 Board, administration and faculty give study to purchasing a foreign language program that is appropriate for early childhood.
- 4.11.2 Administration and faculty explore ways in which a part-time teacher or volunteer can complement and apply core skills delivered by *Rosetta Stone*.

**4.12 Kindergarten**

- 4.12.1 Administration and faculty find ways to address the needs of SAS English language learners and to enhance communication with their non-English speaking parents.
- 4.12.2 Administration and faculty adjust school emergency (i.e.: fire route) procedures with pictorial diagrams at eye level of the kindergarten students.

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STRATEGY 5: EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

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**Action Plans**

- 5.1 The SAS principal and CDC director will write an Action Plan that outlines and sequences the steps to be taken for compliance with the State of Maryland, and specific attention to ensuring that the position of director be separate from principal duties. [See Title 13A State Board Education, Section .24]
- 5.2 Administration and Sligo CDC director give study to (a) enhancing security and minimizing the possibility of students wandering away from the playground and (b) making sure the actual play area is fenced to a height of 4 feet.

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STRATEGY 6: MEDIA CENTER

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**Standard**

- *The media center provides resources that support and enrich the educational program.*

**Action Plans**

Board, administration, faculty, and staff implement Action Plan #4 that addresses specific improvement in library holdings and integrating the individual classroom collections into a common database.

- 6.1 Catalog classroom books into the school wide software program (*Athena*).
- 6.2 Install flat screen TV and DVD player in the library and connect electronic equipment to the server.
- 6.3 Re-configure and modernize library furnishings to be inviting.
- 6.4 Increase the number of age-appropriate denominational periodical subscriptions.
- 6.5 Explore ways to increase the library accessibility for students.

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FACILITIES & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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STRATEGY 7: FACILITIES

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**Standard**

- *The school plant and site are designed, operated, and maintained to achieve the school's mission and purpose.*

**Action Plans**

- 7.1 Develop a list of and the prices for various improvement needs.
- 7.2 In consultation with the Potomac Conference, develop a *Business Continuity Plan* (aka Disaster Recovery Plan), specifying responsibility for its maintenance.
- 7.3 Board, administration and staff revisit the self-study Action Plan #2 (Facilities) and update it to address the items enumerated in the Report of the Visiting Committee (p. 9, item #9).

STRATEGY 8: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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**Standard**

- *The integration of information technology enhances work efficiency and learning enrichment throughout the school program.*

**Action Plans**

- 8.1 Faculty and administration research and include software that enhances creativity and problem-solving as well as acquiring drill-based programs.
  - 8.2 Complete an assessment of technology needs in the classroom for teacher and student use.
  - 8.3 Determine if all the teachers are properly trained in the effective use of the school's educational technology.
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STUDENT ACTIVITIES, STUDENT SERVICES AND PARENT SURVEYS

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STRATEGY 9: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

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**Standard**

- *Student activities, as an integral part of the educational program, are designed to meet the needs, personal interests, and goals of students.*

**Action Plans**

- 9.1 Administration and faculty give study to expanding the after school program by providing clubs that identify and meet the needs and interests of all students.
  - 9.2 Administration and faculty to review the need for more recess time for middle school students.
  - 9.3 Administration and faculty to explore offering a wider variety of extracurricular activities, such as drama, robotics, book clubs.
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STRATEGY 10: STUDENT SERVICES

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**Standard**

- *Student support services meet the needs of students in areas such as food service health, academic assistance, career exploration, and counseling.*

**Action Plans**

- 10.1 Administration provide a locked filing cabinet for student health records.
  - 10.2 Administration provide a means by which the sick room can be monitored continually.
  - 10.3 Administration and staff review all health records to make sure all students are in compliance with health regulations.
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STRATEGY 11: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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**Objectives**

- Develop and maintain strong and mutually satisfying relations with the community (i.e., constituents and other stakeholders, such as parents).
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- Involve families and the school in an active partnership that benefits students and SAS.
- Obtain participation by all SAS families in the Home and School Association (HSA).

**Action Plans**

- 11.1 Administration and faculty give study to coordinating communication with parents as students move from the elementary to the departmentalized middle school.
- 11.2 Middle school faculty to coordinate the giving of tests and also the volume of homework assigned.
- 11.3 Make attendance of HSA meetings and participation in the HSA a requirement of the admission/registration process.
- 11.4 Explore ways of welcoming new families.
- 11.5 Develop ways to ensure that parents receive information about all aspects of their children's academic performance and expectations in a timely manner.
- 11.6 Put processes in place to ensure that parents receive timely and informed responses to their inquiries about admission, financial matters, and other matters of interest.
- 11.7 Provide opportunities for parents and others to contribute time, talent, and financial resources to the school.

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MARKETING

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STRATEGY 12: STUDENT RETENTION & RECRUITMENT

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**Standard**

- *A marketing program is planned and implemented to improve recruitment and retention of students.*

**Objectives**

- SAS teachers play a continuing and visible role in public worship at Sligo Church.
- To motivate families of Sligo Church and non-constituent churches in the school's service area to make Sligo Adventist School their first choice for enrolling their elementary-age children.
- To grow enrollment by 7% per year in order to bring the school closer to operating at its desired and reasonably sustainable capacity ( $\approx$  210 students).

**Action Plans**

- 12.1 Board, administration and faculty to implement a tracking mechanism for the current students and alumni for the purpose of marketing and soliciting their on-going financial support of the school.
- 12.2 Board, administration, faculty, staff and students become involved in personal contact recruiting.
- 12.3 Complete preparation of the strategic marketing plan to provide direction and focus for marketing and out-reach efforts over the next few years.
- 12.4 Prepare a *One-Page Marketing Plan* outlining each year's marketing objectives and the specific projects and initiatives that will be undertaken to achieve them.

- 12.5 Propose that Sligo Church administration designate an education Sabbath (with sermon and other worship activities focused on this theme) at least once each year.
- 12.6 Enlist the aid of Sligo Church's Children's Pastor to obtain a complete list/database of Sligo Church families with children of school-age in order to implement a targeted recruitment drive among such families.
- 12.7 Encourage regular participation of SAS teachers in Sligo Church worship services.
- 12.8 Develop an outreach program to area churches that are not constituents of other Adventist schools.
- 12.9 Study the feasibility, suitability and acceptability of various options/suggestions for making tuition affordable for Sligo Church families and those of other constituent churches that are less well-off economically. Suggestions/options include reducing the number of tuition rates from three to one; converting subsidies to scholarships; and discounting tuition once a minimum classroom enrollment threshold (to be defined) has been reached.
- 12.10 Research and adopt best practices followed by private schools with growing enrollments.
- 12.11 Make improvements that make it easy to obtain information about the school and to navigate the registration and admission processes.

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### FIVE-YEAR PROFORMA BUDGET

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The attached proforma budget is an incomplete first approximation and its assumptions will need to be continuously reviewed as to their reasonableness. It is a "placeholder" for operating budgets over the five-year period of this strategic plan. It is intended primarily to aid in setting annual and other fundraising goals. The base data (i.e., data for 2009-2010) to which the projections for later years are related need to be validated and corrected as new and more accurate data become available.



Voted by the SAS Board on:	June 12, 2007
Revised on:	September 23, 2010
Reviewed by the SAS Board on:	November 9, 2010
Voted by the SAS Board on:	November 9, 2010

9/23/2010

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TABLE 5 – PROFORMA (K-8) OPERATING BUDGET  
(Incomplete Draft)

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Enrollment (budgeted) <sup>8</sup>	140	140	149	159	170	181
<b>Enrollment (opening)<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>152</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>209</b>
% Students on Aid <sup>10</sup>	16%	13%	13%	12%	12%	11%
Gross Tuition Revenue <sup>11</sup>	\$ 699,586	\$ 737,500	\$ 786,175	\$ 838,063	\$ 893,375	\$ 952,337
Unfunded Aid <sup>12</sup>	\$ 35,540	\$ 35,718	\$ 36,432	\$ 37,161	\$ 37,904	\$ 38,662
Aid as % of Revenue	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Net Tuition Revenue <sup>13</sup>	\$ 696,524	\$ 730,125	\$ 778,313	\$ 829,682	\$ 884,441	\$ 942,814
Other Hard Income <sup>14</sup>	\$ 207,876	\$ 129,750	\$ 126,639	\$ 134,997	\$ 143,907	\$ 153,405
<b>Total Hard Income</b>	<b>\$ 904,401</b>	<b>\$ 859,875</b>	<b>\$ 904,952</b>	<b>\$ 964,679</b>	<b>\$1,028,348</b>	<b>\$1,096,219</b>
Conference Discount <sup>15</sup>	\$ 19,874	\$ 19,662				
Conference Subsidy <sup>16</sup>	\$ 207,052	\$ 217,660	\$ 208,229	\$ 221,972	\$ 236,622	\$ 252,239
Church Subsidy	\$ 136,000	\$ 136,000	\$ 136,000	\$ 136,000	\$ 136,000	\$ 136,000
<b>Total Subsidies</b>	<b>\$ 343,052</b>	<b>\$ 353,660</b>	<b>\$ 344,229</b>	<b>\$ 357,972</b>	<b>\$ 372,622</b>	<b>\$ 388,239</b>
<b>Annual Fundraising<sup>17</sup></b>	<b>\$ 56,757</b>	<b>\$ 42,253</b>	<b>\$ 48,591</b>	<b>\$ 55,880</b>	<b>\$ 64,262</b>	<b>\$ 73,901</b>
% Annual Fundraising to Operating Budget <sup>18</sup>	100%	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%
Annual Fundraising \$\$ to Operating Budget	\$ 56,757	\$ 42,253	\$ 43,732	\$ 44,704	\$ 44,983	\$ 44,340
<b>Total Income<sup>19</sup></b>	<b>\$ 1,324,083</b>	<b>\$ 1,275,450</b>				
Operating Expenses <sup>20</sup>	\$ 1,445,725	\$ 1,273,376				
<b>P&amp;(L)</b>	<b>\$ (121,642)</b>	<b>\$ 2,075</b>				
Hard Income % of Expenses	63%	68%				
Fundraising \$\$ to Reserves	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,430	\$ 2,794	\$ 3,213	\$ 3,695
Fundraising \$\$ to Endowment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,430	\$ 2,794	\$ 3,213	\$ 3,695

<sup>8</sup> Assumes an annual growth rate of  $\approx 6.6\%$ , the rate required to achieve the desired enrollment of  $\approx 210$ .

<sup>9</sup> Assumes an annual growth rate of  $\approx 6.6\%$  (i.e., the difference between 2010-11 and 2009-10 opening enrollments).

<sup>10</sup> In 2009-10, there were 19 students on partial aid (equal to \$35,540), plus 5 on full scholarship (i.e., student aid provided by Sligo Church).

<sup>11</sup> Tuition income = tuition, application, registration, middle school, & graduation fees. Assumption: growth of  $\approx 6.6\%$  in years 2011-12 and beyond.

<sup>12</sup> Figure for 2010/11 onwards assumes 2% increase over the preceding year.

<sup>13</sup> Figures for net tuition aid shown here would be lower if unfunded aid is subtracted from gross tuition revenue. Unfunded aid is not recognized in current financial statements. Assumption: NTR = GTR – tuition discounts (which amount to 1% of “Tuition Income- Main”).

<sup>14</sup> Assumption: rental income reduced by 1.5%, year over year; café income is excluded.

<sup>15</sup> The conference discount is  $\approx 4\%$  of administrator/teacher salaries minus the conference subsidy for students.

<sup>16</sup> The conference subsidy for 2009-10 is based on 148 students @ \$1,399 per student and for 2010-11 is based on 156 students @ \$1,395.26 per student. For 2011-12 forward we use the same per student subsidy as in 2010-11; alternatively, assuming that the subsidy is as likely to decrease as to increase, we could use the average subsidy for the past five years.

<sup>17</sup> The figure used for annual fundraising is the sum of fruit sales and donations as shown in the P/L statement. This needs to increase each year to offset reduced rental income, cover unfunded aid and contribute to reserves and an endowment fund. Assumption: increase fundraising by 15% year over year.

<sup>18</sup> Assumption: decreasing sums from annual fundraising will go towards the operating budget.

<sup>19</sup> Total income excludes CDC income.

<sup>20</sup> Excludes CDC expenses but includes all café expenses.