

# **Long-Range Planning Categories, Queries and Questions For Task Force Groups: January – June 2007**

**Long-Range Planning Committee, CFS Board of Trustees, January 11, 2007**

**Queries:** Task Force Groups will consider these queries in their study of key issues and development of recommendations:

**Are we attending to Quaker values?**

**Are we attending to Community?**

**Are we attending to Diversity?**

**Are we attending to Stewardship?**

**Are we attending to Simplicity?**

**Are we attending to Excellence?**

**Are we attending to Cost?**

## **CATEGORY: Staff Support**

**Rationale:** Carolina Friends School's most valuable resource is its rich, diverse teaching and learning environment—an environment that provides instructional programs and opportunities that are challenging, engaging, and inclusive, and which also reflect the Quaker values that shape the School's philosophy and mission. Attracting, retaining and supporting skilled, inspired and committed staff are of utmost importance in protecting this resource. Thus, staff support—including compensation, professional development, and working conditions—is a key focus of the long-range plan.

The 2002 long-range plan focused primarily on increasing staff salaries, endowment growth and needs for increased personnel in the development office. While significant progress has been made in these areas, the visioning sessions made it clear that there is still reason to evaluate staff support

needs. Three important areas of concern were identified related to staff support: salaries and benefits, professional development, and recruitment.

### **KEY ISSUES AND QUESTIONS:**

**Salaries and Benefits:** While there has been notable progress in raising salary/benefit levels, there is still concern about whether these are sufficient to retain and attract the quality teachers the School desires. Additionally, the issue of benefits and support for CFS retirees is of considerable interest, especially since many of the School's veteran teachers are nearing retirement age.

Is the CFS compensation and benefits package sufficient to attract and retain staff with the desirable experience, skills, and attitude?

If not, what changes to the compensation and benefits package are possible to strengthen CFS's ability to do so?

Mindful of the School's commitment to community, are its retirement programs and benefits sufficient to support its retiring staff?

**Professional Development:** The repeated wish for "more time" expressed in the visioning sessions suggests the need for a richer, more conscious professional development strategy to ensure that staff have adequate support to fulfill their teaching mission.

Do staff have sufficient time/resources for planning? For collegial sharing? For mentoring new staff? For individual professional development? For developing quality relationships in the professional community?

What strategies/options are there for increasing the amount of time for professional development? What are the costs?

How do we nurture and support our Principal?

What additional or modified staffing—including administrative support—would enhance the School's academic and professional development programs?

**Recruitment:** Two issues stand out with respect to recruitment: the School's ability to be competitive in hiring and its ability to attract staff who will embrace the School's mission.

What are the challenges CFS faces in attracting staff who meet its commitment to excellence, to Quaker values, and to diversity?

What are the strategies that will make CFS competitive in recruiting quality staff and successful in integrating new staff into the School community?

**Resources and Priorities:** As needs for staff support are determined and options identified:

What is their order of priority?

What resources are required for implementation?

What are the suggested timeframes for implementation?

## **CATEGORY: COMMUNITY**

**RATIONALE:** Education, in its essence, represents the commitment of a community to pass on its knowledge, wisdom, and values to subsequent generations. At its best, education is a partnership between teachers who serve a central role as members of the community entrusted with the mission of educating children, families in the community who are raising those children, and the broader community at large, whose stake in the endeavor is the furtherance of the community itself. Quaker education, with its commitment to accepting and respecting each individual's uniqueness, its emphasis on educating for the broader good, and its celebration of diversity, provides an ideal platform for an educational community. The Carolina Friends School in particular was born of a strong community commitment to providing a better way of educating children in the face of inequalities and social challenges, and its strong sense of community has long been a source of its excellence and strength.

It is essential that Community at CFS be carefully nurtured; therefore, the issue of "community" will be given thoughtful consideration as Carolina Friends School develops its next long range plan, with attention to continuing to support a sense of community among all constituents of the school. Given that the commitment to diversity is a cornerstone of the school's mission, CFS must continue to strive for a community that reflects the diverse world in which we live. As the school continues to grow, nurturing community and inclusivity serves to uphold Quaker values.

### **KEY QUESTIONS:**

#### **How can we expand and deepen stewardship of our Community?**

How can we expand opportunities for meaningful connection in ways that will be well received and utilized?

How do we welcome, build, and utilize a network of parent resources to support curriculum needs, staff, and school?

Are the current formats and frequency of communication from the school to community members meeting information needs? Are they enhancing connections?

#### **How can we make our Community more inclusive?**

How, in this day and age, does the CFS community aspire to be diverse?  
 Are we adequately attentive to and prepared for the diversity we presently have and seek?

How can we support diverse mixing by age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture, cognitive, behavioral and physical abilities, political views?

Should our school community reflect the demographics of our local community?

How can we further aspire to be a “dynamic community of learners”?

How can we increase opportunities for student engagement with diverse cultures?

Can we provide more opportunities for people of diverse views and cultures to teach or attend CFS?

## **CATEGORY: ADVANCEMENT**

**Rationale:** A universal theme emerging from all visioning sessions and survey responses is deep concern about the increasingly difficult problem of the cost of education at CFS for both low- and middle-income families. At the same time, there are strong pressures to increase the school’s budget in areas other than tuition aid, to permit better support of staff, increased offerings to students, and facilities initiatives. Further, many of the opportunities identified in the new long range plan will require additional funds.

We use the term “advancement” to refer broadly to the further identification and explicit enunciation of “who we are” at CFS, and increased communication of this identity to both the CFS and wider Triangle communities. Advancement also encompasses our goals for admissions, alumni relations, fund-raising, and other forms of financial development.

We need to think more broadly about how to generate the resources needed to meet our goals. School size, tuition aid policies and tuition pricing, as well as new possibilities for external fund-raising and programmatic revenue generation, need to be examined in terms of both the financial opportunities they afford and their relationship to core values of the school.

### **KEY QUESTIONS:**

What should be the Carolina Friends School “brand”?

How does the size of the school impact advancement opportunities and the overall financial posture of the school? Is it possible to increase school size without negatively impacting student-teacher relations?

Which of the unique strengths of CFS or long range planning initiatives could be used to attract new sources of external funding?

Do development and admissions staffs have the capacity to pursue an expanded set of advancement goals?

What is the audience our advancement efforts need to reach? How do we best reach that audience?

Are there untapped revenue-generating programs the school should pursue, such as an expanded after-school program or an early childhood center?

Can we design flexible tuition aid guidelines that will benefit middle-income families?

## **CATEGORY: LAND AND FACILITIES PLANNING**

**Rationale:** After operating at the Durham and Chapel Hill Meetings for two years, CFS opened the main campus in 1966 on 35 acres of donated land. Early facilities have been significantly modified or replaced, largely as a result of the 1991 and 1996 long-range plan recommendations. The initiatives from these early long-range plans transformed the CFS main campus from a collection of buildings with many inadequacies to all new, remodeled or rebuilt facilities. Additionally, maintenance funds were established and grown to maintain the long-term health of the facilities. The 2002 long range plan also addressed facilities, and recommendations included researching solutions for six separate, identified facility needs and making recommendations to the Board. Solutions were subsequently researched, and the highest priority recommendations were undertaken and completed. However, several of those needs are still relevant today, and recent visioning sessions have also highlighted some of the same perceived facilities needs, including an enhanced performing arts space and expanded science teaching facilities. These should be addressed in the context of a comprehensive review of facilities needs.

The 2002 long-range plan also recommended “The next long-range plan should consider the effects of the generous gift of 18 acres of adjacent property. Careful planning will help identify uses of the gift and actions to sustain the property for the long term.” Martha and Peter Klopfer

have now expressed their desire for CFS to eventually take control of all of their adjacent property. This generous gift opens many possibilities for the school, and this long-range plan should help define the planning process for future land use.

The CFS philosophy speaks to the need for respect and appreciation of our natural surroundings and for the responsible stewardship of all of our resources. Stewardship has also been addressed in previous long-range plans, and CFS has a strong tradition of using the natural surroundings as a teaching tool, designing new facilities to reduce environmental impact, and looking for opportunities to reduce waste and energy usage. As part of the land use and facilities evaluation, we should consider ways to strengthen our focus on stewardship, resource conservation, and a “greening” initiative that supports our educational goals and philosophy.

### **KEY QUESTIONS:**

What is the best mix of use of available land to support and enhance our academic mission, which may include (1) expanding facilities, (2) generating income, and (3) preserving green space into perpetuity?

What are the needs for construction of new facilities or modifying existing facilities, what will these needs cost, and how should these needs be prioritized?

Does the CFS community have the expertise needed to develop a master plan that will guide land use and facility construction into the future? If not, where do we find this expertise?

### **CATEGORY: TECHNOLOGY**

**RATIONALE:** It is clear that it is of paramount importance for CFS to have the basic technological resources needed to enable to the school to operate to its full potential. Basic needs, to be further identified by the Technology Task Force, may include such items as a reliable email system and a comprehensive database for community outreach. Our thoughtful use of technology can also support our educational mission, as we strive to prepare students for life after graduation and entry into a technology-driven world. The emphasis of technology should be on students and teachers as producers and creators, not as consumers of technological resources and tools. The wise use of technology challenges students to think critically, and to look beyond and beneath the obvious, and in so doing, has the potential to support the Quaker tenets of Simplicity, Stewardship, and that Truth is continually revealed.

**KEY QUESTIONS:****Philosophical Questions:**

How do we reconcile our belief in the value of simplicity with the increasing role of technology used in operating the School, educating its students, and preparing them for a tech-savvy world?

How can we use technology as a tool to enhance students' education in creative, forward-looking ways while also preserving and valuing traditional paths to creative learning?

What are the pedagogical implications for increasing efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and learning?

**Practical Questions:**

Using technology as a learning and communications tool can be a particularly effective way to maximize resources. What would a good system look like (keeping in mind that the taskforce will be asked to prioritize needs, provide estimates of the resources required for each item, and recommend a time frame for completion) that would address both increases in efficiency and meet the needs of CFS outreach?

**Education**

- ❖ How can technology be used to support the school's educational mission and enhance students' learning?

**Efficiency**

- ❖ How can we use technology as a tool to increase our efficiency in all applicable domains for a better functioning the School?
- ❖ How can we provide the necessary support and resources for our teachers in this realm?

**Advancement**

- ❖ How can we improve our advancement initiatives with effective use of technology? Would a comprehensive database maintained by staff help with outreach?

**CATEGORY: Curriculum** — Note: The Long Range Planning Committee recognizes and respects that details of curriculum are appropriately best left to Staff. Therefore, instead of appointing a Task Force, a subset of the Long-Range Planning Committee will meet to 1) collate and summarize issues raised in the visioning sessions and questionnaires, and 2) identify key areas of the curriculum that we recommend be the subject of discussion and analysis by the Staff.

**Rationale:** “Our Mission . . . As a dynamic community of learners, we are dedicated to providing high quality educational programs and opportunities that are challenging, creative, supportive, and inclusive. . . CFS strives to teach students to listen within and to others, to express themselves, to think critically, to take responsibility, to make a difference in their world. We expect the students of Carolina Friends School to develop the skills, values, and confidence that support a lifetime of learning, leadership, and service.”

While the design and implementation of the curriculum are ultimately the responsibility of the staff, we seek in this plan to highlight those issues that received considerable attention in visioning sessions and surveys and which we believe are critical to the School’s efforts to help our students understand and appreciate the complexities of the world and their role in it and to ready them to become effective citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We do affirm the many ways in which education rooted in Quaker values is particularly well-suited to educate and prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Still, we believe that changing demographics and global imperatives create poignant and challenging issues and opportunities for consideration and contribution.

Toward that end, the visioning sessions identified at least **four major curricular areas deserving attention** in the next five years:

- **Language and cultural instruction**
- **Science**
- **Performing arts**
- **Clarification of academic standards and evaluation.**