

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2029



**ZEELAND
CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL**

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STRATEGIC PLAN
2025-2029

MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

OUR MISSION

To provide a high-quality Christian education based on the Reformed understanding of the Christian faith, doing so as an extension of the Christian family and assisting parents in carrying out their responsibility to instruct their children in the Christian faith.

OUR VISION

To enable students to function to their fullest potential in contemporary society as Christian citizens who respond lovingly to God's will, recognize the significance of serving others, and accept their responsibility toward the world.



OUR CORE VALUES



RELENTLESS CURIOSITY



DEEP JOY



FAITHFULLY ALL-IN

OUR CORE VALUES



RELENTLESS CURIOSITY

- Exploring God's Creation with Wonder
- Celebrating Each Child's Uniqueness
- Deeply Committing to Learning and Growth



DEEP JOY

- Knowing and Trusting God
- Flourishing in Relationships and Learning
- Embodying Faithful Living and Teaching



FAITHFULLY ALL-IN

- Committing faithfully to God's Calling
- Wholehearted Support for Students and Community
- Demonstrating Excellence and Service in All Things

FOCUS AREAS

The Plan identifies **four** primary focus areas, each supported by a number of strategic objectives:



EDUCATION (E)



MISSION ADVANCEMENT (MA)



FINANCIAL VITALITY (FV)



BOARD LEADERSHIP (BL)



Elevating our focus on children's academic growth and achievement while preserving the relational, Christ-centered culture of belonging that defines ZCS; investing in teachers and staff to further strengthen their instructional expertise, optimizing systems of support to ensure every child gets what they need to grow, and strengthening the educational programs that make ZCS distinct.



EDUCATION (E)

The Education Objectives are primarily about elevating our focus on:

**INCREASING CHILDREN'S
ACADEMIC GROWTH
AND ACHIEVEMENT**

and

**STRENGTHENING
OUR DISTINCT
PROGRAMS**

...while preserving the relational, Christ-centered culture of belonging that defines ZCS.



EDUCATION (E)

E 1: Collaborating to Increase Children's Learning

GOALS

- Develop and implement a sustainable, schoolwide collaborative structure where teachers regularly engage to improve student learning using curriculum, alignment, data analysis, and shared instructional practices (i.e. professional learning communities).
- Steward a culture of curiosity, growth, and a shared responsibility to be all in for every child, together.
- Achieve an increase in the percentage of students who meet/exceed achievement and growth goals year over year throughout the plan.



EDUCATION (E)

E 2: Ensuring Children Receive the Right Help at the Right Time for Maximum Growth (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support)

GOALS

- Build a Multi-Tiered System of Support for Academics and Behavior (MTSS-A and MTSS-B) that works across all levels (Preschool-8th), with clear pathways, trained staff, data-based decision making programmatically and individually for kids, and clear alignment with ZCS's core values and distinct Christian faith.
- Capture all key aspects of the MTSS-A and MTSS-B frameworks in manuals specific to the program level.
- Evaluate literacy and math curriculum effectiveness; adopt changes as determined; provide two years of training for any new curriculum implementation (completion dates will vary by program level).
- Provide targeted interventions for 100% of students who meet qualification criteria.
- Achieve an increase in the percentage of students who meet/exceed achievement and growth goals.



E 3: Strengthening the Educational Programs that Make ZCS Distinct

GOALS

- Support Services/Inclusive Education:
 - Enhance the educational experience for all kids by clarifying our essential markers of inclusive education at ZCS.
 - Data-based decision making protocols and Person Guided Planning Process are used with fidelity and documented in a manual.
- Middle School:
 - Ensure that ZCS MS stands out as a transformational capstone experience where students are deeply known, spiritually grounded, academically prepared, and well-positioned to flourish in high school and beyond.
- Dual Language Immersion Programs:
 - Refine Mandarin and Spanish literacy curriculum, increase authentic language experiences for students, and remain leaders in the dual language immersion community.



Effective mission advancement includes strategic admissions and enrollment efforts, targeted internal and external communications, developing a philanthropic mindset within and throughout the community, and telling the stories of how Zeeland Christian School students (past and present) live out the School's mission at school and throughout the communities within which they reside.



MISSION ADVANCEMENT (MA)

The Advancement Objectives are primarily about:

STRENGTHENING THE ANNUAL FUND, ACHIEVING FUNDRAISING GOALS TO FULLY FUND THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

and

GROWING ENROLLMENT THROUGH STRATEGIC ADMISSIONS EFFORTS



MA 1: Market for Growth and Mission Advancement

GOALS

- Amplify ZCS's mission and distinct educational philosophy to drive sustainable enrollment and deepen donor engagement.
- Strengthen admissions and Mandarin marketing strategies.
- Launch a Family Ambassador Program.
- Enhance storytelling and internal/external communications.

 **MISSION
ADVANCEMENT (MA)**



MA 2: Increase Student Retention

GOALS

- Maintain a 95% annual retention rate (with no less than 90% overall), increasing preschool retention by 15% over the course of the plan.
- Develop clear retention tracking systems, focusing on key transition years.
- Equip staff and Parent Ambassadors to foster lasting family connections.

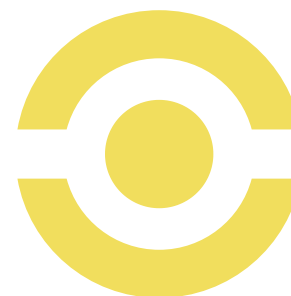
 **MISSION
ADVANCEMENT (MA)**

MA 3: Enroll Mission-aligned Families

GOALS

- Strengthen awareness and alignment with ZCS's mission, vision, and values among all current and prospective families.
- Define "Mission-Aligned" and articulate that clearly with staff and community
- Adjust admissions processes, host events tailored to new families, and prioritize mission-fit in preschool enrollment annually.

 **MISSION
ADVANCEMENT (MA)**



MA 4: Increase Mandarin Enrollment

GOALS

- Increase inquiries, enrollment, and community awareness across West Michigan of the Mandarin Immersion Program
 - Investments of time, talent, and resources in:
 - Community partnerships
 - Promotional campaigns
 - Cultural events
 - Parent ambassadors
 - Strategic evaluation of outreach methods.

 **MISSION
ADVANCEMENT (MA)**

MA 5: Strengthen Our Culture of Philanthropy

GOALS

- Increase donor participation.
- Expand awareness of the Burn Bright Fund to fuel educational excellence and student access.
- Burn Bright Fund advanced through initiatives that share stories of the student experience and are rooted in biblical generosity annually
- Annual growth in Burn Bright Fund (\$1.3M to \$1.55M) over the life of the Plan
 - 2025-26: \$1.35 million
 - 2026-27: \$1.4 million
 - 2027-28: \$1.5 million
 - 2028-29: \$1.55 million



MA 6: Grow the Endowment

GOALS

- Increase the endowment by \$2 million through new gifts, pledges, and estate plans
- Increase the number of members of the Standing Stone Society, executing annual events and education efforts, and incorporating endowment goals into the comprehensive capital campaign.
- Strengthen the current Endowment Committee by expanding its membership, ensuring strategic governance practices and maximizing investment returns.

 **MISSION
ADVANCEMENT (MA)**



Sustaining Zeeland Christian School through strategic financial management that demonstrates the Board's ongoing due diligence of the School's financial health and sustainability; maximizes resources and investments in order to strengthen educational programs; invests in students and educational programs; ensures students' academic, social emotional, and spiritual formation flourishes; and Zeeland Christian School achieves its mission.



FINANCIAL VITALITY (FV)

The Financial Objectives are primarily about:

**INCREASING THE PERCENTAGE OF THE OVERALL
OPERATING BUDGET COVERED BY HARD
REVENUE**

and

**INCREASING STAFF / SOCIETY AWARENESS OF
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OPERATING
BUDGET**



FINANCIAL VITALITY (FV)

Objectives:

FV 1: Increase the percentage of operations covered through tuition and other forms of “hard” revenue

FV 2: Strengthen the Society’s and staff’s understanding and awareness of the operational budget and the Board’s budgeting priorities, stewardship, and due diligence

FV 3: Ensure the School’s physical plant and campus is maintained well and continues to serve today’s and future students and the community effectively.

FV 4: Ensure the amount of financial aid that is needed is available to families unable to afford the full cost of tuition on their own

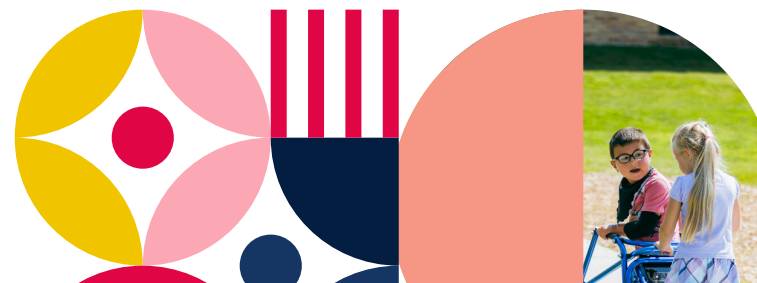


FINANCIAL VITALITY (FV)

FV 1: Increase the percentage of operations covered through tuition and other forms of “hard” revenue

GOALS

- Expand definition of financial aid (Internally only) to include the multi-child discount, requiring FACTS Grant and Aid applications, in order to determine eligibility for financial aid.
- Increase tuition based on cost of living and other variables associated with the actual cost of education.
- Create an achievable budget based on projected enrollment projections (using the formula created in 2024-25) annually.



FV 2: Strengthen the Society's and staff's understanding and awareness of the operational budget and the Board's budgeting priorities, stewardship, and due diligence

GOALS

- Implement the Dashboard (drafted in 2024-25) to communicate the status of the budget and the Board's budget priorities.
- Communicate the status of the budget to internal and external stakeholders at scheduled times throughout the fiscal year.



FINANCIAL VITALITY (FV)





FINANCIAL VITALITY (FV)

FV 3: Ensure the School's physical plant and campus is maintained well and continues to serve today's and future students and the community effectively.

GOALS

- Work collaboratively between the Finance Committee and Building and Grounds Committee.
- Achieve full funding of the three-year Capital Campaign:
 - Burn Bright
 - Capital (new and renovations)
 - Endowment





FINANCIAL VITALITY (FV)

FV 4: Ensure the amount of financial aid that is needed is available to families unable to afford the full cost of tuition on their own

GOALS

- Confirm the amount needed in total financial aid (traditional tuition assistance and impact of multi-child discount).
- Determine impact on budgeted tuition revenue from families now paying the full amount (without multi-child discounts).
- Develop and determine a communications calendar that clearly articulates the budget priorities and how tuition assistance will be distributed each year – by November each year





BOARD LEADERSHIP (BL)

The Board Leadership Objectives are primarily about:

ENSURING THE BOARD'S FOCUS REMAINS ON THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

and

ESTABLISHING THE NECESSARY COMMITTEES AND STRUCTURES TO SERVE AS ITS WORKHORSES, ENTRUSTING THEM TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR RESPECTIVE PLAN GOALS

Ensuring the Board's policies and practices advance the School's Mission and empower the Head of School, Leadership Team, teachers, and staff to carry out that Mission with dedication and impact.





BOARD LEADERSHIP (BL)

BL 1: Mission and Core Values

GOALS

- Clearly communicate, post visibly, and regularly promote the mission, core values, and strategic plan to all stakeholders.
 - Strategic Plan referenced and promoted at school events, on the website, and in staff communication – annually
 - Regular updates to stakeholders on progress – annually
 - Visibility and integration of the Strategic Plan across ZCS communications and events – annually

BL 2: Board Governance to Enhance Leadership

GOALS

- Implement and support active Board committees
 - Building and Grounds Committee (New)
 - Education Committee (Existing)
 - Executive Committee (Existing)
 - Finance Committee (Existing)
 - Governance Committee (Existing)
 - Philanthropy Committee (New)



BOARD LEADERSHIP (BL)



BOARD LEADERSHIP (BL)

BL 3: Comprehensive Capital Evaluation

GOALS

- Complete a thorough evaluation of facility and classroom conditions to ensure high-quality learning environments for all students.
- Determine if a capital campaign is necessary.
- Conduct a feasibility study.



BOARD LEADERSHIP (BL)

BG 4: Move strategically to safeguard the School's future through ongoing review and implementation of the Plan's goals, strategic initiatives, and action steps

GOALS

- Ensure the Board's monthly Board Reports are focused on the annual goals of the strategic plan in order to provide members with ongoing updates on the staff's focus and progress of the Plan's objectives.
- Annually conduct a comprehensive review of the progress on the Plan's objectives, make revisions as appropriate, and communicate with the Society on the Plan's achievements and the annual goals as determined by the Board.
- Alignment of the Head of School's annual professional goals with the annual objectives as determined by the Board annually.





BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2024-2025

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