

# **SUZUKI CHARTER SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

## **FINAL REPORT JUNE 2023**

### **1. OVERVIEW**

Committee members: Christine Garcia, Melissa Rothwell, Jenelle Clarke, Lynne Paradis, Mehnaj Amin, Lisa Skovberg

As part of good governance, the Suzuki School Board of Directors created a strategic plan process to gain feedback from all stakeholders on the current strengths of the organization and the possibilities for the future. A committee of Directors with input with the Superintendent and admin support team facilitated the process, analysed the data and common trends in the many pieces of data examined. These findings are presented in this report and the intent is that this information will help inform future planning in annual education plans. A process was selected by the Board in the fall of 2022 and the process was initiated in Feb. 2023 and completed in June 2023. A summary of the process is in this report. All supporting documentation, with detailed input from each group that participated is included in the Strategic Planning binder available from the Board Secretary Treasurer.

### **2. PROCESS**

#### **A. GETTING STAKEHOLDER INPUT:**

1. Survey for parents
2. Train board as facilitators and gather focus groups together to get feedback.
3. Identified cohorts:
  - School teachers and EA's
  - Music instructors
  - Parent council
  - Board
  - Students (grade 3 – 9)
  - Division 1 parent group
  - Division 2/3 parent group

#### **B. PHASES OF PROCESS**

1. Organization --- set the process and identify committee (Jan)
2. Training facilitators (Feb.)
3. Public engagement sessions (March, April)
4. Sense making of data/issues – (May)
5. Recommendations to Board (June)
6. Finalize any revisions from Board
7. Develop a plan to include findings in annual education plans over the next five years.

### **C. STEERING COMMITTEE**

- Develop questionnaire
- Develop focus questions
- Set timelines
- Coordinate engagement sessions
- Initial data analysis, group analysis session
- Compiling report

### **3. PARTICIPANTS AND INPUT**

<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>	<b>DATE/TIME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Board members	Monday, March 13, 2023	Learning Commons	9
Music Faculty	Wednesday, April 12, 2023 9:30 am	Learning Commons	11
Parent School Council	Thursday, April 13, 2023 12:00 - 1:00 pm	Via Zoom	11
Division 1, 2 and 3 Parents (Kindergarten to Grade 3) and (Grade 4-9)	Tuesday, April 18, 2023 8:30 - 10:30 am	SCS Gymnasium	13
Grade 4-6 Students	Tuesday, April 18, 2023 11:00 am -12:00 pm	SCS Gymnasium	149
Junior High Students (Grade 7-9)	Tuesday, April 18, 2023 1:00 - 2:00 pm	SCS Gymnasium	42
EAs and Office Staff	Tuesday, April 18, 2023 2:00 - 2:30 pm	SCS Gymnasium	EA - 9 Office Staff - 3
Academic Teachers	Tuesday, April 18, 2023 3:30 pm	Learning Commons	20
General Session - Everyone Welcome	Wednesday, April 19, 2023 7:00 - 8:00 pm	Via Zoom	6
Parent Surveys	April 26, 2023	Online	47
Total Participants = 320			

### **4. DATA GATHERING METHODS**

A combination of methods was used included: a) digital survey feedback, b) focus group discussions, c) use of a carousel strategy in small groups, and d) think, pair share. All input was recorded to be reviewed once all sessions of input were completed.

## **5. FOCUS QUESTIONS**

Three basic questions were provided to participants (with some adjustments to wording with students):

1. What is one thing we do well and should be maintained as a priority focus for the future?
2. What is one thing we could change/add to increase our success in the next five years?
3. What can be done to strengthen the attraction to our junior high program?

## **6. COMMUNICATION TO STAKEHOLDERS**

Numerous reminders and invitations were sent to all parents, students and faculty to engage in the strategic planning events. A combination of daytime, evening, digital and in person events were held to meet the diverse needs and availability of our stakeholders.

## **7. DATA ANALYSIS**

The board committee reviewed all data and looked for trends. Single ideas that were not mentioned more than once are included in the full data package but were not included in the trend data.

## **8. TRENDS AND PATTERNS**

### **STRENGTHS**

These points were identified as characteristics of the school that should continue to be a priority. These were viewed as the indicators that make the school a school of choice for many stakeholders.

- safe environment
- personal attention for individual students
- high positive staff and student interaction
- genuine interest in children
- engagement opportunities for students/faculty and parents
- friendly and welcome environment
- making connections between home, school, and community
- Educational assistants a strong factor
- music program and many opportunities in music learning
- strong academic expectations
- innovative teaching approaches (e.g., grade 3 collaboration instruction)

### **POSSIBILITIES/AREAS TO CONSIDER**

- more extra curricular activities
- more language instruction choices

- opportunities for families to mix with students and staff (e.g. community BB Cue)
- Increase in music performances in the community
- Kinder-care and pre-school re-instituted
- new music experiences for upper grades (e.g. grade 6, 7, 8, 9)
- volunteer opportunities for parents
- more space – expand facility

## **9. OBSERVATIONS FROM COMMITTEE**

It was very evident from the participants in the various sessions that there is strong support for the school and that satisfaction levels are high in areas of school climate, instruction, music and administration. It was a bit of a surprise that more people did not participate but in following up with some non-participants their view was they were happy with how the school is operating and didn't feel they had anything new to contribute.

Strong messages came with every group that the culture in the school is very positive and it is the treatment of children, parents and faculty that bring the positive climate alive in daily operations. Emphasis on maintaining the student focussed operation was a noted strength of the school in every planning session.

The main concerns expressed were around limited space in the facility and the need to possibly grow the school on site or possibly at a different site. Some feedback was received on ideas to improve the attractiveness of the junior high program but most of these have been investigated to date and many implemented. This feedback may point to a priority to better communicate and market the program realities to students and parents.

The committee members embraced this project with enthusiasm and all assumed key leadership roles. Their volunteer time to the longer-term planning priorities at Suzuki School are praiseworthy.

## **10. BOARD INPUT**