

THE PILLOW ACADEMY STRATEGIC PLAN

Richard Kimmel '79
School Board Chair

The Pillow Academy Board of Directors approved a process of self-study and long-range planning. Approximately 100 alumni, parents, faculty and community leaders were asked to sit on one of five task forces. Collectively, they reviewed every facet of Pillow Academy, from student life to academic quality: building and grounds to faculty life.

We sought the insights of a broad spectrum of people and opinions with an internal faculty questionnaire as well as a parent survey. By involving as many of our stakeholders as possible we have produced the very best solutions for Pillow Academy.

The document before you represents a synopsis of those recommendations. Through their efforts, the members of the task forces have proposed what Pillow Academy must do to remain faithful to its proud tradition and to ensure that every student leaves Pillow Academy with knowledge, wisdom and service.

With this document I would like to report that the process is complete. However, this strategic plan must be viewed as a starting point, for we must continually challenge ourselves to improve, to look ahead, to find better ways of serving the students who will one day be leaders in our society.

We all have a stake in the education of our youth. Take some time to discover the Pillow Academy Strategic Plan. Then, after you've read the recommendations, take a moment to tell us what you think. There is always room for more ideas: that is how great schools thrive.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AT PILLOW ACADEMY

Pillow Academy Board of Directors approved the long-range strategic planning process. Following in-depth data gathering by the faculty, staff and administration, six task forces were formed from alumni, faculty, past and present parents, and friends. These groups were chartered to study, to critique, and to dream.

This process in conjunction with the recently renewed and **Highly Commended** School Improvement Plan for dual Accreditation with the Southern Association of Independent Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools focusing on the three key areas of **Communication, Personal and Social Responsibility, and Thinking and Reasoning Skills** will guide Pillow Academy's future.

The Pillow Academy Strategic Plan represents the input of many members of the Pillow Academy family. It embodies the priorities of Pillow Academy for the next five to ten years. These recommendations will ensure a strong and vibrant Pillow Academy.

While this report provides a "blueprint" for the continued enhancement of Pillow's tradition of excellence, it also serves as a reminder of how well the school has fulfilled its mission over the past 40 plus years.

By daring to study, critique, and dream, the task forces have presented a comprehensive strategy to enhance the ability of Pillow Academy to continue to fulfill its mission to the youth of the Delta.

ACADEMIC TASK FORCE

From the beginning, Pillow Academy has emphasized academic excellence, self-discipline, and spiritual growth. The development of the whole person is central to our mission. It is our goal to discover the potential of each student: to challenge each to excel; and to demonstrate a caring concern which assists each in learning to love God and neighbor.

In general a Pillow Academy graduate should have:

- Critical thinking skills
- Problem-solving abilities
- Communication skills
- Study skills and a "learning for life" philosophy
- Understanding of technology capabilities and applications
- Sound moral judgment

ATHLETIC TASK FORCE

Pillow Academy is home to many Champions. We believe there is more to an education than words in a textbook. Thus, the educational value of athletics is found in its promotion of leadership, teamwork, discipline, determination, goal setting and work ethic. Furthermore, athletic activities are intended to provide for the physical, psychological, and social well being of those involved.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS TASK FORCE

Pillow Academy takes pride in providing a well-maintained school for its students. Not only do clean attractive buildings provide the right atmosphere for learning, a well maintained school communicates that Pillow is committed to its mission of providing a quality education to its students and fostering their positive personal development.

Cleaning and repairs are a regular part of the operations of the school. At some point, however major repairs and improvements to the older structures must be addressed, as well as any additions or new construction to improve our offerings.

FACULTY LIFE TASK FORCE

As a private school, Pillow Academy is blessed to have a dedicated, academically gifted faculty committed to the mission and vision of Pillow's philosophy of education. Currently the school enjoys a reputation built on caring, experienced teachers.

Looking ahead, however, faculty compensation is an issue, which must be addressed. We know that salaries alone cannot guarantee the best teachers. As knowledge expands at an ever-increasing pace, faculty require professional development to keep abreast of the latest developments in the sciences, the liberal arts, and information technology.

STUDENT LIFE TASK FORCE

Pillow Academy encourages, directs, and assists students to set realistic life goals rooted in Christian values. To do this students are challenged to master the concepts and skills necessary to turn youthful ideals into reality. This is no easy task. Beyond the knowledge found in textbooks lie other skills vital to success: leadership, teamwork, creativity, and sensitivity. In short, there must be opportunity for not just academic growth, but spiritual, physical, and social development as well. This broader education demands activities other than those found in the classroom. Extra-curricular activities are an integral part of the Pillow Academy experience.

PILLOW ACADEMY

Strategies, Goals, and Objectives

Strategic Goal I – Faculty Enrichment

1) Competitive pay and benefits to retain and attract quality faculty.

Objective Utilize funds from Lucas Teaching Excellence Fund to provide benefits for faculty.
Responsibility Board of Directors and Headmaster.
Timeline Goal is to implement plan for the 2010-11 school year.

2) Encourage varied teaching styles – project based – critical thinking and improved writing.

Objective Our goal is the improvement of thinking and reasoning skills of Pillow Academy students at all levels and in all disciplines.***This goal is part of School Improvement Plan.
Responsibility Headmaster and High School and Elementary Principals.
Timeline Implementation was begun with the 2009-10 school year with the goal of measurable improvement by the 2014-15 school year.

Strategic Goal II – Program Enhancements

1) Improve and enhance student/career counseling

- Objective** A career day will be held with faculty from Mississippi Delta Community College and Delta State University. Additionally a career day will be held with Pillow Academy Alumni representing areas of interest as indicated on surveys conducted with student body.
- Responsibility** High School Principal and High School Guidance Counselor.
- Timeline** Events will be held every year with the first program to be held in October 2009.

2) Improve and expand fine arts program.

- Objective** Continue to add to drama department by adding a fall musical. Add a choral music program when possible and continue Delta Renaissance.
- Responsibility** High School and Elementary Principals.
- Timeline** Hold a fall musical in December 2009. Add choral music for the 2010-11 school year if instructor can be hired.

3) Expand and improve club and activity offerings.

- Objective** Provide all students opportunities to be involved in group activities and clubs.
- Responsibility** High School and Elementary Principals.
- Timeline** Restructured clubs beginning in the school year 2008-09.

4) Separate middle school students either through scheduling or a new building.

- Objective** Schedule separate study halls for middle school and high school students.
- Responsibility** High School Principal and High School Guidance Counselor.
- Timeline** Scheduling with this purpose was begun in 2008 and will be continued each year.

5) Develop a Technology Plan

- Objective** Develop a technology plan to include updating of current computers, explore technology that can be used in classrooms, and current technology curriculum.
- Responsibility** Headmaster, Elementary Principal, and High School Principal along with Technology committee to be appointed by Headmaster and Principals.
- Timeline** Plan developed by committee should be complete by May 2010. Plan will have timeline for each area. Implementation will begin in August 2010.

Strategic Goal III – Capital Improvements

1) Address drainage and pavement problem.

Objective Repave all asphalt surfaces on campus and eliminate areas of standing water that do not drain properly.

Responsibility Headmaster and Director of Facilities.

Timeline A proposal is being presented to have all asphalt repaved over the next 5 summers. Drainage will begin to be addressed in the summer of 2010, with a goal of eliminating problems within 3 years.

2) Expand and air condition current gymnasium.

Objective Increase seating capacity of gymnasium by 500 by expanding one end of the gymnasium and air condition facility.

Responsibility Board of Directors and Headmaster.

Timeline Expansion and air conditioning will be considered when funds are available. A capital campaign will be considered for this purpose in the next 5 years.

3) Construct a covered walkway between buildings.

Objective Construct a covered walkway in front of Johnson Hall and the Kindergarten Building that connects to the Student Activity Building.

Responsibility Board of Directors and Headmaster.

Timeline Walkway will be built when funds are available. A capital campaign will be considered for this purpose in the next 5 years.

4) Build a new indoor multi-purpose facility.

Objective Build a 100' x 200' indoor facility that will be used by elementary physical education, middle school physical education, and practice for outdoor sports during inclement weather.

Responsibility Board of Directors and Headmaster.

Timeline Facility will be built when funds are available. A capital campaign will be considered for this purpose in the next 5 years.

5) Renovations

a) Classrooms

b) High School and Elementary Offices

c) Modernize Restrooms

d) Convert heat/cool to individual classroom units

Objective Renovate areas listed.

Responsibility Board of Directors, Headmaster, and Director of Facilities.

Timeline Renovations will be done as funds are available. A capital campaign will be considered for this purpose in the next 5 years.

6) Capital Improvements

- a) Exterior of Buildings
- b) Breezeway between SAB and Gym
- c) Gym Entrance
- d) Campus Security and Lighting
- e) Improved Campus Signage

Objective Improve exterior aesthetics of buildings by painting or a new covering. Enclose breezeway between SAB and gym to include a hallway and storage areas. Build a new entrance to gym by enclosing an area approximately 30' x 25' to go along with enclosing of breezeway. Improve campus security and lighting. Develop and implement a campus signage program.

Responsibility Board of Directors, Headmaster, Athletic Director, and Director of Facilities.

Timeline Improvements will be done as funds are available. A capital campaign will be considered for this purpose in the next 5 years.

7) Grounds Improvements

- a) Elementary Playground
- b) Soccer/Softball Complex
- c) Football Field
- d) Baseball Field

Objective Improve drainage and surface of elementary playground by hauling in dirt and adding a water system. Build a soccer field on campus to include water system and sprig grass surface. Build a concession/rest room area between soccer and softball facilities. Renovate football surface by hauling in dirt to improve drainage and surface. Overlay player's box areas with artificial turf.

Responsibility Board of Directors, Headmaster, Athletic Director, Associate Athletic Director, and Director of Facilities.

Timeline Complete during summer of 2010.

8) Capital Purchase

- a) An air conditioned bus
- b) Air condition existing busses

Objective Purchase a new air conditioned bus and air condition current busses.

Responsibility Board of Directors, Headmaster, and Director of Facilities.

Timeline Purchase and upgrade to existing busses will be done as funds are available. A capital campaign will be considered for this purpose in the next 5 years.

A RESPONSE TO THE PILLOW ACADEMY STRATEGIC PLAN

Termie Land
Pillow Academy Headmaster

This document is the result of a process, which has relied heavily on the collective wisdom of many that are not only interested in, but also dedicated to, the future of Pillow Academy. Such dedication has resulted in an extremely honest appraisal of the present condition of this institution as well as a hope-filled stance toward its future. The Strategic Plan provides an important starting point for all of us to look to the future while at the same time taking up the essential task of responsible planning for future growth and development.

Pillow Academy, like most private schools faces special challenges: rising costs, a lack of reserve funds, inadequate teacher salaries, a limited pool of available students and an increasing reliance on annual fundraising. While Pillow Academy's main purpose is not financial in nature, like any other institution we recognize the importance of prudent business practices. In this context in cooperation with the School Board and Pillow Endowment Board we need to increase our annual endowment and scholarship funds, improve efforts to increase and retain enrollment, institute a planned giving strategy, and plan for excellence in all academic and extra-curricular endeavors.

In the face of these challenges, I remain optimistic and remind each one of you of the continued importance of your input, insights and support. All of us have been beneficiaries in one way or another of the Pillow Academy heritage and tradition. It is essential that our continuing dialogue empower each one of us to assume our rightful role in assuring continued growth of Pillow Academy.

I am excited about our future and thank each one of you for giving of yourself, your talents and your gifts. Through the help of our works may we grow and mature in knowledge, wisdom and service.