

January 24, 2018

Dear Cornerstone Community,

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce the creation of our “Leading Together” strategic planning initiative. Cornerstone has grown in every way since we opened in 2012. Building on the contributions of students, staff, parents and other community members, our school is in excellent financial and academic health. We are excited to engage in the strategic planning process as a way to move our school to the next level of academic and cultural excellence.

The Leading Together initiative will enable parents and staff members to engage in dialogue about the future goals and direction of our school. The process will reflect our dedication to the three pillars of Rigorous Academics, Character Education, and Meaningful Parental Involvement, and to our Leadership Principles. These principles state that leaders:

1. Set clear direction, align to it, and commit to success.
2. Seek, throughout their life, to grow academically, socially and physically.
3. Build leaders who build leaders. Leaders develop and empower others.
4. Demonstrate persistence in the face of challenges, accept responsibility and grow through failure.
5. Develop a leadership “identity” and exhibit character and integrity.
6. Allow others to provide ideas and participate in decisions.
7. Value relationships over personal agendas and specific issues, creating a healthy organic community.
8. Engage in healthy dialogue to advance learning and resolve potential conflict.

We are anxious to achieve an academic program, a leadership program and a school culture that will nurture all of our students, from kindergarten through twelfth grade, teaching them the skills and knowledge they need to pursue their interests and goals, and to act as ethical leaders and citizens.

To that end, a Leading Together committee is being formed to include parents, staff, board members and other members of our school community. The purpose of the committee is to create and oversee a planning process that is inclusive, uniting and motivating. We hope to conduct focus groups with parents. Our goal is to achieve the participation of 300 Cornerstone families, and we hope you will be willing to come and share your thoughts, hopes and concerns.

The Leading Together initiative will continue through the end of this school year, with the goal of completing a five-year strategic plan before the annual meeting in June. Once the plan is approved, we will commit to its goals and align the decisions of the school towards its ends.

This is an exciting process, and through it we hope to fulfill the mission of our charter, giving each child the opportunity to fulfill his or her potential.

Finally, it is our desire through this collaborative strategic planning process to encourage the development of a healthy school community. As a board we stand committed to establishing a positive and productive culture that allows all members of our community to become meaningfully involved in our school.

Our goal is to develop and engage in a process that is future oriented, collaborative and transparent, through which we can establish positive, trusting relationships among our community members. We hope to create a community forum for positive and important conversations about the direction of our

school. We hope to find ways to understand ourselves and our school a little better. By talking to each other, listening to different views and engaging in constructive dialogue, we hope to bring these conversations back into the building rather than having them remain in isolated social groups and on the internet where mutual understanding cannot be reached.

We know that not everyone will agree on every point. But exploring disagreements and different ideas in a respectful, open forum is an important part of a healthy strategic planning process and a healthy community. It is not a sign of dysfunction, but of trust. It is not an opportunity to criticize, but to collaborate.

The members of our board are wholly dedicated to the success of Cornerstone. Most of us are parents of Cornerstone students, and like you, we want nothing more than to see our school flourish through instruction in Core Knowledge, character education and leadership. Like you, we became part of a charter school because decisions regarding the quality of education at our school are extremely important to us.

We invite you to join us in this effort. By taking the time to participate in focus groups, conversations with staff and administration, and school meetings, you can help our community build a vision, a strategic plan and a culture of which we can all be proud.

We thank all of our families and staff members for being part of our Cornerstone community. We appreciate all those who model our leadership principles and demonstrate integrity in the way they live and show respect for others. We appreciate your countless contributions, be they big or small, visible or anonymous, financial or the gift of time. Cornerstone is a wonderful school with a strong community, and we are grateful to be a part of it.

Respectfully yours,

The Board of Directors