


Girls First Strategic Plan Presentation

- Introduction
- Components of the Plan
 - Vision, Mission, Values
 - Planning Research Topics
 - Our Strategy, Strategic Intent, and Goals
- Putting the Plan into Action
 - Linking Goals to Action Items
 - Change Management



Welcome to our Strategic Plan!
This presentation is intended to
give you a detailed view of the
planning method and results.

- ◆ In early 2024, Girls First reached out to RSVP's Volunteer Executive Consultants (VEC), for help with strategic planning.
- ◆ VEC provides free managerial assistance to nonprofits in the greater Philadelphia area through consulting and educational services.
- ◆ Despite being a small non-profit, Girls First went knee deep into the planning process and chose to create a rigorous plan to set the organization's direction.
- ◆ Girls First worked diligently through a Core Team that constructed the Plan and a Review Team to give feedback. VEC provided consulting and education on the planning process. It was a great team effort.
- ◆ The Strategic Plan covers a 5-year outlook with goals spread over the first 3 years.
- ◆ The Plan was approved by the Board of Directors on September 19th 2024.
- ◆ The slides with the  symbol were provided by VEC for education on the planning topics.





- ✦ Inspires the listener
- ✦ Appeals to the senses
- ✦ Possible if not practical
- ✦ Motivational
- ✦ Inspirational
- ✦ Emotional
- ✦ Connects to mission and values



A vision is a statement about what your organization wants to become. It should resonate with all members of the organization and help them feel proud, excited, motivated and part of something much bigger than themselves.



Mission

- ◆ A succinct expression of an organization's essential purpose and reason for existence; articulated for those in the organization and for the public.
- ◆ Broadly describes an organization's present capabilities and serves as a roadmap for the company's vision statement.
- ◆ Could include what kind of product or service it provides, its primary customers or market, and its geographical region of operation.
- ◆ Linchpin to Vision and Values





- ◆ Values define what your organization believes and how you want your organization resonating with and appealing to its staff and the external world.
- ◆ Values become integrated with the beliefs of your staff and affiliates such that the external marketplace sees these values in action.
- ◆ They are declarations about how the organization will interact among staff, volunteers, and the communities they serve.
- ◆ Core Values are those principles and behaviors that distinguish the organization from standard codes of conduct. They are best described in a few short memorable statements.

Girls First Vision and Mission

Vision
To reach children in more communities with our unique trauma informed, arts-based, and emotionally responsive academic programing, which inspires and empowers students to be their best selves every day.

Mission
We build character, instill a positive sense of self, and provide tangible life skills through a creative arts-based curriculum with exposure to the sciences, academic reinforcement, and social-emotional learning.

Core Values

Promote Empowerment

Allow everyone a voice and a choice

Foster Collaboration

Teach the value of working together for the common good

Build Trust

With an environment that is physically and emotionally safe

Model Empathy

Kindness to students and their families experiencing hardships

Celebrate Diversity

Value differences and each other's backgrounds to build stronger communities

Nurture Creativity

Enable students to explore and apply arts and sciences through their own lens

Be Resourceful

Provide the best possible programming with the resources available to us

Measure Outcomes

Our compassion is supported by a data driven culture to achieve results

- ◆ A Plan with substance will include in-depth analysis of topics that will influence your strategy. We chose the following:
 - Benchmarking organizations that provide similar services
 - Identifying the Core Competencies of our organization and how to leverage them
 - Evaluating organizations as current or potential partnerships, especially ones identified as Strategic
- ◆ The following slides present each topic



Benchmarking



- ◆ Benchmarking involves comparing an organization's performance to others in similar businesses to identify areas for improvement.
 - Anticipate and respond to the changing customer needs and expectations.
 - Stay ahead of the curve.
 - Serve as input to creating your business strategy.
- ◆ Target organizations for benchmarking can be non-profit or for-profit.
 - The best matches would be of organizations having similar programs as Girls First.
 - Can also select from a range of quality of service varying from child care to high end educational and/or social value like Girls First.
 - Organizations that we respect for their devotion to children in need are ideal.
- ◆ Criteria to evaluate
 - Size and scope of geographic coverage
 - Program Capability – what they do better; what we do better
 - Their branding capability, plusses and minuses
 - Cost or fee structure; especially cost or fee per student
 - Quality and content of their Strategic Plan, if they have one
 - Take aways from the benchmark: what can we do better

Target Benchmark Organizations

Organization Name	Location(s)	Students
Chester Eastside, Inc	Chester, Pa	24, K-4
Walnut Street Theater	Phila area	2,478 in adopt-a-school
Mosaic	Norristown	30+ middle & high school
Expressive Path	Norristown	500; ages 12 - 19
Keep Music Alive	Greater Phila	?
Mighty Writers After School Academy	Phila, Chester, New Jersey	4697 with 237 programs
The Arts League	West Phila	"hundreds annually"; K-7
The Garage Youth Center	Kennet Square and Avondale, PA	#?; Middle & High School
ArtVentures	Springfield Mass & Hartford, CT	#?; Elementary Age
Girls Inc	Greater Philly, South Jersey	K-12; multiple programs for 3000 girls regionally, 130,000 US/Can
Boys and Girls Clubs	Phila	1300 in 14 locations
YMCA	25 states	#?; After-school pilot program
LEAP	Phila Free Libraries	#?; K-12

Benchmarking Exercise Eye Openers



- ◆ All benchmarked orgs are non-profits
 - 4 of the 13 charge program fees, of which 2 offer scholarships or subsidies
- ◆ All but one organization is coed
- ◆ Student size varied greatly, 4 in the thousands, 2 others in the hundreds
 - 3 for Middle and High School, 2 are K-12
 - *Some very large organizations started out with only a couple staff members*
- ◆ Many programs focus on performing arts: music, dance, theater
 - Some include trauma informed education
 - Some are event based rather than after school
- ◆ A few websites explained the content of their curriculums
 - Some websites have superior branding
- ◆ Several orgs have a larger base of community partners to work with
- ◆ Some orgs have a better pipeline of volunteers
- ◆ As expected, the larger orgs have more and diverse funding sources



Core Competencies

A Core Competency is an underlying skill, ability, knowledge, experience, technology and/or process that gives advantage

- ◆ Unique, hard to duplicate
- ◆ Better than organizations in your field
- ◆ Could bring to a strategic partnership



To find our Core Competencies, we started with a brainstormed list of ideas, discussed them with the core team, and then narrowed down to just the few Competencies that meet the above criteria.

Girls First Core Competencies – What we do best

1) Applying an Exemplary Curriculum

- ▢ Artsee is our copyrighted arts-based curriculum with exposure to the sciences, academic reinforcement, and social-emotional learning, enabling our students to thrive at home, at school, and in their community.
- ▢ It is a robust four-year program focused on building grit and resilience while cultivating regulation, agency, self efficacy, and empathy. It incorporates SEL, Arts-based learning, and trauma-Informed best practices, far exceeding what would normally be found in after-school programs.
- ▢ We have a skilled workforce that applies our intellectual property to the design and implementation of curriculums with other organizations who partner with us

2) Providing a Supportive Environment

- ▢ Throughout our 15 years of service, we have designed a unique safe space where our girls feel accepted, valued, respected, loved, and empowered to be true to themselves.
- ▢ It goes beyond physical security by creating a specialized nurturing environment surrounded by bonding activities and loving care.
- ▢ Our healthy meal program provides both nutrition and an emotional connection.

3) Training our Staff and Affiliates

- ▢ Our teaching expertise enables comprehensive trauma informed training for new staff, teaching artists, volunteers, board members, and partners.
- ▢ We reinforce these skills and our values with continuing educational programs.

4) Living our Values

- ▢ Our values are deep rooted, reflect our behaviors every day, enabling consistently high service quality.
- ▢ We foster collaboration by teaching the value of working together for the common good.
- ▢ We model empathy with kindness to students and their families experiencing hardships.

5) Driven by Data

- ▢ Deep analytics is built into what we do to achieve superior results.
- ▢ Our detailed assessments and data reporting tracks measurable outcomes.





Partnership Opportunities

- A Partnership is a collaboration that an organization enters with one or more parties to meet the needs of each party.
- Nonprofit partnerships allows various organizations to join together and make even bigger strides in bettering their community.
- In addition to linking with other nonprofits, partnerships can be with for-profit companies. Many corporations include in their mission to give back dollars and employee time to the communities in which they operate.
- A partnership can also be with government agencies. Charitable nonprofits and governments are natural partners, serving the same constituents in the same communities.
- Some successful partnerships can also be with competitors, via the “Coopetition” model, where organizations both compete and collaborate as described in the previous slide.
- **There are two basic segments of partnerships: *standard* and *strategic***
 - Standard Partnerships can be as simple as a supplicant-benefactor relationship. For example, the nonprofit seeks funding from another organization, charitable or municipal. Standard partners can also be what Girls First refers to as Community Partners, who provide specialized services that enhances the Girls First program.
 - A Strategic Partnership is a special form that becomes central to each organization’s mission and integral to their strategies. Both deploy and combine their core competencies, joint activities proliferate, personnel and institutional relationships multiply, and trust deepens. They are designed to leverage the unique strengths of each party to achieve a common goal.



Observations from the Partnership Analysis

- ◆ 32 Partnerships Identified
 - 13 Current – 19 Potential
 - 15 Standard – 17 Strategic
- ◆ Wide variety of relationships
 - Program enhancement/extension
 - Student outreach
 - Skill collaboration
 - Funding/branding
- ◆ Solid base of current partners, standard and strategic
 - Rotation Records, Theater Horizon, Norristown Library, and Keep Music Alive were cited by more than one person
- ◆ Many good potential leads – 11 of 19 are strategic
- ◆ Need to select among the most promising standard and strategic leads and begin the exploration



Partners Identified by Segment

◆ Standard – Current

- Rotation Records
- Keep Music Alive (may go strategic)
- Theater Horizon
- Norristown Library
- The Clay Mobile
- TruMark Financial
- Victory Church

◆ Standard – Potential

- Elmwood Zoo
- Greener Partners
- CHOP King of Prussia Hospital and Norristown Office
- CHOP Healthy minds, Healthy Kids
- City of Philadelphia Office of Children and Youth
- Child Guidance Resource Center
- Rock to the Future
- Mural Arts Program Art Education

◆ Strategic - Current

- Chester Exchange (Kids First partnership)
- Kids First CEI
- The Franklin Institute
- CCSA
- Gesu
- Montco Community College

◆ Strategic - Potential

- Kids First other locations
- Upper Darby School District
- Mosaic
- Girls Spark
- Girls on the Run
- Bryn Mawr College GSSWSR
- AmeriCorps and Artist Year
- Episcopal Community Services (ECS)
- Darby Mission House
- Crayola Imagine Arts Academy?
- Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

Ways we benefit from Current Partners

- 1) Applying current curriculum to expand student population at other locations
 - Chester Eastside (Kids First CEI), CCSA, Gesu
- 2) Enriching current Program with partners having expertise in related fields
 - Rotation Records, Theatre Horizon, Norristown Library, The Clay Mobile, Keep Music Alive
- 3) Diversifying/expanding current Program into new areas of interest
 - The Franklin Institute, Chester Exchange (Kids First)
- 4) Collaboration to share specialized skills
 - Victory Church, Montco Community College
- 5) Vertically integrating with organizations having similar programs for older students
 - N/A – no current partners
- 6) Synergy to receive funding and share brand awareness
 - TruMark Financial

Ways we could benefit from Potential Partners

- 1) Applying current curriculum to expand student population at other locations
 - Chester ExChange/Kids First (other locations), Upper Darby School District, Episcopal Community Services (ECS), Montgomery County Intermediate Unit
- 2) Enriching current Program with partners having expertise in related fields
 - Crayola Imagine Arts Academy, Mural Arts Program (Murals on the Move), Keep Music Alive, Rock to the Future
- 3) Diversifying/expanding current Program into new areas of interest
 - Elmwood Zoo, Greener Partners, Girls on the Run
- 4) Collaboration to share specialized skills
 - Bryn Mawr College GSSWSR, AmeriCorps, CHOP Healthy Minds Healthy Kids, Child Guidance Resource Center
- 5) Vertically integrating with organizations having similar programs for older students
 - Mosaic, Darby Mission House, Girls Spark, Mural Arts Education
- 6) Synergy to receive funding and share brand awareness
 - TruMark Financial, City of Philadelphia Office of Children and Youth



How Strategy is Linked to Action

This shows the progression we take from articulating strategy via Strategic Intent Statements and linking them to Goals and Actions.

- ◆ Strategies (compelling phrase or visual)
 - Strategic Intent Statements
 - We intend to . . . (insert direction) by . . . (insert how going to get there)
 - ❖ Goals (achievable milestones with success measures)
 - ✓ Actions (sequenced activities to meet the goals)
 - △ Change Management (ensuring success)



- ◆ Your Strategy is the most important reflection of your organization's Vision, Mission, and Values.
- ◆ Some organization's Strategy is built into its fabric without being explicitly stated.
- ◆ Some have a short, concise writeup articulating the Strategy for others to follow.
- ◆ A technique for explaining your Strategy is via Strategic Intent Statements as shown on the next two slides.





Strategic Intent folds the future back into the present; a merger of Vision and Mission. It envisions a desired leadership direction and establishes the criterion the organization will use to chart its progress.



- Is more than unfettered ambition. It encompasses an active management process, generating the desired pattern of decision making when communicated and adopted in the organization.
- Implies a sizable stretch for an organization. Current capabilities and resources will not suffice. This forces the organization to be more inventive, to make the most of limited resources.
- Provides consistency to short-term action, while leaving room for reinterpretation as new opportunities emerge.

Excerpts from HBR article by Gary Hamel & C.K. Prahalad, 2005



Strategic Intent Statements

- ✦ Succinct descriptions of the directions the organization is going to take and how it will get there
- ✦ Focuses on new strategic directions while reaffirming critical current directions
- ✦ Stated as “we intend to . . . (insert direction), by . . . (insert how going to get there)”
- ✦ Are linked to one or more goals with milestones

“Strategic people create connections between ideas, plans, and people that others fail to see” HBR



Girls First Strategic Intent Statements

We intend to . . .	by . . .
1) Expand from our roots in Norristown to a network of after-school locations within the tri-county area surrounding Philadelphia, reaching a much greater population of students in need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Progressively adding outreach partner locations ➤ Growing with our current partners as they add students and facilities ➤ Adding Girls First locations utilizing the Norristown model ➤ Selectively including co-ed programs ➤ Vertically integrating middle school age children into the Girls First program ➤ Establishing in-school residency programs
2) Continue to enhance our exemplary trauma-informed ARTSEE curriculum and programming, enabling our core values to impact our expanding and diverse student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Delivering our latest trauma-informed arts based social-emotional learning (SEL) program to children living in underserved communities ➤ Continuously adding new features to our program to meet the needs of the diverse and growing student population ➤ Emphasizing the quality of our current services as we expand ➤ Collaborating with experts in the field of mental and emotional health ➤ Providing trauma-informed workshops to the broader community
3) Strengthen and maintain connections with our communities and affiliates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Making the Girls First brand synonymous with after-school programs for those in need ➤ Building strong relationships with community partners that enhance programming, offer diverse resources & expertise, and create a mutually beneficial support network ➤ Preserving enduring connections with foundations, corporations, federal, state, and local officials, and individual donors who see the value in our vision and mission ➤ Providing our partners with quality curriculum, materials, and data analysis ➤ Educating parents and the community about the value of our program to their families
4) Ensure our Financial Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Diversifying sources of funds through corporate sponsorships, government agencies, fundraisers, and fee-for-service programs ➤ Employing a strategy to increase revenue streams and reduce operational costs ➤ Ensuring the organization practices fiscal discipline
5) Benefit from the strength of our staff and supporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Providing premier trauma-informed training for staff, teaching artists, and volunteers ➤ Possessing an effective pipeline to recruit and retain our staff, teaching artists, and dedicated volunteers ➤ Recognizing and rewarding our staff for their dedication and contributions to our vision and mission ➤ Counting on the leadership, involvement, and support of our Board of Directors



Goal and Action Item Setting Principles

- Make sure your goals are in sync with your Strategic Intent.
- Make them SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based.
- A goal without a measurable outcome is like a game without a scoreboard or scorekeeper.
- Goals connect to time dependent actions items with resources assigned.
- Create a road map with the action items for exactly how you're going to reach each goal.
- Push yourself to think big while having some quick hits that will reinforce positive results.
- Pick realistic scope, time and resource commitments; resetting as needed.
- Stick to your commitments. Stay motivated to see your goals through to the end.
- Make your goals visible to stakeholders; involve them in the effort.
- Celebrate the success of completed goals.





- ◆ Plans don't work unless they are implemented
- ◆ Implementation doesn't work unless actions are identified
- ◆ Actions don't get done unless resources are committed
- ◆ Actions don't get done well unless they are logically connected:
 - Vision, Mission, and Values drive Strategic Intent
 - Strategic Intent drives Goals
 - Goals drive Action Items



Girls First Strategic Plan Summary

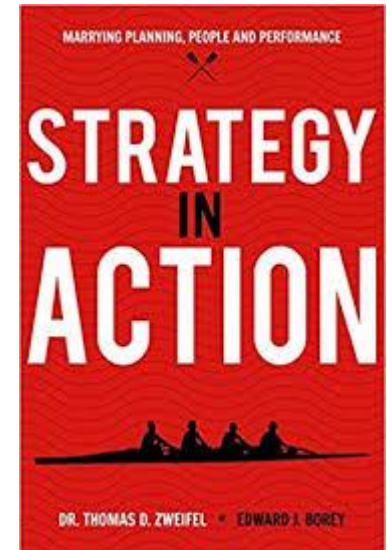
(this slide is the culmination of all the work put into our planning process)

Strategy	Strategic Intent	Goals (3-year timeframe)
Enroll a much greater population of students in need	Expand from our roots in Norristown to a network of after-school locations within the tri-county area surrounding Philadelphia	Initiate ten outreach partners within the tri-county area
		Open an additional Girls First location, using the Norristown model
		Develop curriculum to include middle school students (5 th -8 th)
		Create an in-school residency program, <i>Art Works</i> PreK-3 rd Grade
Evolve our exemplary curriculum	Continue to enhance the trauma-informed ARTSEE curriculum and programming, enabling our core values to impact our expanding and diverse student base	Continue to update curriculum and trauma-informed programs
		Implement a literacy component with retirement community volunteers
		Maintain quality oversight of our growing Outreach programs
		Build a trauma-informed workshop series for prospective TA's
Collaborate with the communities we serve	Strengthen and maintain connections with our communities and affiliates	Ensure our brand is recognized as the leading trauma-informed program
		Initiate creative fundraising events with members of the community
		Grow and strengthen bonds with our community partners
		Conduct frequent parent/caregiver <u>Artsee</u> curriculum workshops
Ensure financial stability	Diversify sources of funds; support our growing programs and staff; practice fiscal discipline and responsibility	Assure revenue streams annually hit or surpass budget
		Maintain between 6 and 12 months of cash in reserves
		Hold the annual cost per student calculation at competitive levels
		Enforce a balanced and diverse funding program
Benefit from the strength of our staff and affiliates	Promote a supportive environment for staff, teaching artists and volunteers; an outstanding training program; recruitment and retention of the best talent	Employ financial risk management methods annually
		Ensure all staff, TA's and volunteers feel respected and valued for their dedication and service to Girls First
		Utilize our trauma-informed training program for all participants
		Provide resources for ongoing staff professional development
		Launch a recruitment and retention program for Staff, TA's & volunteers



How to make a Plan work

- ◆ Link strategy to the goals and action plan
- ◆ Address *Change Management* for those impacted
- ◆ *Monitor* implementation activities and results, make adjustments as needed
- ◆ *Communicate* the Plan to everyone it touches, ask for feedback and their support
- ◆ Celebrate success, acknowledge shortfalls



How we make our Plan work

- ◆ In our Plan Summary slide, you will notice we have about 4 goals highlighted for each of the 5 strategies.
- ◆ To execute our Plan, our complete goal descriptions have measurable outcomes and milestones.
- ◆ The 21 goals break out into 74 action items with timeframes expected outcomes during our 3-year planning horizon.
- ◆ Each goal has a goal owner named from Girls First with accountability for the action items and overall success of the goal.
- ◆ Plan progress will be routinely monitored and adjustments to the detailed plan will be made as needed.
- ◆ The Plan and its updates will be actively communicated throughout the Girls First Community.
- ◆ We have assessed the impact these changes may make on those involved with Girls First and have created a Change Management Plan.





Change Management

- ◆ Change management is the discipline that guides how we prepare, equip and support individuals to successfully adopt change in order to drive organizational success.
- ◆ Organizational change management involves
 - Identifying the groups and people who will need to change as the result of the project, and in what ways they will need to change.
 - Creating a customized plan for ensuring those impacted receive the awareness, leadership, coaching, and training they need in order to change successfully.
- ◆ Being able to deliver expected results allows an organization to achieve their strategic vision.
- ◆ Studies have shown that initiatives without, or with poorly designed change management fail about 80% of the time, while use of well-designed change management approaches creates an 80% success rate.





Change Management Tools

◆ Change Statement

- Also called the “Why” Statement
- Decreases resistance by explaining the compelling reason why we need to change from where we are now, e.g. the status quo is no longer tenable.
- Increases enthusiasm by also describing how it will be better when we get there, e.g. inspiring the stakeholder

◆ Impact Analysis

- Recognizes a variety of Stakeholder individuals or grouping
- Predicts how each Stakeholder will react to the change; either positively or negatively

◆ Change Management Methods

- Frequent promotion
- Asking for feedback, addressing concerns
- Training and follow up coaching



Girls First Change Management Statement

- ◆ Our strategy is to serve a much greater student population by expanding locations, adding age groups, coed classes, and offering in-school programs.
- ◆ The curriculum and programming will be enhanced to remain a leader in the field of trauma-informed education.
- ◆ Despite this growth, our devotion to each current student and their families is steadfast.
- ◆ Our transformation will be accomplished through:
 - Increasing Community and Strategic Partnerships.
 - Pacing the change within our financial resources.
 - Honoring our highly talented, qualified staff and volunteers.
 - Counting on the support of Parents, Funders, and our Board of Directors. Together, we can reach so many children in need with the very best program available in the tri county area.

Change Management Approach

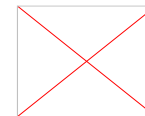
Who is affected by the changes	Change Management Approach
GF Students	Our expanded programming will provide enriched opportunities. While doing so, we will stay focused on each and every child's need.
GF Student Parents	The parents are our sounding board on the effects our changes have on their children and the families. We will value feedback and adjust accordingly.
Current Outreach Partners	We will apply our model to fit the uniqueness of each location. We will be in frequent contact to ensure the staff is supported and the program is perfected
New Outreach Partners	Our partnership agreements provide mutual benefit and sharing of expertise to provide the best possible service to the children. We will monitor effectiveness.
Board of Directors	The Board is our conscience and steers our direction. We count on the Board to promote our strategic intent while governing the pace of change.
Community Partners	Community Partners enhance our programming with updated experiences for the children. We nurture the relationships with both current and new partners.
Teaching Artists	Teaching Artists perform at the very core of our curriculum and program. They receive high-level training and reinforcement. Feedback from the TA's is key.
Volunteers	Our volunteers have access to up-to-date trauma-informed best practices. We provide clear direction, positivity, and enthusiasm for the ensuing changes,
Funders	We could not operate without our funders. Our growth will depend on diverse funding sources. We must provide clarity and consistency of our message.
Girls First Staff	Our dedicated staff is the catalyst for change. They perform at a pace to enable growth and quality of current service. We care about their professional wellbeing.

Girls First Strategic Plan Presentation



Thank you for your interest in our Plan
and your support as we move forward.

Please contact: Cheri@GirlsFirst.org if you have
questions or would like to give us feedback.



Building Organizational Capacity