**It’s Elementary**

**THE CAREY SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2014-2019**

**Specializing in Elementary Education**

*Our goal is to be an expert in elementary education that*

*sets the standard for other elementary schools.*

**Cultivating Elementary Teaching Expertise**

*Our goal is to have outstanding elementary teachers and*

*be a school where great teachers want to work.*

**Caring for the Carey Community**

*Our goal is to enhance our distinctively “Carey” community that*

*celebrates and supports elementary students and their families.*

**Strengthening Our School**

*Our goal is to ensure Carey’s long-term sustainability*

*through the responsible stewardship of resources.*

**I. Specializing in Elementary Education**

*Our goal is to be an expert in elementary education that sets the standard for other elementary schools.*

**We Know Children** and

Developmental stages

* Ensure our *program* centers on student age, ability and interest levels.
* Deliver a challenging curriculum for our learners and communicate about it beyond the classroom to enhance school/home partnerships.
* Utilize contemporary [*research-based curricula*](http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/2013/10/five-research-driven-education-trends-at-work-in-classrooms) *and standards* in areas of math, language, reading, writing, social studies, science, technology, the arts, and athletics.

Appropriate Grade-Level Content and Skills

* Ensure consistency of experience and challenge within grade levels and across core and co-curricular subjects.
* Emphasize play-based learning at younger ages progressing towards collaborative critical-thinking and leadership at older ages.

Character education

* Place greater explicit emphasis on ethics, civics and moral development in the curriculum.
* Continue integration of *Social Emotional Learning* ([SEL) concepts](http://www.careyschool.org/student-life/social-emotional-learning/) throughout our program and strengthen it with greater opportunities to foster optimism, effort and empathy.

**We Celebrate Children** through

Engagement

* Promote an environment for students to learn-by-doing through project-based learning, structured and unstructured play, assemblies, and field trips.
* Provide *integrated studies* opportunities to help students make connections between subject areas and develop a broader view of challenges and solutions.

Their eyes

* Prioritize fun and the joy of our school.
* Provide opportunities for all children to be their authentic selves.

**We Prepare Children** for

The next grade level

* Ensure that each student steps up to the next grade level aware of accomplishments, personal abilities and areas for growth.
* Offer support of *learning resources* to address specific student needs.
* Institute authentic, formative, and student-driven assessments to complement teacher-driven assessment.

The next school

* Graduate independent learners who can manage the social, procedural, and academic aspects of middle school.
* Expand our connections with local middle schools through board, administrative and faculty relationships.

Life beyond Carey

* Enhance [real world relevance](http://thethirdteacherplus.com/index#/greeley-elementary-school/) and the role of citizenship in our curriculum, with emphasis on multicultural, service-learning, and ecological awareness.
* Implement age appropriate school-wide projects to address local/national/global problems and connect student learning to the larger world.

**II. Cultivating Elementary Teaching Expertise**

*Our goal is to have outstanding elementary teachers and be a school where great teachers want to work.*

**We Know Elementary Teaching** and

Attracting great teachers

* Conduct nationwide searches for job openings.
* Develop relationships with key teacher training programs to ensure the most mission-aligned applicant pool.
* Build our culture as a great place to work.

Hiring and retaining effective faculty

* Explore compensation options to reward the impact faculty and staff have on delivering the school’s mission.
* Offer teachers attractive, competitive compensation.
* Develop innovative, non-salaried benefits to meet our faculty’s financial planning and quality of life goals.

**We Celebrate Elementary Teaching** through

Teaching excellence

* Recognize commitment and high quality engagement with students in and out of the classroom.
* Provide teachers with ample resources to succeed in the classroom.

Collaboration

* Support effective models for collaboration that are most impactful on the classroom and students.
* Provide structured and unstructured time during the school day for faculty to know each other’s work and share ideas on advancing teaching practices and curriculum.
* Prioritize collegiality and cultivate opportunities for teachers and staff to enjoy their work and communicate positively about it.

Innovation

* Foster an environment where innovative teaching is encouraged to further our educational mission.
* Become “connected educators” who thoughtfully use technology as a teaching, learning, communication and professional development tool.

**We Prepare Elementary Teachers** for

Achieving their personal best

* Measure performance on a regular basis to promote growth and renewal.

Classroom and career success

* Inspire our faculty and staff through personalized *professional development plans* that targets areas of individual interest and growth while advancing the mission of the school.

**III. Caring for the Carey Community**

*Our goal is to enhance our distinctively “Carey” community that celebrates and supports elementary students and their families.*

**We Know Our Community** and

School-family partnership

* Align efforts to support student growth through improved and consistent school-family communication.
* Be mindful of the financial, time and volunteer commitments asked of families to be resource-conscious and nimble in carrying out community activities.

The individuals who comprise it

* Foster an inclusive environment for families of all backgrounds and perspectives as communicated in our *Statement on Diversity and Inclusivity*.

**We Celebrate Our Community** through

A shared purpose

* Adhere to Carey’s *mission* and values of kindness, respect and personal responsibility.
* Strengthen our community through family-centered traditions and new events that bring our community together for learning, sharing, fun and friendship.

Participation

* Encourage broad, whole family participation in school life by providing appropriate opportunities to volunteer, engage and see the school in action.
* Welcome mission-appropriate parent-initiated groups that build community, support parents, teachers and students and enhance the Carey experience.

**We Prepare Our Community** for

A broad perspective on parenting and education

* Expand opportunities for parent and family education through communications and access to outside experts and resources.
* Support initiatives that expand our families’ connections with our local community and the world.

School life after Carey

* Prepare parents and families for their child’s transition to middle school.
* Provide opportunities for ongoing affiliation with Carey after graduation.
* Maintain connections with alumni and alumni families to benefit from their experience, history and institutional knowledge.

**IV. Strengthening Our School**

*Our goal is to ensure Carey’s long-term sustainability through the responsible stewardship of resources.*

**We Know Our School** and

A strong operating model

* Ensure the school operates within its means in the short and long term.
* Improve further the school’s financial strength and operational flexibility.
* Address capital project commitments in a timely fashion.

Good governance

* Enhance [trustee and administrative processes](Dashboards/NAIS_Dashboard_for_PDF.pdf) for financial and fiduciary reporting, monitoring, risk assessment and planning.
* Employ best practices to guide operational and financial decision-making.

**We Celebrate Our School** through

Investments in curriculum, faculty and financial aid

* Prioritize programmatic enhancement to offer the most educationally effective curriculum, materials and technology.
* Continually benchmark practices of peer schools and leverage industry resources to ensure we remain on leading edge of compensation practices and non-monetary benefits.
* Offer meaningful financial assistance to keep a Carey education accessible to a wide range of families.

A robust advancement program

* Optimize time, energy and resources in advancement.
* Expand sources of giving.

**We Prepare Our School** for

Our elementary mission

* Maintain a safe and welcoming campus.
* Create a master plan for the campus site.

Environmental and resource sustainability

* Develop more natural spaces for ecological learning and play.

Long-term financial health and flexibility

* Build endowment and reserves to enable the school to thrive in challenging economic environments.