

Yukon Montessori Society
2024 – 2027
STRATEGIC PLAN
June 2024



YUKON MONTESSORI SCHOOL.
GUIDED FREEDOM.UNLIMITED POTENTIAL.

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Overview

The Yukon Montessori Society offers pre-school, elementary and summer camp education to children in the Whitehorse area, based on the principles of Montessori pedagogy. Serving approximately 90 students in the early learning and elementary school, with about 8 staff members, YMS recently moved into new facilities and hired a new Executive Director.

Given the number changes YMS has experienced in the last few years, the Board wished to develop a strategic plan. Bartlette Consulting was contracted with to lead them through the planning process.

The consultant met several times with the Board president and vice-president prior to starting the project. An interview with each Board member was done and a session with staff was held. A survey went out to parents. Summary reports on these activities were sent out to the Board prior to the first planning session, along with background information on strategic planning. These documents are in the appendices to this report.

The consultant met with the Board for two planning sessions on May 14 and May 24, 2024. An additional session was held at the June 11 regular Board meeting. At the first session, the summary reports were briefly reviewed, and the vision, mission and guiding principles were worked on. Due to time constraints, the consultant took this work and drafted statements for each of these.

These draft statements and a draft environment scan (SWOT analysis, done by the consultant) were brought to the May 24 session for discussion. A first draft of strategic priorities and goals were developed. Due to time constraints, the final development of the vision, mission and guiding principles were given to the consultant and president for further work. The consultant also took away the draft priorities and goals for further development, and drafted objectives for each goal. These were to be brought to the June 11 Board meeting to be finalized.

At the June 11 meeting, new discussion emerged regarding the vision, mission and values. As a result, these remain in draft form in the plan. The Board will need to finalize these on their own. While the strategic priorities and goals were agreed upon, there was not time to finalize the objectives for each goal. These, too, remain either in draft form or blank, for the YMS Board to complete. Very recent changes in the administrative structure at YMS may require further changes to the strategic plan.

The strategic plan provided in this report, while requiring further work by the Board, will, once complete, guide the work of the YMS Board over the next 3 years. As such, it should remain an active document that is regularly referenced by the Board and senior administrators and should guide the development of work and operational plans at YMS.

The Strategic Plan

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Inspiring students to become self-reliant and compassionate citizens who are equipped to make positive change in their world.

Mission

We are a Whitehorse non-profit school dedicated to providing education and programs, grounded in Montessori philosophy for children 18 months to 13 years. In partnership with families, highly trained and dedicated educators create environments that nurture each child's holistic learning and development, empowering them to reach their full potential.

Guiding Principles

In working towards our vision and mission, the following principles embody our values and guide our behaviour, decisions and actions as an organization and as individuals within our organization.

Montessori philosophy: The AMI Montessori approach assists children in developing to their full potential, encouraging learning driven by creativity and curiosity. We foster independence in education and beyond, as students emerge into their futures as contributing citizens in their communities and the world. What we do within our individual programs and as an organization follows this approach.

Children: We believe children are capable and confident partners in their own learning. We seek to understand, value and include the uniqueness of each child. We meet each child 'where they are at', in a nurturing prepared environment that promotes their learning and their social and emotional development.

Collaboration: We believe children, educators and families are partners in our education and learning community and build relationships with each other as empathetic and compassionate learners. We engage with and learn from the unique skills, knowledges and cultures each individual brings to our school.

Educators: Our educators are committed to ongoing professional growth and development. As educators they uphold ethical principles and personal integrity taking responsibility for their decisions and behaviours. As a school we are committed to supporting educator AMI training and credentialing.

Sustainability: As a non-profit, we aim to use our financial and human resources in ways that support the current and future on-going operations of the organization. We support our staff through professional development opportunities, fair compensation and a work environment that allows each employee to use their capabilities for the good of the learners and the organization. Board members and all staff act ethically, with the vision, mission and best interests of the organization in mind. We aim for fiscal responsibility and accountability while furthering the mission of YMS.

Community: We believe the learning environment has no walls. We will reach into the larger community to develop partnerships that benefit our children's learning and the community. We will encourage a love of and commitment to stewardship of the natural environment in our programs. We will foster a responsibility to reconciliation.

Priorities, Goals and Objectives

Strategic Priorities:

- Board and Governance
- Communication
- Educators
- Future Planning and Managing Growth
- Community Relations

Priority #1 Board and Governance

GOAL #1 DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE SUITE OF BOARD POLICIES

Objective (i): identify governance policy needs for the Board

Objective (ii): develop and approve policies

GOAL #2 SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR BOARD

Objective (i): implement a Board succession planning process

Objective (ii): actively identify future board members/use committees and working groups as a Board recruitment tool

GOAL #3 REVIEW BOARD STRUCTURE

Objective (i): develop committees or working groups to support the Board in their work

Objective (ii): consider added an elected staff representative to the Board

Objective (iii): ensure governance policies are clear on roles and responsibilities, including scope of decision making, for the Board, committees (incl officers) and staff

GOAL #4 CLARIFICATION OF BOARD AND ED ROLES

Objective (i): create a working group to clearly define the role of the ED and the role of the Board

Objective (ii): ensure this is supported by policy

Objective (iii): educate Board members on the role of the ED vs role of the Board

Priority #2 Communication

GOAL #1: IMPROVE YMS WEBSITE

Objective (i): strike a working group to review websites for similar organizations and consult with families and staff to create a needs list for improved website

Objective (ii): once Board has approved project, assign ED to hire contractor, manage website improvements and develop a web maintenance plan

GOAL #2: IMPROVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Objective (i): consult with YMS families to determine what they need/want in communications from their child's teacher, the school/Board in general

Objective (ii): work with ED to develop a plan to implement what is needed

GOAL #3: IMPROVE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Objective (i): develop a plan for publicizing news and events from YMS to the general public (social media, press releases, other)

Objective (ii): establish a 'news and events' section on YMS website which is regular updated

Priority #3 Educators

GOAL #1 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Objective (i): review HR policies

Objective (ii): create AMI training plan for teaching staff

Objective (iii): create a professional development plan beyond AMI training for each staff member

Objective (iv): develop mentorship opportunities for each teacher

GOAL #2 BECOME A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR AMI IN THE NORTH

Objective (i): your objectives here would be the steps you need to take for this goal

GOAL #3 DEVELOP AN EDUCATION PLAN FOR YMS

Objective (i): review ed plans from other AMI schools (see the example provided to the Board)

Objective (ii): determine if this type of plan, possibly combined with a SEM plan, is desirable for YMS

Objective (iii): if so, Board determines broad outcomes for such a plan

Objective (iv): strike a committee (Board/staff, or staff with Board representation), to develop the plan

Objective (v): use the plan as a communication and recruitment tool (post on website, for e.g.)

Priority #4 Future Planning and Managing Growth

GOAL #1 MANAGE WAIT LISTS

Objective (i): strike a working group to determine parameters for wait lists (for e.g., maximum number of families on list, time on list, likelihood of filling spaces in various grades should there be openings)

Objective (ii): ensure that families on wait lists are regularly communicated with

GOAL #2 DEVELOP A GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Objective (i): strike a committee to determine if expansion in next 5 years is desirable/possible

Objective (ii): if 'yes', form an expansion planning group

GOAL #3 EXPLORE FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING OPTIONS

Objective (i): strike a committee to identify grants/funding YMS may qualify for

Objective (ii): determine whether lobbying for government support for YMS is desirable

Objective (iii): determine what internal fundraising activities are feasible from a cost vs return perspective

Objective (iv): determine if any community partners identified are potential donors

Objective (v): work with growth management plan to identify longer terms financial needs

GOAL #4 DEVELOP STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Objective (i): determine student/family mix desired at YMS

Objective (ii): determine student supports needed to recruit and retain students and families

Objective (iii): develop a scholarship program

GOAL #5 DEVELOP AN EDUCATION PLAN

Objective (i): review other AMI school education plans and determine if an education plan or combined education/SEM plan is something YMS wishes to develop

Objective (ii): if so, Board to determine broad outcomes desired in the plan

Objective (iii): strike a joint Board/staff committee to develop the plan

Priority #5 Community Relations

GOAL #1 IMPROVE INTERNAL COMMUNITY BUILDING

Objective (i): hold events during the year for all YMS families (for e.g., fall BBQ)

Objective (ii): survey families to determine what type of events they would like to attend

GOAL #2 BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE EXTERNAL COMMUNITY

Objective (i): develop a list of potential community partners

Objective (ii): look at opportunities for students and/or YMS to take on projects in the community

Objective (iii): identify projects with a reconciliation focus

Objective (iv): develop opportunities to bring community partners into the school

