

Touchstone Community School

2011-2012

Campus Master Plan

Why Develop a Campus Master Plan (CMP)?

New opportunities arise as we look to replace our aging playground in the near future or look for a suitable location. The simplest of questions - what will our new playground look like? - or- do we keep the playground in its current location? - sets off a chain reaction of new questions about our campus layout and uses of our nearly nine acre property. As a result, we cannot look at the playground replacement project in isolation, but must view it in concert with existing facilities and other growth opportunities. As improvements to the school are identified, such as the playground, reconfiguring interior/classroom spaces, or drainage patterns, we want to make sure all improvements are made in the smartest way with an eye towards longevity.

It is important that decisions implemented today do not conflict with the long-term goals of Touchstone Community School. The Campus Master Plan will include a visionary land-use and facilities plan that provides a framework for future development consistent with the mission of the school. This plan will also provide a timeline for implementation of the full scope of work (based in part on priorities identified by the community) along with a budget-level estimate of probable cost of design, permitting and construction for each project.

To accomplish this task, the committee will have a dialogue with the TCS community (faculty, staff, students, parents, board of trustees and alumni) to assess existing facilities and identify wishes and desires for facilities and land uses that complement and enhance the principles and mission of TCS.

Purpose of the Plan

The Campus Master Plan is a collection of powerful ideas that establishes a flexible "opportunity framework" for coordinating physical change on the campus. This framework institutes patterns that will maintain the campus's unique spatial characteristics while identifying opportunities for consistent and harmonious expansion. The quality of the physical environment has a tremendous influence on the image of the institution, and, as such, the Campus Master Plan serves as a foundation for shaping the campus fabric in support of its mission and vision and founded on the premise that the campus exists as a place to offer child-centered educational program and environment that will nurture competent, thoughtful and enthusiastic life-long learners. The Campus Master Plan outlines parameters to strategically manage development opportunities and confidently implement common initiatives within the short-, mid-, and long-term time horizons.

Campus Master Plan Goals

TCS will embark on this Campus Master Plan with the overarching premise to create a well ordered, safe, educationally effective, and distinctive school environment. To achieve this unity, the plan recommends strengthening existing physical relationships, challenging inefficient campus patterns, and developing compelling new patterns. Throughout the master planning process, special attention will be placed on opportunities to improve campus organization, image, and character while providing an adequate infrastructure to accommodate growth. The Campus Master Plan's core organizational precepts are derived from the following common goals:

1. Assess the campus's infill capacity and ideal organization.
2. Reinforce the campus's use of the outdoor environment.
3. Provide a high-quality image and identity for the school.

4. Improve the physical environment for students.
5. Develop partnership opportunities.
6. Establish a flexible planning and implementation framework.

Description of the Process

A sound process may be the most important part of any master planning exercise. TCS will develop an inclusive, consensus-oriented committee structure to provide continuity and solid user representation. The planning process will include faculty, students, staff, administrators, parents, trustees and alumni. Each of these participants will guide decision making from beginning to end, providing valuable counsel to the planning team and gaining "ownership" of the major ideas and core concepts.

This planning process will be divided into four major phases: Discovery, Alternatives, Refinement, and Documentation. The Discovery phase will consist of listening and learning. This important first step will include data collection, interviews and meetings, physical analysis of existing conditions, and spatial projections to highlight shortcomings and overages for individual space categories. The Alternatives phase can be summarized as testing the imagination. This phase will explore up to three divergent approaches to developing the future campus. These scenarios will be thoroughly scrutinized before common goals and objectives are reached. The Refinement phase will combine the best alternatives into a preliminary and then final plan. This portion of the Campus Master Plan will allow the users to test the plan against their goals and expectations. Finally, the Documentation phase will include the creation of the final illustrative graphics and the packaging of this document.