



Strategic Initiatives for the  
2017/2018 School Year

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Presented to the Board of Trustees  
&  
School Improvement Team

March 2017

The following is a list of strategic Initiatives being vetted and prioritized by the Village Green Virtual Charter School. In March, this list will go to the Trustee's for initial screening. Items deemed priorities by the Trustees will then be forwarded to the School Improvement Team for further work. There, the initiatives will be given timelines and ascribed with persons responsible for tasks and completion.

The document's anticipated time of completion is April 14, 2017. Board discussion and approval will be an action item on May 9, 2017.

1. Creation of Senior Transition Center

206 Westminster Street will be valuable space for the school as we expand and set ourselves up for increased enrollment. Currently, the space is under architectural planning and code review. The goal is to create a "co-working" space which is flexible in its design (no cubicles) and is tailor made for high school completion at VGV including projects and dual enrollment.

2. Deployment of new sized cohorts at 135 Weybosset

Opening 206 Westminster gives us an unprecedented amount of space at 135 Weybosset Street. A master plan of downsized cohorts and re-shuffling of teachers, assignments and grades served is a wonderful opportunity. At 135 Weybosset Street, our current average number of students per LC is 55. In 2017/2018, it will be 45 and this means that we should reconfigure our LC grades and composition and match the teachers to the new student need.

3. Next Generation Science Program

2017 is the last year for NECAP Science test and standards. As a school, we are transitioning to the new state mandated Next Generation Science Standards. Edgenuity, however, is not creating Next Generation Science courses. It is our obligation to re-shape science here at VGV. By using version 5 of Edgenuity and replicating the science sequence and progression found within the Next Gen standards we can make the perfect science curriculum for the future. Students who are mid-stream would have to be grandfathered in. However, because the sequence will be brand new and custom built, the students will not have to ever repeat a course or repeat content. I have conversed with Edgenuity about this and they are very excited about the prospect of us doing this groundbreaking work.

4. Establishment of Literacy Center

Since our first year of operation we have paid more attention to literacy every year. This year we had a terrific experience in the creation of our testing center. Item #2 gives us a great opportunity to take the Eddy Street half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and create a Literacy and testing center. The reading specialist can run intensive programs for PLP students and can have appropriate space for a library and testing center for the frequent NWEA testing which takes place as part of our academic program.

5. Become SFA and issue RFP

To increase quality and variety, it is recommended that VGV become its own School Food Authority. Requests for Proposals will have to be issued and a contract entered with RIDE. In becoming the "customer" as opposed to being a "recipient" we will have greater leverage over important program elements such as food costs, personnel costs, menu planning and a la carte items. RFP's to Sodexo, Aramark and Chartwells is where we will start but local vendors are not out of the realm of possibility.

#### 6. Increase Technical Assistance to RITS

Over the past two months we have become a valuable ally in the deployment of Edgenuity at the RI Training School. Originally, they contracted with Highlander Institute for the Edgenuity advisement. Realizing that our skill set with Edgenuity was very well developed, Highlander reached out the VGV with a request. Since that time, RITS teachers have spent four days at VGV. The RITS has written us into the FY2018 CRP for Title IIA support. The amount of their request is 10K. It is VGV's intention to become a long-term partner with the RITS and continue to help improve their use of Edgenuity in support of their students.

#### 7. Execute TA to Middle Schools in China through RIA/IEP, LLC

Currently, the RIA team is in China sealing the deal for us to bring blended learning with Edgenuity to Middle Schools in Guangzhou and Hangzhou. Presently, we have a signed MOU, however, the contract has not been executed. The current timeline has VGV personnel in China for three to four weeks in the summer to build curriculum and place product. Teachers will have to be trained and monitoring from VGV will have to be designed. This is a terrific opportunity; however, costs of implementation may mean severely reduced income in year one. This is eyed at being a long-term relationship.

#### 8. Stability plan for employee benefit costs to the employer

Health care costs at VGV went from 70K per year to 180K per year from FY16 to FY17. As a function of our census, the health care costs were not known to us until after teachers were hired and the dependents were known. Presently, we offer family, including spouses, health and dental with a 25% co-pay. We are a business with less than 50 employees so we have a great deal of flexibility. There are many emerging health care products in the marketplace and we should look at a menu of options and plan parameters.

#### 9. Re-design current configuration to create Team, Pod, and Suite model

Our current LC set up is ready to be experimented with. From my work on the Charette Charter School it has become apparent to me that we can provide smaller learning units with teachers who travel to the kids instead of vice versa. Teams would stay at the 45 to 60 number. However, pods would accommodate 12 students each and workshops would be shared by two pods and be a suite. In essence, we would experiment by going away from the bull pen concept and going to a more personalized environment with better access to workshops.

#### 10. Feasibility study for growth to student body size between 225 and 272

The one year hiatus from our planned growth to 272 gives us an opportunity to pause and reflect on what number, regardless of charter cap, is right for us. Over the next five months we should see how the new space works out, develop the new Team model and strategize on how to best utilize our facility to achieve the best outcome for the right number of students and not be simply blinded by a pre-agreed to charter cap.

#### 11. Prepare for new Leadership to be introduced September 2018

With Dr. Pilkington's retirement set for August 31, 2020, it is imperative that a succession plan be devised over the next year with a goal of hiring an academic head (principal certified at a minimum) in FY19 for a stable transition period. The loan repayment will be over in FY18 and this will free up in excess of 200K per year. A prudent direction would be to name Ms. Baker as Executive Director of the Corporation and to hire a principal to work under her in the org chart. This planning can take place all of next year.