

# **THINK COLLEGE NOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

## **2006-2008 STRATEGIC PLAN**

Think College Now  
Elementary School  
2825 International Blvd.  
Oakland, CA 94601

Principal: David Silver

Phone: (510) 879-1490  
Fax: (510) 879-5430  
[www.thinkcollegenow.org](http://www.thinkcollegenow.org)

Prepared by  
Brian Pick, Goldman School of Public Policy, and  
Delphine Sherman, Hass School of Business  
University of California, Berkeley

The Small Schools Residency, Oakland Small Schools Foundation

## Contents

Executive Summary	3
Overview of Think College Now	4
The Strategic Planning Process	5
Strategic Areas of Focus	
English-Language Arts	6
Staff Sustainability: Recruitment & Retention	9
Maintaining a College Focus	12
Parental Involvement & Community Outreach	15
Funding / Development	18
Next Steps	21
Appendices	
Questions for Developing Goals, Priorities, and Action Steps	22
List of Acronyms	27

# Executive Summary

**All Think College Now students will have the tools to choose their life's path and desired occupation with an equitable opportunity to attend college and pursue their dreams.**

In January 2006, Think College Now Elementary School initiated a strategic planning process to guide the school's development over the next three years. Since opening its doors three years ago, the school has made substantial progress toward meeting its vision. This strategic plan creates a school-wide strategy to prioritize and meet goals in a sustainable way.

Over a five month period, two graduate students from the University of California, Berkeley worked to gather input from 25 stakeholders, to identify key strengths and opportunities for the school, and to set a clear direction and set of goals for its future.

This plan identifies five areas of focus which are critical to TCN's sustainability in achieving its mission and vision:

- English-Language Arts Curriculum
- Staff Sustainability: Recruitment and Retention
- Maintaining a College Focus
- Parental Involvement & Community Outreach
- Funding / Development

The plan defines goals in each of these areas as well as outlines short-term and long-term priorities for reaching these goals. Detailed action steps are identified, tasks are delegated, deliverables are named, and a timeline is established for each area.

Think College Now's Coaches Leadership Team and Leadership Team will assume the responsibility of implementing the plan and updating or changing the plan as they see fit.

# Overview of Think College Now

## Vision

All Think College Now students will have the tools to choose their life's path and desired occupation with an equitable opportunity to attend college and pursue their dreams.

## Values

*Equity:* We want equal opportunity for all children.

*Respect:* Every person, young or old, from every culture, deserves respect.

*Responsibility:* Students, teachers, family, and community must all do their part.

*Reflection:* We must examine ourselves and our community to improve.

*Reality:* We must focus on the goal, getting our students into college.

*Ganas:* We must want to work hard to have success

## Theory of Action

Think College Now staff, parents, and students believe that the following elements will enable them to reach their goals:

Start Early, College Focus

High Expectations

More Time, No Short Cuts

Family Involvement

Community Partnerships

## History

Think College Now is a new small school founded by David Silver and a group of committed Oakland parents. Think College Now was developed in partnership with the Oakland Unified School District, the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools, and Oakland Community Organizations. In September 2003, Think College Now opened its doors to 120 students in kindergarten through second grade. The school has grown one grade level each year, and, next year, will serve 280 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. This year, Think College Now students are 70% Latino, 20% African-American, 5% Asian, and 5% multiracial with 90% of its students receiving free or reduced lunch. The school is located within the new Caesar Chavez Educational Centre in Oakland's Fruitvale neighborhood.

# The Strategic Plan Process

## Background

As graduate students at the University of California, Berkeley and participants in the Oakland Small Schools Foundation Residency Program, Delphine Sherman and Brian Pick worked with Think College Now to support the development of a strategic plan. Over a five month period, they **conducted over 25 in-depth interviews** with various Think College Now stakeholders including teachers (former and current), administrators, parents, and consultants, and they **reviewed relevant documents** and notes from TCN retreats, planning meetings, and LT/CLT meetings.

## Areas of Focus

This plan identifies **five areas of focus** which are critical to TCN's sustainability in achieving its mission and vision:

- English-Language Arts Curriculum
- Staff Sustainability: Recruitment and Retention
- Maintaining a College Focus
- Parental Involvement & Community Outreach
- Funding / Development

We have organized our research into these five areas and have provided summary sheets for each of these areas. Our summary sheets are organized as follows:

- **Summary of Issues:** Outlines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for each area which we gathered from our research
- **Strategic Goal**
- **Short-term and long-term priorities to reach the goal**

## Sources

The data reported in the following tables were compiled by reviewing TCN documents, interviewing key stakeholders, and drawing from our own observations and experience.

# English-Language Arts Curriculum

## I. Summary of Issues

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ELA Goals defined and posted</b></li> <li>• <b>Students’ progress toward goals tracked</b></li> <li>• <b>Flexibility given to teachers to adapt curriculum</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OCR effective if done well</li> <li>• Guided reading to fill in gaps</li> <li>• Writers Workshop structure</li> <li>• Getting closer to finding a balance</li> <li>• Continuity among classrooms</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OCR, Guided Reading &amp; Writers Workshop are complex to implement, especially in condensed formats</b></li> <li>• <b>Difficult for teachers to pick &amp; choose what to teach and how best to teach it</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OCR not enough to prepare students well</li> <li>• OCR can be weak for ELLs</li> <li>• OCR pacing challenging</li> <li>• Differentiating instruction within OCR</li> <li>• Implementation of a school-wide writing curriculum</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><i>Short Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gap analysis of students’ literacy skills using multiple sources of data</b></li> <li>• <b>Assess needs of ELL students to provide targeted instruction</b></li> <li>• Writers Workshop Professional Development / Model lessons</li> <li>• Guided Reading Professional Development / Model lessons</li> </ul> <p><i>Longer Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Use data to drive classroom instruction</b></li> <li>• Strategic use of homework / at-home reading</li> <li>• Use of technology (e.g. Accelerated Reader)</li> <li>• Literacy links: math, science, social studies, ‘college lessons’</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teaching misaligned with standards; students must be taught to mastery sooner</b></li> <li>• <b>OCR, GR, WW disjointed</b></li> <li>• ELLs need more consistent ELD instruction to reach ambitious goals</li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaps in curriculum</li> <li>• Students may not be receiving appropriate interventions</li> <li>• Curriculum relevance problems; some students may not be inspired to think critically as a result</li> </ul>

## English-Language Arts Curriculum

### II. Strategic Goal

Reach school-wide goals on Think College Now target matrix in English-Language Arts areas to ensure adequate yearly progress toward meeting NCLB requirements. Deliver a rich, effective English-Language Arts curriculum that meets the needs of our students.

### III. Short-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Further define school-wide ELA program</b>	○ Draft ELA theory of action, gather input, and build investment	May and June 2006	Amanda in consultation with CLT & and staff	Documents Outlining Theory of Action
		○ Create document describing program components, identifying areas of consistency & areas of flexibility	Summer 2006	Amanda in consultation with CLT & and staff	Document Outlining Program Design
		○ Provide a 'Menu of Choices' for teachers	Summer 2006	Amanda in consultation with CLT & and staff	'Menu' Document
		○ Use data to refine program model and balance between components	Fall 2006	Staff	Analysis Meeting
2	<b>Assess and target specific needs of English Language Learners</b>	○ Identify and give effective assessments	Fall 2006	ELA Committee & Teachers	Assessment
		○ Consider needs of transitioning students and implications for instruction and promotion	Fall 2006	Teachers	Revised Promotion Policy
		○ Adopt and implement a vocabulary program	Fall 2006	ELA Committee	Curriculum/ Program
		○ Build scaffolding strategies into curriculum	Spring 2007	Teachers/ Coaches	Workshop/ PD Opport.
		○ Provide targeted intervention	Spring 2007	Teachers	Instruction
3	<b>Individualized Professional Development in ELA areas catering to teacher expertise</b>	○ Identify areas for PD using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Admin/Coach observations</li> <li>▪ Self-evaluations</li> <li>▪ CST results</li> </ul>	Fall 2006	Staff	PD Request Forms
		○ Execute PD sessions	Spring 2007	Staff	PD Opport.

## English-Language Arts Curriculum

### IV. Long-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Enhance systems for using data to drive meaningful instruction</b>	○ Map process by which data is currently being used to drive instruction	Spring 2007	CLT	Inquiry Cycle Document
		○ Provide regular time and space for data analysis and curriculum mapping	Spring 2007	CLT & LT	Grade Level (Horizontal & Vertical) Collaboration Meetings
2	<b>Create best practices portfolio for ELA instruction at TCN</b>	○ Create/revise sheets that explain supplemental programs (e.g. A to Z Reading, Phonics Readers)	Fall 2006	CLT	Explanatory Documents
		○ Video project to highlight effective instructional strategies to share widely (current staff, new staff, visitors, OUSD, etc.)	Spring 2007	CLT+, LT, and tech support	Videotape
3	<b>Choose yearly/monthly literacy focus</b>	○ Use data to identify focus area	Fall 2006	Teachers	Data Analysis Meeting
		○ Develop strategy, tools and timeline	Fall 2006	LT	Planning and Execution Document
		○ Execute & assess	Spring 2007	Teachers & Coaches	Instruction
4	<b>Create a picture of how homework and at-home reading is currently being used to support literacy instruction; develop best practice document for homework &amp; at-home reading</b>	○ Complete an 'audit' of typical HW being assigned – collect & complete a strength/improvement analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Worksheets</li> <li>▪ Reading Log</li> <li>▪ Comprehension Activities</li> <li>▪ Amount / grade</li> <li>▪ Journals</li> </ul>	Spring 2007	Ad-Hoc Committee: Homework Audit	Homework Overview Document (with strength & improvement analysis as well as examples of best practices)
5	<b>Use technology such as Accelerated Reader to support literacy instruction</b>	○ Train teachers	Fall 2006	Brenda with support of staff	Training & Labeling
		○ Label books in classrooms and library	Spring 2007	Teachers	Instruction

# Staff Sustainability: Recruitment & Retention

## I. Summary of Issues

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Staff is motivated, talented, supported, and hard-working</b></li> <li>• <b>Emphasis on professional development (including external PD opportunities)</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TCN spends a lot of time recruiting the ‘right’ people</li> <li>• Teachers work with teaching coaches</li> <li>• Strong sense of community</li> <li>• Teacher autonomy in curriculum and instructional choices</li> <li>• Staff is compensated for extra work time</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Staff can ‘burn out’, feel bad for putting off work-related item for ‘personal life’</b></li> <li>• <b>Small staff = lots on everyone’s plate</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure to succeed</li> <li>• ‘Accountability’ environment: teacher’s performance gauged by standardized tests</li> <li>• First-year teachers feel need to measure up against the more experienced teachers</li> <li>• Staff does not reflect diversity of the students</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><i>Short-Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Identify ways to free teachers’ time to focus on planning and instruction</b></li> <li>• <b>Further develop teachers’ sense of perspective about where TCN is in its development (more discussions about vision, history, current status, and future)</b></li> <li>• <b>Help teachers feel a sense of agency in curricular choices and school focus</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Short-Term, Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build more systems to standardize processes, share best practices (HW, parent letters, charts, etc), and identify staff needs</li> <li>• Use data to empower teachers, not to create anxiety</li> </ul> <p><i>Long-Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>School growing means more teachers and greater division of responsibilities</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Long-Term, Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit from a more diverse, larger pool of applicants</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Too many responsibilities detract from teacher’s primary responsibility, which is to teach students</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High turnover: Other opportunities for teachers (other schools, graduate school, start families)</li> <li>• High costs (not merely financial) associated with high teacher turnover</li> <li>• A culture focused on standardization and acculturation (to fit the TCN model ) may squeeze innovative thinking at times</li> </ul>

## Staff Sustainability: Recruitment & Retention

### II. Strategic Goal

Ensure that strong staff members stay at Think College Now and have the support and resources needed to teach their students effectively.

### III. Short-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Develop methods for freeing teachers' time for planning and instruction</b>	○ Identify high-leverage strategies to free teachers' time	Summer 2006	Sustainability Committee	Survey and Analysis
		○ Execute high-leverage methods	Fall 2006	Staff	Outcome
2	<b>Further develop teachers' sense of perspective about where TCN is in its development</b>	○ Further discussions about school's vision, history, current status, and future	Spring & Summer 2006	Staff	Meetings & Dialogue
3	<b>Help teachers feel a sense of agency in curricular choices and school focus</b>	○ Discussions about school's vision and curricular goals	Summer 2006	Staff	Meetings & Dialogue
4	<b>Task 1-2 people to look at division of responsibilities</b>	○ Create document to map the division of responsibilities at TCN	Fall 2006	Sustainability Committee	Document
		○ Define / clarify roles of and requirements for individuals	Spring 2007	LT & CLT	Document
5	<b>Stay consistent with policies that are already put into place (e.g. observation time and "open" PD)</b>	○ Solidify policies in writing	ongoing	LT & CLT	Document
		○ Allow for revision at designated time in the year	ongoing	LT & CLT	LT/CLT Commitment to Consistency

## Staff Sustainability: Recruitment & Retention

### IV. Long-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Cultivate a culture where it is great to balance personal life with professional commitments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work into coaching and review structure</li> <li>○ Teacher self-reflections</li> </ul>	Spring 2007	Teachers & Staff	Coaching Meetings
2	<b>Standardize best practices (e.g.: test prep, retention, intervention) and periodically reevaluate but do <u>not</u> continually change the standard practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop system to share best practices - Collect, group, and distribute</li> </ul>	Spring 2007	LT & Staff	System for sharing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Make available on the internet, in handbooks - accessible to all</li> </ul>	Fall 2008	Staff	Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Master schedules of staff and programs</li> </ul>	Fall 2008	Office Staff	Master schedules
3	<b>Create system of dividing responsibilities (Esp. first-year versus experienced teachers)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use document from #2 in short term priorities to set goals for workload</li> </ul>	Fall 2008	CLT & LT	Document

# Maintaining a Focus on College

## I. Summary of Issues

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Vision includes a college focus and opportunities for the development of a college-going culture</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted events: workshops starting in May, PIQE workshops, College T-shirt days</li> <li>• Some best practices (path to college poster, data tracking college poster, college ABCs)</li> <li>• People committed to the idea: Gail Kaufman, parents, UC Berkeley BUILD tutors</li> <li>• Realia: banners, pendants and diplomas posted</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>More collaboration needed among staff to strengthen college focus and to develop college-going culture</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough trained professionals to implement strategy</li> <li>• Parent involvement not as strong as it could be; same families coming to same events and disproportionate participation from families of lower grades</li> <li>• Difference between parent involvement and parent investment has not been explored</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><i>Short-Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop school-wide strategy by making meaning of vision together, whole staff</b></li> <li>• <b>Empower parents</b> through GED classes, ESL classes, computer literacy, OUSD and PIQE workshops, and workshops on assessing the strength of middle schools/high schools</li> </ul> <p><i>Short-Term, Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen professional work in FRC that focuses on college-going culture</li> </ul> <p><i>Long-Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Embed college-going lessons in curriculum and classroom practice</b> – e.g.: take OCR and develop common college themes into the curriculum, use GPA for math exercise</li> </ul> <p><i>Long-Term, Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College visit field trips (e.g. each grade visits a different college)</li> <li>• Continue to build relationships between TCN students and college students (e.g. in after-school programs)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lack of cohesive school-wide strategy</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of meaningful depth (i.e. banners, slogans, and procedures but few meaningful takeaways by parents and students)</li> <li>• Parents unclear about characteristics of college-bound students</li> <li>• Frustrations from teachers if they see this as another responsibility</li> <li>• Ensuring a college focus for students beyond TCN as they attend middle &amp; high schools</li> </ul>

## Maintaining a Focus on College

### II. Strategic Goal

Within 3 years, create a college focus among teachers, parents, and students that increases parent participation, standardizes practices, and links curriculum to a college focus.

### III. Short-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Create a school-wide strategy to build a college focus into the school, driven by school's vision</b>	○ Norm management & procedural systems that reflect college vocabulary & themes	Fall 2006	CLT & LT	Document
		○ Have visiting 'scholar' days, perhaps 4x per year where TCN students write interview questions and interview these scholars (from similar backgrounds). Parents of scholars could hold a meeting for parents.	Fall 2007	College Focus Committee	Programming
		○ Build on idea of 'college' as a symbol of equity	Ongoing	Staff	Workshops
2	<b>Task a professional and/or college student to work in FRC on college-going focus</b>	○ Define role and duty of this person	Fall 2006	Hiring Committee	Job Listing
		○ Identify or hire individual	Spring 2007	Hiring Committee	Hiring
		○ Assign tasks (including task #3 below)	Spring 2007	David	Tasking of Responsibility
3	<b>Review best practices from other schools</b>	○ Identify innovative schools in this area and collect resources– college prep	Spring 2007	Professional	Best Practices Document
		○ Talk to vertical team (elementary, middle, high) to get a better sense of needs & why students are not staying on track	Fall 2007	Staff	Collaborative Meeting

## Maintaining a Focus on College

### IV. Long-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Develop and run parent workshops on college-going topics</b>	○ Target families for workshops based on data	Spring 2007	FRC Staff, Coaches, & Teachers	Data Analysis
		○ Design and implement workshops on college-going topics	Fall 2007	FRC Staff & Teachers	Workshops
2	<b>College visit field trips</b>	○ Set goal: e.g. Grade-level trips to colleges in Bay Area	Fall 2007	CLT & LT	Planning Document
		○ Establish college buddies	Fall 2007	FRC Staff	'Buddies'
		○ Schedule activities on campus	Spring 2008	Teachers & FRC Staff	Schedule
		○ Execute	Spring 2008	Teachers	Go!
3	<b>Embed and standardize college-going lessons in curriculum and classroom practice</b>	○ Develop college-going lessons for each grade level	Fall 2006	Gail & Teachers	Curriculum Development
		○ Make use of curriculum Gail designed full of lessons to develop college-going culture	Fall 2006	Teachers	Download materials (or get binders for each teacher)
		○ Determine when to best fit them into curriculum	Spring 2007	Teachers	Curriculum Mapping
		○ Execute lessons	Fall 2007	Teachers	Instruction

# Parental Involvement & Community Outreach

## I. Summary of Issues

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diversity of workshops, events, and resources for parents.</b> Examples of workshops include: PIQE, OUSD workshops, GED, ESL, computer literacy, café hour at FRC every Thursday AM.</li> <li>• <b>Vision of Family Resource Center:</b> To get parents ready so that they have the tools to help their children go to college.</li> <li>• <b>90% attendance at Parent-Teacher conferences!</b></li> <li>• <b>98% parent satisfaction according to last year's parent survey!</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committed team of parent leaders</li> <li>• Best practices from some teachers. Examples include: certificates to parents for number of hours they participate (Amanda, et al.); parents invited to read with their children in the classroom from 8AM to 8:30AM (Ruben, et al.)</li> <li>• Family Resource Center provides safe space for parents to visit with an Open Door Policy</li> <li>• Matching parent skill set with the needs of the school (e.g. home/school folders)</li> <li>• Parental collaboration across ethnic groups</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unclear dissemination of information.</b> Example: Some teachers do not know that there is a system of class reps.</li> <li>• <b>Lack of enforcement of the parent contract.</b> Example: Not all parents read to their children every night or volunteer 10 hours per year.</li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No clear, agreed upon role of the FRC.</li> <li>• 4-5 families doing all of the work</li> <li>• FRC is a small space</li> <li>• Asking for increased parental involvement adds one more layer of responsibility to teachers.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><i>Short Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Parent workshops:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reading Workshops</li> <li>○ How to Help Students with their Homework</li> <li>○ Computer Training</li> <li>○ Workshops focused on College</li> <li>○ Emotional support of student achievement</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Long Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diverse group of parents allows opportunity for strong collaboration which could strengthen community</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Long Term, Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avenue for parents to talk about diversity – anti-racism workshop</li> <li>• Dispel myths that parents might have about volunteering at the school</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Currently, no cohesive school strategy in this area.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language barriers</li> <li>• Race, ethnicity, and class tension</li> <li>• Some teachers feel parents can get in the way of their teaching.</li> </ul>

## Parental Involvement & Community Outreach

### II. Strategic Goal

Increase the level and scope of parent participation, standardize best practices, and develop links between classroom, school, community, and parents.

### III. Short-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Define role of FRC and communicate this to staff, parents, and students</b>	○ Create document highlighting services of the FRC – update as needed	Fall 2006	FRC Staff	Informational Brochure
		○ Distribute document to staff, parents, and students	Spring 2007	FRC Staff	Systematic Distribution
2	<b>Create and run parent workshops – systemize this process</b>	○ Prioritize workshops.	Fall 2006	FRC Staff	Prioritized listing
		○ Strategically promote / advertise these workshops.	Fall 2006	FRC Staff & Teachers	Publicity
		○ Create document to standardize the planning and executing of workshops	Spring 2007	FRC Staff	Planning Document
		○ Celebrate/recognize parents that are involved	Spring 2007	FRC Staff & Teachers	Certificates
		○ Identify parent leaders to co-facilitate workshops	Fall 2007	FRC Staff & Teachers	Parent Leaders
3	<b>Strengthen School-Home Communication</b>	○ Develop and distribute school events calendar	Fall 2006	LT & FRC Staff	Calendar
		○ Distribute information to parents in systematic manner – using and building on established home-school folder procedure	Fall 2006	FRC Staff & Teachers	Distribution System
		○ Develop and distribute parental resources	Spring 2007	FRC Staff	Resource Listing
		○ Post information on website	Spring 2007	FRC Staff & tech support	Website

## Parental Involvement & Community Outreach

### IV. Long-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	<b>Determine reasons parents are hesitant to get involved at TCN using focus groups and surveys</b>	○ Design and execute parent survey on issue	Spring 2007	FRC Staff	Survey
		○ Run focus groups to determine reasons parents are hesitant to get involved	Fall 2007	FRC Staff	Focus Groups
2	<b>Create best practices document of techniques teachers use to involve parents</b>	○ Do a 'parental involvement' audit collecting information and resources teachers use to involve and communicate with parents	Spring 2007	Ad-Hoc Committee: Parent Involvement Audit	Best Practices Search
		○ Distribute results to staff to incorporate into classroom	Fall 2007	Ad-Hoc Committee: Parental Involvement	Best Practices Document
3	<b>Solidify and mechanize a governing body of parents</b>	○ Determine best structure for parental involvement group	Fall 2007	LT & FRC Staff	Planning Meeting
		○ Identify leaders	Fall 2007	FRC Staff	Parent Leaders
		○ Task this new parent group to plan and run an event	Spring 2008	FRC Staff	Planning & Event

# Funding / Development

## I. Summary of Issues

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diverse-funding base: individuals, corporations, foundations, university partnerships, and successful events.</b></li> <li>• <b>David Silver builds strong relationships and great partnerships.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong development leadership team: Holly, Jonathan, and David</li> <li>• OSSF partnership</li> <li>• Long-term focus and planning. (i.e. TCN already has a funding plan for next year; \$ in the bank from individuals to replace BayCES)</li> <li>• Development strategy is aligned with schools' objectives</li> <li>• OSSF markets the school to the community</li> <li>• School is data driven which helps positioning to funding community</li> <li>• Good use of resources</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TCN's private funds come in small chunks - small grants and donations are time intensive to manage</b></li> <li>• <b>Some funders have said they will not fund TCN forever - they will move on to new areas and organizations.</b></li> <li>• <b>Internal evaluation and report process weak.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While development leadership is strong, TCN needs additional grant-writing capacity as Jonathan and Holly have increasing responsibility with OSSF.</li> <li>• Zellerbach grant for FRC has a narrow focus which constricts the type of activities of the center</li> <li>• TCN needs a point-person to lead individual giving efforts, in the same way Jonathan/Holly do grants</li> <li>• Greater focus needed to expand individual giving.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><i>Short-Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work to get more gov't money (Prop 49 and OFCY)</li> <li>• Continue to focus on developing the programs and <u>then</u> pursuing funding for those programs</li> <li>• Apply for additional grants for the FRC, perhaps with other small schools</li> <li>• Build on success of Fischer/Crowfoot event</li> <li>• Develop a second annual funding event for individuals in the spring in a different community.</li> </ul> <p><i>Long-Term, Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop leadership committee for individual giving campaigns to diversify responsibility away from David Silver.</li> <li>• Partner with agencies such as Sports4Kids, UC Build, etc. to raise money together. Example: Y&amp;H Soda grant with the YMCA.</li> <li>• Partner with corporations and local businesses</li> <li>• Create Parent Fund and use OSSF as a vehicle for placing the funds which are collected (5-10 parents work at large companies and/or are well-connected)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TCN risks losing its current funding sources in 3+ years for intervention, family resources, teacher stipends, and after-school programs.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual giving has stayed constant in last 3 years; no increase</li> <li>• Difficult to get funding for single, public school. Foundation community likes to see high impact from investment in networks of schools.</li> <li>• Family Resource Center depends on one grant from Zellerbach Family Foundation. Need to diversify funding streams for this program.</li> <li>• Individual giving/grants may not continue if David, Jonathan, or Holly leave</li> <li>• No clear system for how much money is needed, if on pace, and where gaps exist</li> </ul>

## Funding / Development

### II. Strategic Goal

Increase long-term financial sustainability of the school by leveraging and growing existing donor base through the use of individual giving campaigns, creation of a parent fund, and partnerships with local corporations.

### III. Short-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
1	Develop functioning donor groups	○ Identify each group's fundraising event and mailing targets	Fall 2006	Development team	Events and Targets Plan
		○ Raise funds through phone calls, mailings, and personal contacts	Ongoing	Development team	Fundraising
2	Hire professional on a contract basis to help with research, grant-writing and individual giving	○ Use development leadership team to create a strategy	Fall 2006	Development Team	Strategy Document
		○ Hire professional and task them on project	Fall 2006	Development Professional	Fundraising
3	Increase grant support and public funding for ASP, FRC, and class size	○ Write and submit grant proposals	Spring 2007	Development team	Grant Proposals
4	Continue to work to get more gov't money (Prop 49 and OFCY)	○ Write and submit proposals	Spring 2007	Development team	Proposals
5	Create an long-term funding plan (3-5 years) with target goals	○ Identify target goals	Spring 2007	Development team	Goals Document
		○ Create long-term funding plan	Fall 2008	Development team	Funding Plan

## Funding / Development

### IV. Long-Term Priorities

	<i>Task</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Who's Responsible</i>	<i>Deliverable /Method</i>
<b>1</b>	Have clear goals of what is needed and a system to assess if on pace, identify gaps, and develop next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set goals</li> <li>○ Identify gaps</li> <li>○ Develop next steps</li> </ul>	Fall 2007	Development team	Planning Document
<b>2</b>	Build partnerships with corporations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify corporations</li> <li>○ Contact appropriate person</li> <li>○ Build relationship</li> </ul>	Spring 2008	Development team	Partnerships
<b>3</b>	Create Parent Fund led by 5-10 parents in the TCN community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify leaders</li> <li>○ Set goals</li> <li>○ Create fund</li> <li>○ Fundraise</li> </ul>	Fall 2007	Development team	Parent Fund
<b>4</b>	Continue to build reserve fund to ensure financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set goals</li> <li>○ Fundraise</li> </ul>	ongoing	Development team	Reserve Funds

## **Next Steps**

Think College Now's Coaches Leadership Team and Leadership Team will assume the responsibility of implementing the strategic plan. They also have the right to update or change the plan as they see fit. The priorities, action steps, timeline, delegated responsibility, and deliverables should be reviewed by the CLT/LT and adjusted as needed.

The plan should be consulted when the school is faced with competing priorities, and the CLT/LT should reassess the plan at least once a year in order to ensure that Think College Now is on track to meeting its vision and goals.

## Appendix: Questions for Developing Goals, Priorities, and Action Steps

### English-Language Arts Curriculum

Driving Questions	Responses
<p><b>GOAL SETTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should there be school-wide priorities/ focus for literacy instruction for each year/semester?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pick an area(s) of focus with a timeline</li> <li>Base decision on test scores (Reading Comprehension Strategies for example)</li> </ul>
<p><b>CURRICULUM / PROGRAM BALANCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is TCN using the right balance of the three ELA curriculums: OCR, Guided Reading, and Writers Workshop?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graphic/Rationale to articulate program and choices which clearly identifies what is required and what is optional. Reevaluated after 2005-2006 test results analysis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What supplemental programs are teachers using to support literacy in the classroom? Who? How?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create/revise sheets that explain each fully               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A to Z Reading</li> <li>Phonics Readers</li> <li>Accelerated Reader</li> <li>Vocabulary Program</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>TEACHER COLLABORATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are best practices shared among teachers?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create portfolio of instruction and video</li> <li>Release time for observations</li> <li>Staff meeting sharing time</li> </ul>
<p><b>LEVEL OF TEACHER EXPERIENCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a difference between novice and experienced teachers?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes: how can we help novice teachers with the learning curve? What are the top 5 tips experienced teachers would give?</li> </ul>
<p><b>AT-HOME READING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the at-home reading strategy working?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ways to motivate students and families</li> <li>Put Mr. Silver on the Roof Campaign</li> </ul>
<p><b>HOMEWORK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is homework being used to support <i>literacy</i> instruction?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete an ‘audit’ of typical HW being assigned – collect &amp; complete a strength/improvement analysis               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worksheet Skills</li> <li>Reading Logs</li> <li>Comprehension Activities</li> <li>Amount / grade</li> <li>Journals</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Appendix: Questions for Developing Goals, Priorities, and Action Steps

### Staff Sustainability: Recruitment & Retention

Driving Questions	Responses
<p><b>GOAL SETTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the goals for teacher retention? How do they fit into the vision of the school?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TCN will strive to keep great staff members at the school</b></li> <li>• Defined as a percent? (eg: 25% or less turnover)</li> <li>• Defined in number of years? (eg: 2, 3, 4, 5 years)</li> <li>• How important is teacher retention to achieving the school’s vision?</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the problem too much work or is the problem pressure to succeed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Need to set more clear priorities</b></li> <li>• <b>Improve decision-making efficiency</b></li> <li>• Limit pressure on the first-year teachers</li> <li>• Have each teacher spend fewer hours per week at school?</li> <li>• Create shared databases to organize documents and avoid duplication of efforts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHO CAN HELP? HOW?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What responsibilities can be removed from teachers?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to the intervention model?</li> <li>• More reading specialists?</li> <li>• Fewer committees?</li> <li>• Parental support?</li> <li>• Family Resource Center</li> <li>• Administrative Assistant</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHO IS DOING WHAT?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should responsibilities be divided among teachers? Are they equitably divided?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create a overall picture of ‘TCN responsibilities’ to assess current status</b></li> <li>• Is there a way to collapse certain committees together?</li> <li>• Should there be suggested amounts of time spent on a variety of activities to help guide teacher’s allocation of time? (committee roles, communicating with parents, teaching, lesson planning, decorating room, designing new projects and activities, helping students 1:1, replying to emails/surveys)</li> <li>• Poll teachers and set benchmarks or let each teacher decide for himself/herself?</li> </ul>

## Appendix: Questions for Developing Goals, Priorities, and Action Steps

### Maintaining a College Focus

Driving Questions	Responses
<p><b>GOAL SETTING / VISION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should TCN focus on creating a college-going atmosphere? What does this look like? Who should be responsible?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best Practices between classrooms – “college talk” (standardization) – produce a guidebook document</li> <li>College visits / develop concrete college relationships</li> <li>College Spirit week at TCN</li> <li>Task a staff member in FRC to create a college-going culture</li> </ul>
<p><b>CURRICULUM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could college-going lessons be weaved into the current curriculum? Who would develop these lessons and fit them into the day?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set aside time for 1-2 teachers to develop a curriculum</li> <li>Is there a UC class that could do this?</li> </ul>
<p><b>CLASSROOMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What classroom management methods might TCN adopt to create a college-going atmosphere?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College-going language (eg: core courses, electives, study groups)</li> <li>Use of college names to group students</li> <li>College-going bulletin boards</li> <li>Classroom naming</li> </ul>
<p><b>PARENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the best ways to incorporate parents into the strategy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about good middle schools/ high schools - what to ask/where to look to find out if the school produces college-ready graduates</li> <li>Computer literacy</li> <li>GED/ESL classes</li> <li>Parents teaching parents</li> </ul>

# Appendix: Questions for Developing Goals, Priorities, and Action Steps

## Parental Involvement & Community Outreach

Driving Questions	Responses
<p><b>GOAL SETTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the best ways parents can get involved?</li> <li>• How do you define successful parental involvement?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To give parents the tools and resources to help their children go to college.</li> <li>• To help parents move ahead with language support, job training, or further education</li> <li>• To build a stronger sense of community which transcends race, ethnicities, and cultures</li> <li>• Look at best practices of other schools</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the reasons that that parents do not participate?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of not understanding or not being understood (perhaps due to language or cultural barriers).</li> <li>• Parents think getting a TB test costs a lot of money.</li> <li>• Asked to attend many events at the school</li> <li>• Other commitments including work schedules</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHO CAN HELP OUT? HOW?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should the parent “governing body” be structured?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles should be formalized.</li> <li>• Class rep system should be systemized.</li> <li>• Perhaps, hire additional paid professionals</li> <li>• Perhaps, form an official PTA</li> </ul>
<p><b>FAMILY CONTRACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should the Family Contract be enforced and who should enforce it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents enforcing parents.</li> <li>• High expectations of students? Should there be high expectation from parents?</li> <li>• What is the purpose of signing the Family Contract if it is not enforced?</li> <li>• Who should track the number of volunteer hours? Office staff? Jean? Teachers? Someone else?</li> </ul>
<p><b>DEFINING ROLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are efforts to involve parents synchronized among teachers, staff, and parent leaders? Or are efforts being duplicated?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review who is doing what at school level and classroom level.</li> <li>• Streamline processes. Do parents need to track hours volunteered in addition to Jean tracking that information?</li> <li>• Need someone to manage this process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>PARENT WORKSHOPS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There seems to be an obvious need and demand for more parent workshops. Who should administer those workshops? Which workshops are most important?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize workshops.</li> <li>• Create document to standardize these workshops.</li> <li>• Strategically promote/advertise these workshops.</li> <li>• Hire someone to do the parent workshops?</li> </ul>

## Appendix: Questions for Developing Goals, Priorities, and Action Steps

### Funding / Development

Driving Questions	Responses
<p><b>CHALLENGES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has been the most challenging aspect of raising money?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small grants are time-intensive (writing and reporting)</li> <li>• It is difficult to show results because the school has less than three years of history</li> <li>• Challenging to get funding for single, public school. No large scale impact.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the ways we can leverage David Silver’s relationships in the community while simultaneously offloading some of the fundraising responsibilities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop functioning donor group</li> <li>• Find point-person to coordinate individual donations, donor groups, and events</li> </ul>
<p><b>CORPORATIONS AND BUSINESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How could TCN strengthen its relationships with local corporations and have those businesses support one or more of the school’s programs?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research the kinds of organizations and projects which have been supported by local corporations. Think strategically about how TCN’s programs might appeal to these companies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>BayCES FUNDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are we on track to have \$\$ to replace BayCES funding without using the money in the bank?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target Goals?</li> <li>• Building a reserve fund?</li> </ul>

## **Appendix: List of Acronyms**

ASP – After-school Programs

BayCES – Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools

CLT – Coaches Leadership Team

CST – California Standards Test

ELA – English-Language Arts

ELL – English Language Learners

ELD – English Language Development

FRC – Family Resource Center

GR – Guided Reading

HW – Homework

LT – Leadership Team

OCR – Open Court Reading

OFCY – Oakland Fund for Children and Youth

OSSF – Oakland Small Schools Foundation

PD – Professional Development

PIQE – Parent Institute for Quality Education

TCN – Think College Now

WW – Writers Workshop