



STRATEGIC PLAN

2020–2025

INNOVATE. ENHANCE. GROW. EVOLVE. SUSTAIN.



RIVER SCHOOL PILLARS

INNOVATIVE TEACHING: From Mouth Time to Mindfulness, The River School creates new programs and develops evidence-based teaching strategies that draw from the best current research in education.

CO-TEACHING & PERSONALIZED EDUCATION: Our co-teaching model pairs a master's level educator with a speech-language pathologist in each classroom, a unique and effective combination for cementing strong language, literacy and social skills. Our low teacher-student ratios and small class sizes promote strong, personal relationships between teachers and students and allow educators to tailor teaching to each child.

PASSIONATE & HIGHLY ENGAGED EDUCATORS: Our teachers are energetic, creative, curious and committed. They model the qualities we hope children will develop: mindfulness, empathy, persistence, resilience, honesty and integrity.

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION: By expanding children's opportunities for social, physical and creative development we enhance their personal and academic success. Our faculty includes specialists in the visual arts, music, science, physical education, drama and yoga.

THEMATIC CURRICULUM: Themes provide a play-based, child-centered and cohesive context for learning, and inspire vocabulary development, experimentation, problem solving and the ability to make connections between different academic areas.

INCLUSIVE & DIVERSE CLASSROOMS: For all students, diverse and inclusive classrooms provide the environment in which to develop enriched perspectives and a greater understanding of their world. At The River School children with hearing loss learn alongside their hearing peers and provide an important source of diversity.

ACTIVE LEARNING: Children at The River School engage in active learning; they work collaboratively in groups, solve problems, make mistakes and learn from them, and develop the confidence to take risks, share ideas and speak up.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING: Our Social-Emotional Learning Program begins with teaching our youngest children to identify their own emotions and culminates in a social justice focus. Children learn to recognize and express their own emotions and to develop positive and empathetic relationships with others.

FINANCIAL AID: Because we value a dynamic and socioeconomically diverse school community, we make a significant commitment to financial aid to ensure that all students can benefit from a River School education.

A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS: Relationships between children and faculty are strengthened by collaboration among faculty, administrators and families. Professional development for faculty, graduate student training, parent-education programs and family engagement all add richness and depth to the educational program.



RIVER SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

Within this strategic plan, we outline our vision for the future and reaffirm our Mission and Pillars—touchstones for The River School in our work with children, families and the greater community.

OUR MISSION: The River School's inclusive program challenges each child to work collaboratively, to think critically and to develop the confidence to take risks, embrace their curiosity, and find their voice.

OUR VISION: The River School was founded in 1999 to provide a fully inclusive educational program for children with and without hearing loss. Over our first twenty years the School has grown to capacity and now fully occupies our building. The program and service offerings have expanded to include a full range of clinical services; parent education and support programs; teacher and graduate student training; auxiliary programs for children; and outreach and advocacy efforts. Moving forward, the School seeks to expand all aspects of our program by adding dedicated staff and space for each of the initiatives.

Our vision for the future includes the following key intentions to help us innovate, enhance, grow, evolve and sustain our program.

- » Grow from 220 to 350 students by expanding at each age band and adding grades.
- » Promote awareness of our inclusive model nationally and internationally.
- » Add dedicated staff and space for each of our services and programs.
- » Serve more students of diverse backgrounds from our surrounding community and region.
- » Establish a National Center for Hearing Innovation.



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025:

INNOVATE. ENHANCE. GROW. EVOLVE. SUSTAIN.

1 INNOVATE

The River School will continue to develop, assess and share its cutting-edge model, strategies and interventions to improve educational and social-emotional outcomes for children with and without hearing loss.

- » Continue to research, refine and implement new teaching and therapeutic strategies to optimize education for children with and without hearing loss.
- » Explore creative partnerships to offer services beyond The River School community that reflect our innovations in language and literacy and our approach to social-emotional learning.

2 ENHANCE

The River School will continue to pursue an evidence-based approach to informing and enhancing our educational and clinical practices. These enhancements will be shared within The River School and with the greater community.

- » Increase accessibility by serving more students to reflect the diversity of our region; actively seek faculty, administration and Board members with diverse backgrounds; and use incentives and fellowships to attract and retain faculty.
- » Provide expanded opportunities for:
 - » parents through greater access to parent-focused training and education;
 - » children through increased opportunities for camps, enrichment and other auxiliary programs; and,
 - » faculty by increasing funding for professional development.

3 GROW

Expand The River School program, improve the current facility (or seek a new one) and increase enrollment.

- » Expand enrollment by adding classes at each current grade level and new grades.
- » Develop curriculum and other offerings for older students.
- » Add capacity for clinical and tutoring services to meet the needs of River School families and the greater community through River REACH.
- » Increase faculty and graduate student training opportunities.
- » Acquire a new facility to house an expanded school and increased clinical capacity.



4 EVOLVE

The River School will join with university, hospital and industry partners to develop a National Center for Hearing Innovation (NCHI) in Washington, DC. The goal is to improve access for all individuals with hearing loss to new hearing and listening technologies and to promote collaboration, clinical research and services, professional training, outreach and advocacy.

- » Establish NCHI to better integrate the efforts of new and existing partners to improve treatment and outcomes for children and adults with hearing loss.
- » Initiate collaborations that will provide the financial support needed to create NCHI and add value to The River School program through enhanced opportunities for research and development.
- » Conduct a fundraising campaign to provide financial support for the establishment of NCHI.
- » Acquire a new facility to house NCHI and an expanded school, and build clinical capacity.



5 SUSTAIN

Devote human and financial resources to developing, refining and sharing our unique innovations in language and literacy education, as well as our approach to social-emotional learning and a progressive, academically challenging curriculum with the goal of ensuring optimal student outcomes while maintaining our financial stability.

- » Ensure a leading-edge position in the hearing and speech professional community by continuing to conduct and disseminate pediatric cochlear implant longitudinal-outcomes research.
- » Seek input and funding from hospital, university and industry partners to assist the school with advocating best practices for timely diagnosis, use of hearing devices and critical follow-up services and programs to improve childhood outcomes nationally.
- » Maintain financial aid levels at 15% of budgeted tuition.
- » Improve incremental revenue streams.
 - » Maximize student enrollment.
 - » Increase revenues from auxiliary programs.
- » Control expenses by maintaining focus on operating cost management while supporting continuous quality improvement of our students' experience.
- » Invest in the Future Fund and initiate a fundraising campaign to support school growth in a new or expanded facility.



THE RIVER SCHOOL

4880 MacArthur Blvd., NW

Washington, DC 20007

riverschool.net | Tel: 202.337.3554

