
*A Tale of Two Schools:
Strategic Planning
in the 21st Century*

**A Presentation to the
CAIS Trustee-Heads Conference,
San Francisco, January 23, 2010**

Our Panel's Experience with Planning

- Damon Kerby, Headmaster, Saint Mark's School, San Rafael
 - Wendy Broderick, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee, Saint Mark's School
 - Paul Chapman, Head of School, Head-Royce School, Oakland
 - Lori Fogarty, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee, Head-Royce
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The Head-Royce School/Saint Mark's School Connection

- NAIS National Conference on Financing Sustainable Schools
 - Joint Analysis of ten school metrics (including market demand, attrition, annual fundraising, etc.)
 - We compared and contrasted!
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NAIS: Five Keys to Sustainability

- NAIS Opinion Leaders Survey: *Forecasting Independent Education to 2025*, June 2005
 - Financial: More efficient, less costly
 - Environmental: More green, less wasteful
 - Global: More networked, less parochial
 - Programmatic: More skill focused, less traditional content
 - Demographic: More inclusive, less unapproachable financially and socially
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The Timing and Context for Our Plans

- No market timing here!
 - Financial collapse and Great Recession dominate dialogue
 - Demographic realities apparent in admissions softness regionally
 - Each school in a relatively strong financial and market position according to NAIS analysis
 - Commitment to innovate, address salient issues, and BE BOLD
 - Key: Being both ambitious and realistic
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Saint Mark's Planning History

- Strong history of planning: 1995, 2000, 2004, 2009, with much progress resulting.

	1990	2009
Student Body	290	373
Operating budget	\$1.9 million	\$9.7 million
Median faculty salary	\$24,000	Nearly \$80,000
Financial aid	\$82,000	\$1.1 million, benefitting 90 students
Fundraising	\$170,000	Nearly \$800,000, with an Annual Fund that typically draws the support of over 90% of parent body
Endowment	\$5,000	\$9.5 million invested as endowment in the Capital Fund and Endowment funds



Saint Mark's Planning History

- Planning watchwords have been:
 - Vision
 - Brevity
 - Measurable, clear outcomes: stakes in the ground
 - For endowment, diversity, financial aid, faculty compensation



The 2008-09 Planning Process

- Issues facing Saint Mark's included:
 - Large gift for financial aid coming to an end
 - Challenged endowment
 - Strong concern about affordability and effect on enrollment
 - Long-term site stability
 - Competitive compensation
 - Mindset: Ambition vs. realism, optimism vs. hunkering down?



The 2008-09 Planning Process

- 2007-2008
 - Mission re-visited and re-articulated
 - CAIS accreditation action plan considered
- 2008-2009
 - Board retreat SWOT analysis
 - Environmental scan (done with consultant)
 - Committee formed (19 members, including 11 trustees and eight administrators)
 - Surveys of parents and faculty/staff
 - Committee work, including draft sharing with constituencies
 - Board passage in May 2009



The Saint Mark's 2009 Strategic Plan

- **Programmatic:** Ensure an excellent program that focuses on the skills and concepts that will enable the Saint Mark's community of learners to become contributing and thriving global citizens.
- **Global:** Enable students to interact locally, regionally, and globally in reciprocal relationships, thereby fostering intercultural understanding, a sense of membership in the broader global community, and a commitment to social justice and equity.
- **Environmental:** Implement environmental sustainability as a core value in all levels of the school community and its activities.



The Saint Mark's 2009 Strategic Plan

- **Demographic:** Increase and support the many aspects of diversity in the Saint Mark's community in order to achieve demographic sustainability.
- **Cultural:** As Saint Mark's continues to grow and evolve, the school should maintain and preserve the essence of its culture, while being both flexible and dynamic.
- **Financial:** Develop and implement far-sighted strategies for developing diverse revenue sources, compensating competitively, ensuring continued strong enrollment, and enhancing the site.



The Saint Mark's 2009 Strategic Plan

- Sample implementation steps:
 - Develop and integrate, within the current academic program, a sustainability curriculum with scope and sequence for K-8.
 - Develop a financially prudent master plan for the school campus that strives for the highest level of sustainability possible.
 - Reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of Marin County for students, personnel and trustees. (Currently 30% students of color enrolled in Marin K-12 schools)
 - Compensate faculty and administration competitively, using the top quartile of Bay Area CAIS K–8 independent schools as the benchmark.



Implementation

- Spreadsheet with financial implications (about \$650,000 of additional expenses) created
- Exercise at fall retreat to assess board priorities: one-to-one laptop program, strengthening financial aid and marketing emerge as top-level items
- Current committee's charge: "Think tank" as well as "monitor"



Lessons Learned

- Be ambitious in thinking, then more conservative in implementation timeline, if necessary
- Factor in CAIS accreditation process and action plan
- Don't allow parent survey to drive planning completely
- Keep in mind: Significant progress happens that is not explicitly planned
 - Tuition Support Program, Upper Division restructuring, partnerships with schools in South Africa and Beijing, Canal Alliance partnership are examples for Saint Mark's



HRS Strategic Planning History

- A commitment to planning: 1984, 1988, 1992, 1997, 2003, 2009
 - Mission Driven Change
 - Key Results
 - Mission core values: scholarship, diversity and citizenship
 - Enrollment increased from 550 to 800
 - Diversity increased from 12% to 47%
 - Financial Aid increased from \$125,000 to \$3 M
 - Campus completely rebuilt, 5 new buildings, 4 renovated buildings, new athletic complex
 - 21st century themes: global education and green school
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The Planning Process

- Key Stakeholders on Committee: Faculty and Staff (8), Trustees (10), Alumni and Community Representatives (2)
 - Parent, Student, Faculty and Alumni Surveys
 - Lower School, Middle School, and Upper School Forums (with SWOT analysis and key issues identified)
 - Board & Faculty Committee Input Throughout (10)
 - Forced ranking to ensure focus on top priorities
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Our 21st Century Goals

1. Sustainability--Become a sustainable, model green school in all areas of program, operations, finance and facilities.

2. Educational Program--Offer an excellent K-12 academic and extracurricular program that uses the latest research to ensure the development of the whole child.

3. Global Citizenship—Foster global citizenship and public purpose through partnerships with local and international organizations and development of innovative educational programs.

4. Community and Communication--Strengthen communication with HRS community, and improve outreach and marketing to enhance the School's visibility and reputation in the community.

And Do the Other Things: On-Going Goals

- **5. Students--Attract and educate an academically accomplished and diverse student body that values and demonstrates leadership and responsible global citizenship.**
 - **6. Faculty, Administration and Staff--Recruit, develop and retain an outstanding and diverse team of leaders for our students.**
 - **7. Diversity--Promote the School's commitment to diversity and its importance in the education and development of our students.**
 - **8. Facilities--Maintain and fully utilize the School's beautiful new facilities.**
 - **9. Governance--Attract, develop and retain an outstanding Board of Trustees that focuses on the School's long-term financial sustainability.**
 - **10. Finance and Development--Secure the School's financial strength, improve access and affordability, maintain sound fiscal management.**
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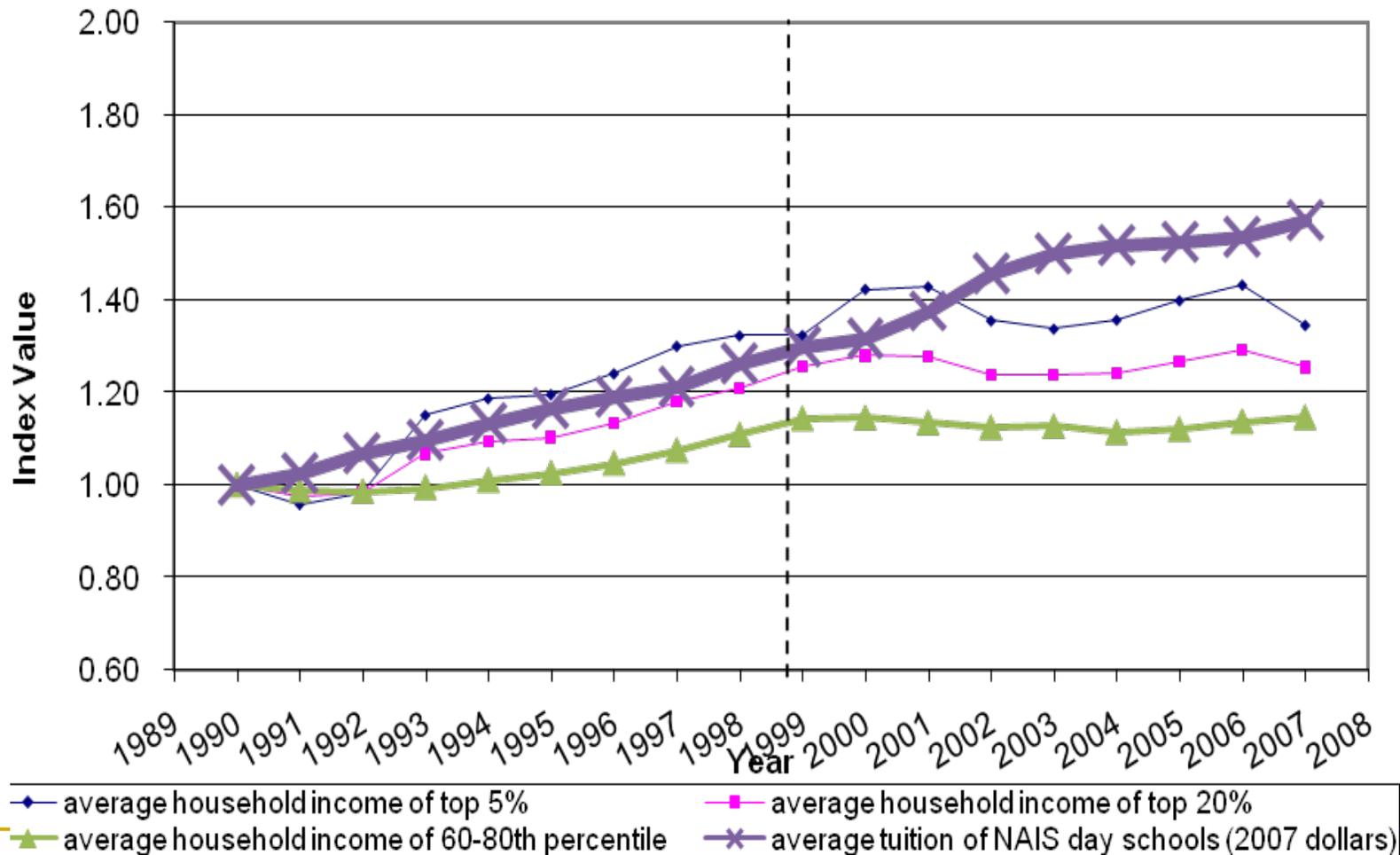
Financial Sustainability

The Game Changer

- The Affordability Disconnect: NAIS Analysis, 6/09
 - Sustainability Task Force, 2009-10
 - Focus on the following:
 - Control costs, keep personnel flat
 - Increase class size slightly (average from 14 to 18)
 - Increase non-tuition revenue--annual fund, endowment campaign, multi-faceted approach from facilities, café, etc.
 - Increase access with a flexible tuition program of financial assistance, significant increase in support from current 25% of students and 15% of gross revenues
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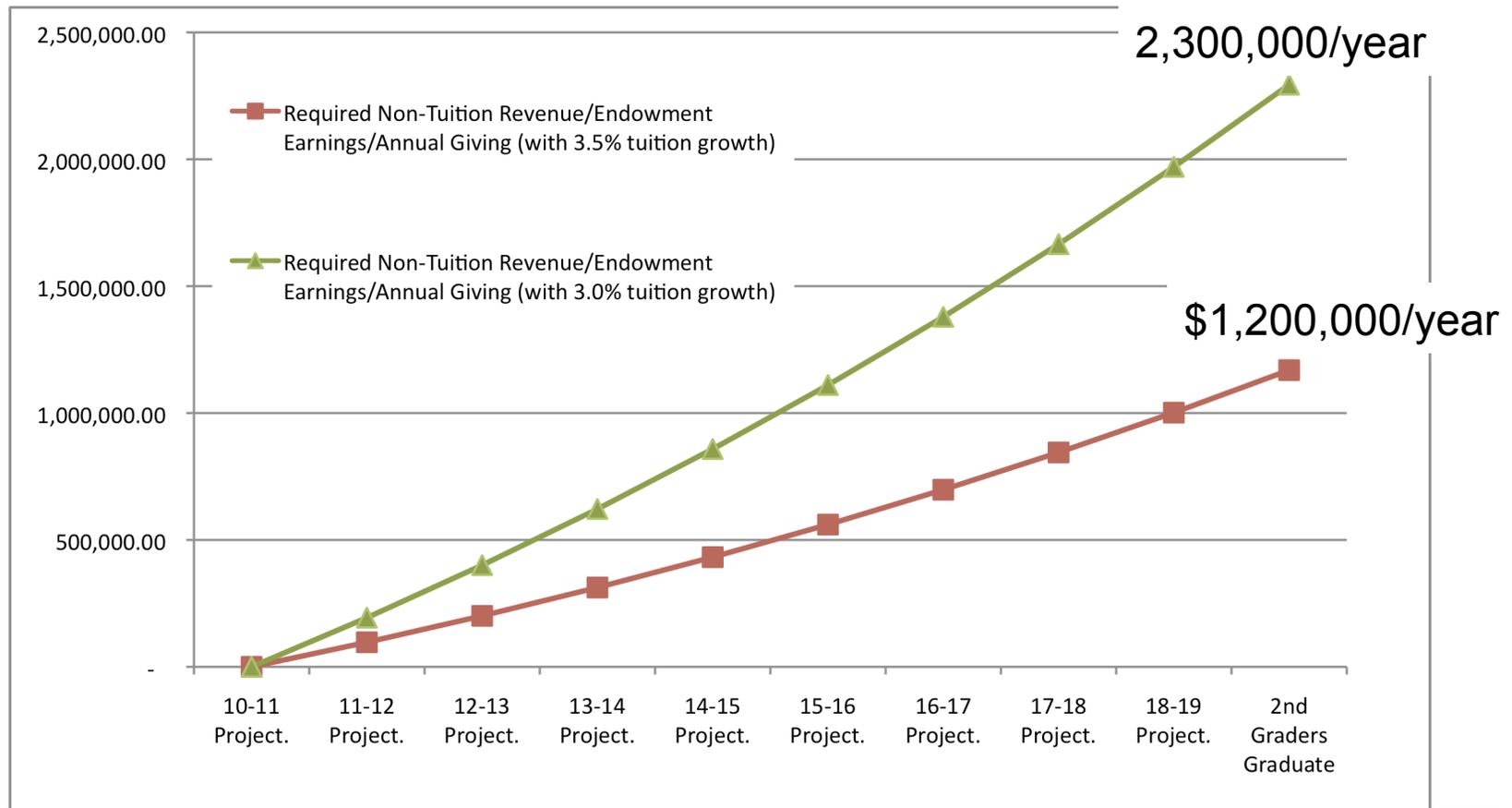
Price and Access: The Brutal Facts

Figure 2. Average Household Income and Private School Tuition Cost Indices from 1994-2007 (1990=1.00), top 40% of households by income



The Cost of Affordability: \$ Required for Restrained Tuition Growth)

How much additional giving or revenue must we create if we hold tuition increases to 3.0% or 3.5% (rather than 4% in the LRFP) – if we take no other action on the expense side?



Focus On Our Students' 21st Century Skills

- Critical thinking (analysis, synthesis, interdependence, systems)
- Problem solving (questions, process, solution, evaluation)
- Creativity (initiative, risk-taking)
- Communication (verbal, written, digital)
- Leadership (emotional-social intelligence, teamwork)
- Character (respect, responsibility, integrity)
- Purpose (cultural, global, environmental, community)

- See Tony Wagner, [The Global Achievement Gap](#), Pat Bassett, “Demonstrations of Learning for 21st Century Schools,” NAIS Commission on Accreditation
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Some Lessons Learned

- Balance inclusivity and efficiency
 - Stay focused, keep it simple
 - Expect the unexpected
 - Have a bias for action
 - Strategic planning is never over
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Strategic Planning Issues in the CAIS Community

- See the full Saint Mark's plan at www.saintmarksschool.org and the Head-Royce plan at www.headroyce.org
 - We welcome your questions and comments.
 - What successful experiences can you share from your school's work?
 - What issues are you facing today?
 - Thank you!
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