



Strategic Planning
Doulos Discovery School
Jarabaoca, Dominican Republic

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Following the transition of the founder and a major turnover in experienced staff, I stepped in as a new Director and quickly realized that much of what occurred at the school was based on tradition rather than procedure. As a school we needed to be thinking about growth and expansion, but had limited bandwidth as we were struggling to operate with consistency month-to-month and year over year. Future sustainability was one of Doulos' greatest opportunities for growth moving forward, yet received very little attention.

Being a young director with limited experience, I soon found myself overwhelmed by my attempts to plan for the school's future. I struggled to identify what needed to be addressed first. I longed for clarity as a leader and desperately wanted to provide the same for my staff, but did not know where to begin. Over time, I became increasingly convinced that as an organization we needed to address several issues simultaneously. Many of these issues, however, were long-term projects and required a multi-year plan to be achieved. It was this realization that led to the decision to create a strategic plan.

After much prayer and conversation, Jim Marsh joined us as a consultant to guide us through the planning process, serving as a lynchpin for Doulos' success in the development of a strategic plan. He engaged with us through phone conferences, campus visits and regular email communication. He walked alongside us in establishing the collaborative planning process with various stakeholders, ensuring the inclusion of a wide variety of goals that allow Doulos to steward the various opportunities for growth that we have moving forward. Based on collaborative conversations, we determined five priority areas for future growth including board governance, systematic evaluation of our mission, financial sustainability, school expansion and staff retention.

Our strategic plan provides the structure and clear objectives necessary to further our mission rather than merely sustaining it year to year. The development of a three to five year plan is an important next step towards organizational clarity and long-term sustainability, allowing us to grow in maturity and impact in the upcoming years. This plan will serve as a valuable tool for communicating the school's priorities and for holding leadership accountable to meeting the goals outlined within it. As an organization we are becoming more future-minded and better equipped to steward the gifts and opportunities God brings.