GSSM Strategic Plan – 2020

Part 1. Organizational Culture

Mission

GSSM seeks out and advances our state's most talented and motivated students, offering a transforming education in science, mathematics, and engineering that cultivates joy in learning and builds the confidence to engage as ethical leaders with the world's most significant issues.

Vision

GSSM will be recognized as a national leader in K-12 science and mathematics education, known for developing students who are exceptionally well-prepared to engage in global issues as creative and ethical leaders.

Values

- Development and well-being of the whole student
- Sense of community between the students and faculty/staff
- Open communication
- Quality curriculum
- Supporting education statewide

Goals

This strategic plan will achieve specific and measurable results to move GSSM forward while addressing critical issues facing us. Four key focus areas are listed below. The goal is to accomplish these objectives over the next five years.

- Provide challenging and relevant courses that offer our students meaningful academic experiences unique to GSSM.
- Expand virtual programs to reach students in all communities in South Carolina.
- Partner with K-12 schools to inspire student interest in math and science, provide content knowledge, and help teachers achieve their educational objectives.
- Prepare our students to pursue complex global issues in college and careers.

Part 2. Critical Issues

Major Issues

- Clear and effective communication
- Curriculum and graduation requirements that help students maximize their GSSM education
- Increase accessibility to GSSM for all top SC students
- Positive work and learning environment
- Foster student, faculty, staff wellness

Part 3. Strategies and Initiatives

Strategy 1: *Create an environment that stimulates the creativity, innovation, and excellence for GSSM students, faculty, and staff.*
   a. Climate, Culture, and Shared Vision:
       i. Foster a culture and climate that promotes faculty and staff innovation and collaboration, professional development, and wellness.
      ii. Clearly communicate expectations and protocols, be transparent in decision-making, and responsive to faculty and staff.
     iii. Establish a collegial work environment that promotes collaboration, values innovation and creativity, and supports employee work/life balance.
      iv. Define faculty and staff job responsibilities to allow for equitable workloads.
       v. Support faculty and staff professional development and participation in professional organizations.
      vi. Create a faculty and staff handbook to compile institutional policies, procedures, and expectations.
     vii. Standardize and streamline financial procedures, HR protocols, and hiring procedures to meet instructional needs.
   b. Curriculum, Assessment, and Accessibility
       i. Expand the course offerings across all programs and ensure that curricular outcomes are consistent and aligned with the mission regardless of delivery method.
      ii. Conduct a front-end analysis/needs assessment for attaining accreditation and subsequently seek external accreditation through AdvancED.
     iii. Develop an Institutional Research framework to track student progress towards academic success, and implement best practices in institutional effectiveness and research.
      iv. Strive to achieve enrollments in all programs that reflect the demographics of the state.

Strategy 2: *Focus on student centered academic excellence, integrated student development and global engagement while supporting broadened accessibility and diversity for the GSSM residential program.*
   a. Academic Excellence, Integrated Development and Global Engagement
       i. Improve academic services for admitted residential students.
      ii. Research, develop and implement opportunities for students to strengthen their foundational preparation, complete advanced coursework, or pursue a personalized course of study.
     iii. Develop a residential curriculum and graduation requirements that maintain GSSM's STEM identity and help students get the most from their GSSM education.
      iv. Improve academic advising through advisor training and working collaboratively as an advising team.
       v. Integrate courses addressing international, economic, multi-cultural, and ethical issues to the residential curriculum.
      vi. Provide students with rich and diverse opportunities to develop their awareness of global issues.
     vii. Expand service learning and leadership opportunities.
   b. Student Support and Wellness
       i. Create and sustain a healthy campus environment that promotes and develops well-being, creativity, and respect for self and others.
      ii. Improve communication and collaboration between faculty and staff in order to better meet student needs.
   c. Accessibility
       i. Improve programs to help more promising students across the state be prepared to succeed at GSSM.
      ii. Improve recruiting to attract qualified students from all areas of S.C

Strategy 3: *Expand STEM learning opportunities across the state through GSSM virtual programs that focus on student-centered academic excellence, integrated student development, and global engagement.*

    a. Program/Platform, Integrated Curriculum, and Academic Excellence
- i. Improve the academic preparation of admitted students through foundational and summer prep courses
- ii. Integrate international, economic, ethical, and cultural perspectives into the virtual programs curricula.
- iii. Improve the content and delivery platform for the virtual programs.

    b. Student Support and Wellness
- i. Continue to develop and maintain the virtual academic success program.
- ii. Implement a college advising program for students in the application-based virtual programs.
- iii. Implement best practices in virtual education for appropriate number and level of courses, assignment deadlines, and teacher/facilitator interactions and support.

    c. Partnerships and Accessibility
- i. Strengthen relationships with current partner schools and districts and develop new partnerships.
- i. Establish methods to improve the academic preparation of students admitted to the virtual programs.
- ii. Expand non-application based virtual programs to reach more schools across the state.
- iii. Develop additional foundational courses beyond virtual Algebra II to increase access to GSSM by students from underserved areas.

Strategy 4: *Expand outreach learning experiences for students and teachers across S.C.*

    a. Curriculum
- i. Ensure that curricular outcomes are consistent for all topics, regardless of the program by reviewing goals, objectives, outcomes, and program assessment methods.
- ii. Develop curriculum that improves content knowledge, problem-solving skills, and the understanding of the inter-relationships between, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and society.
- iii. Continue developing and disseminating relevant units and activities to teachers that improve content and pedagogical knowledge.
- iv. Explore new models and modalities for delivering curriculum to students and teachers across the state.

    b. Program Support
- i. Prioritize and support outreach learning opportunities for students and teachers with sufficient resources and personnel.

    c. Partnerships and Accessibility
- i. Improve the partnership model to increase the number of outreach offerings with current school district partners and develop new partnerships across the state.
- ii. Develop new partnerships in underserved communities.
- iii. Provide academic outreach for K-12 students and teacher training around S.C., particularly in underserved communities.
- iv. Expand the summer STEM learning experiences offered in communities across S.C. and explore new models and modes of delivery.
- v. Develop and implement a teacher professional development model that provides academic year and summer learning experiences for teachers.
- vi. Provide academic enrichment and support for cohorts of underrepresented minorities through a program that offers multiple academic learning experiences during the academic year and the summer.

Strategy 5: *Update and improve facilities, operations services, and IT systems in order to effectively accomplish our mission.*

    a. IT Security Infrastructure
        i. Continue to develop information security infrastructure and management practices using industry standards.
    b. Data Management, Security, and IT Systems
        i. Continue to develop and implement security awareness and training programs.
        ii. Develop and implement a sustainable school wide data management plan.
        iii. Develop and implement an Instructional Technology plan to support student learning in all GSSM programs.
    c. Facility Upgrades
        i. Implement best practices to increase efficiency in maintaining school infrastructure and plant facilities.
    d. Enhanced Operations and Internal Protocols
        i. Implement best practices to increase efficiency in business office operations.
        ii. Integrate procedures for budgeting and purchasing with SAP accounting tools provided by the state (SCEIS).

Strategy 6: *Enhance advancement and stewardship in order to ensure reliable and flexible support for GSSM programs and growth.*

    a. Maintain a collaborative and productive partnership between GSSM and GSSM-F for fundraising, support and growth.
    b. Ensure that funding is reliably sufficient to support ongoing operations and future initiatives, including student global experiences, student research and inquiry, and statewide outreach opportunities.
    c. Establish a capital campaign to increase the endowment and fund major school initiatives.
    d. Secure grants to fund GSSM priorities.
    e. Foster a culture of charitable giving to the institution among all GSSM constituents.

Strategy 7: *Improve communications, marketing, and public relations in order to achieve the GSSM mission.*

    a. Standardize the GSSM brand and develop a school Brand Standards Guide.
    b. Improve communication with all GSSM constituents, to promote transparency and ensure that pertinent information is available in a timely manner.
    c. Improve the GSSM website to enhance internal and external communications.
    d. Increase awareness of GSSM statewide and beyond.
    e. Develop an admissions marketing strategy for the residential, virtual, and outreach programs.