

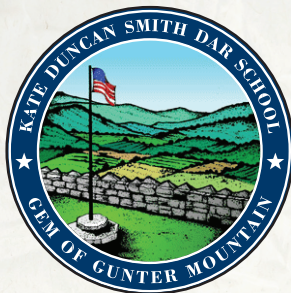


Kate Duncan Smith DAR School, Inc.

THE ROAD AHEAD

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023





STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chair, Melvina P. Phillips, Ed.D., Vice Chairman, KDS DAR School Board of Trustees

Co-Chair, Rita P. Horton, Honorary Chairman, KDS DAR School Board of Trustees

Cheryl P. Harrison, Chairman, KDS DAR School Board of Trustees

Heather W. Green, Executive Director, KDS DAR School, Inc.

Beth E. Cagle, Development Director, KDS DAR School, Inc.

Executive Committee of the KDS DAR School Board of Trustees:

Cheryl P. Harrison, Chairman

Melvina P. Phillips, Vice Chairman

Athelia W. Gibbs, Secretary

Gail W. Moore, Treasurer

Ann T. Dillon, President General, NSDAR

Tammy B. Clemons, State Regent, Alabama Society DAR

Nancy S. Folk, Vice President General, NSDAR

Rita P. Horton, Honorary Chairman

Peggy S. Johnson, Honorary Chairman

Lanabeth L. Horgen, President General's Advisor

Shelby D. Ward, Parliamentarian

KDS Administrative Office Staff:

Heather W. Green, Executive Director

Beth E. Cagle, Development Director

April Pendergrass, Office Manager

Scott Randles, Maintenance Supervisor

Amanda Weeks, Bookkeeping Assistant

Teresa Choat, Receptionist

With additional assistance and input from:

Keith Buchanan, Principal, KDS DAR Elementary School

Tim Isbill, Principal, KDS DAR Middle School

Stacy Anderton, Principal, KDS DAR High School

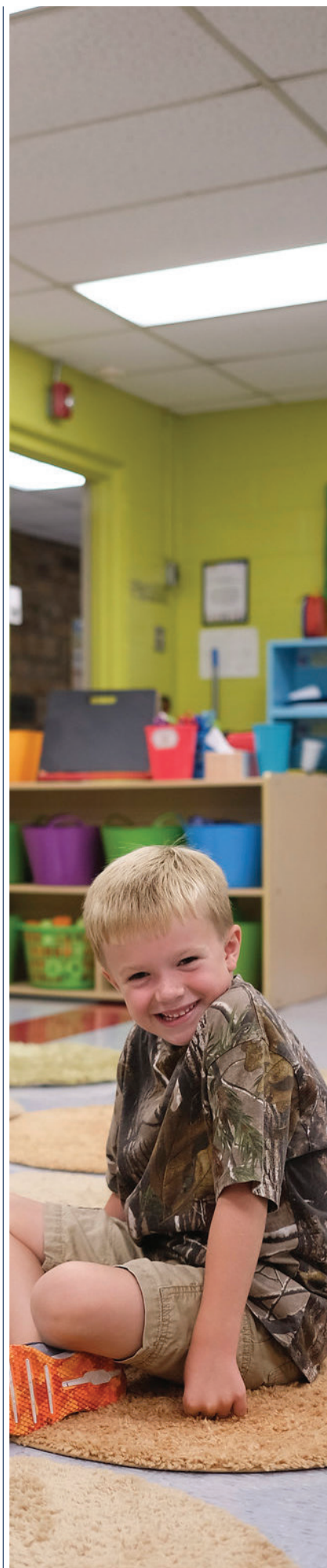
Kim Smith, Counselor, KDS DAR Elementary School

Tammy Sutton, Media Specialist, KDS DAR High School

Ricky Sutphin, former KDS Maintenance Supervisor and member, KDS Board of Trustees

Special thanks to Brent Hutchinson, Executive Director, Hindman Settlement School, for his valuable input.

Cover photo: Cathedral Caverns Highway (Marshall County Road 5) by Donna Prickett



Description

Kate Duncan Smith DAR School, Inc. (KDS), organized by the Alabama Society Daughters of the American Revolution (ASDAR) in 1924 and joined by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) in 1928, provides a high-quality education for the students of Gunter Mountain. The non-residential school provides academic, patriotic, and social opportunities for children of the largely rural area of Marshall County, Alabama.

The purpose of the school continues with the honored goals to instill in students a sense of patriotism, an understanding of civic responsibility, and an appreciation for the heritage and history of this great nation, while also providing a high-quality academic foundation beginning in Pre-K through 12th grade that will prepare students for life beyond KDS.

Today, more than 1,300 students, almost 60% of whom live at or below the poverty level, have the privilege of attending this DAR School. The school campus has grown from the original four-classroom building to include 240 acres of land and 40 buildings, 11 of which are faculty residences. The KDS campus is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district and is home to a number of area landmarks.

As a part of the Marshall County School District, the school receives funding and support that is required to facilitate the ongoing academic and facility needs of this institution. School administrators and teaching staff integrate the academic goals of the Alabama State Department of Education and the Marshall County Board of Education. A written cooperative agreement between the Marshall County Board of Education and KDS outlines the expectations of fair and equitable funding and the division of responsibilities pertaining to facilities.

To ensure high quality education opportunities for the students, NSDAR, ASDAR, DAR state societies and chapters, alumni, and local businesses and organizations provide funding for a variety of supplemental educational and social programs, perpetuate the school's mission, and provide funding for the building and maintenance of the facilities and grounds of KDS.

The management and control of KDS DAR School, Inc. is vested in a Board of Trustees. The business management and administrative operations of the school is the responsibility of the Executive Director who is selected and employed by the Board of Trustees.



MISSION

The mission of Kate Duncan Smith DAR School, Inc. is to provide opportunities for educational and personal growth for students, while emphasizing patriotism, responsible citizenship, and the historical legacy of the school.

BELIEFS

1. We believe the privilege of a sound education is a heritage, which should be enjoyed by all citizens of our country.
2. We believe the school environment should be disciplined with emphasis on positive attitudes, academic excellence, and patriotism.
3. We believe the historical legacy of the school should be preserved and promoted.
4. We believe it is vitally important to maintain the vision of our founders, the Alabama Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, that "children be trained in the knowledge and practice of pure and noble citizenship."
5. We believe it is essential to collaborate with the Marshall County Board of Education, the Alabama State Department of Education, the Marshall County Commission, and the citizens of Gunter Mountain to provide quality educational instruction within a safe learning environment.
6. We believe it is our responsibility to enhance educational opportunities and provide resources for the personal growth and well-being of students.
7. We believe in preserving the historical buildings on campus.
8. We believe in maintaining campus facilities while planning for future growth.
9. We believe fostering relationships with stakeholders is vital to the mission of Kate Duncan Smith DAR School.
10. We believe, as did our founders, in maintaining the "same spirit of dedication to achievement, patriotic and moral values, and service to community and country... on the campus today as it did in the early years of this unique educational experiment of the Daughters of the American Revolution."





PLAN OVERVIEW

This Strategic Plan reflects the mission and beliefs of Kate Duncan Smith DAR School, Inc. and outlines the goals, objectives, and strategies for the next five years.

A great deal of time and research was put into developing this plan. Input was sought from the school's many stakeholders including faculty and staff, members of the DAR, alumni, current students, members of the community, and others who have a vested interest in the future of KDS DAR School. The committee reviewed all available data to create a plan that is progressive while being mindful of the school's historical legacy and its focus on patriotic education and student programs.

KDS has identified three primary areas of focus over the next five years:

PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

INFRASTRUCTURE



I. PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

- > **GOAL:** Develop and expand programs and initiatives to enhance overall student growth and achievement

Objectives

Educational – Enhance student educational opportunities by strengthening partnerships with local, state, and regional organizations and maximizing exposure to often under-funded subject areas such as art, music, band, science, and technology

Student Support – Promote student development and growth through support programs, particularly for those with financial need

Patriotism, Civic & Community Engagement – Foster community engagement and civic responsibility to students through patriotic activities, community service and outreach, and events focusing on American history

Strategies

Educational

1. Continue to work in partnership with the Marshall County Board of Education to encourage educational excellence
2. Enhance the State School Curriculum through the implementation of supplemental programs in targeted areas
 - a. Continue to look for ways to improve the Art & Music Enrichment program
 - b. Seek funding for and oversee development of new programs in STEM education/Robotics
 - c. Pursue funding opportunities for needed technology equipment
 - d. Provide field trip assistance for students with financial need
 - e. Continue to look for ways to improve classroom support programs such as Adopt-a-Class and Honor Roll



3. Expand participation in DAR programs that focus on education
 - a. Encourage student participation in the DAR American History and Christopher Columbus Essay Contests by working with and providing current information to history and English teachers
 - b. Work with the High School to ensure annual selection of a DAR Good Citizen
 - c. Promote classroom grants programs and other outside funding opportunities to KDS educators
 - d. Facilitate student participation in the annual Junior American Citizens contests

Student Support

1. Provide for student personal and healthcare needs by streamlining request procedures and fulfillment
2. Expand the Blessings Bags & Patriot Pantry programs to include additional students
3. Continue to provide College Scholarships based primarily on financial need while securing additional funds to ensure future growth
4. Develop new programs and implement to encourage student personal growth and character education
 - a. Identify community resources and implement age-appropriate Drug Prevention programs
 - b. Work with available resources to strengthen Anti-Bullying messaging focused primarily on middle school students
5. Provide job skills and work force training through after school and summer jobs for students in financial need
6. Continue to provide Christmas gifts for children and families in need while assessing availability of community support

Patriotism, Civic & Community Engagement

1. Work with school faculty and staff to offer programs that promote patriotism and national pride
 - a. Develop and implement a structured, age-appropriate curriculum focusing on patriotism, civic responsibility, and American history

- b. Encourage and ensure daily observance of patriotic rituals by students
2. Coordinate and/or support special events that enhance student appreciation of patriotism
 - a. Support, as needed, the annual campus-wide Veterans Program
 - b. Encourage participation in Constitution Week activities
 - c. Coordinate a 6th grade Junior American Citizens club and school-wide participation in the J.A.C. Contests
 - d. Encourage patriotism through participation in campus-wide DAR events such as Dedication Day and Awards Day
3. Encourage students to participate in community service activities and offer meaningful community outreach
 - a. Provide opportunities for and encourage service activities among students
 - b. Offer activities that enhance parental support of the school and their child's education; and support, as needed, activities organized by the three schools
 - c. In cooperation with the three schools and other community resources, host drug prevention and awareness activities aimed at the community-at-large
 - d. Provide opportunities for adult education such as GED classes
 - e. Work with community resources to identify and offer heritage and community education programs



II. INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

> **GOAL:** Encourage overall improvement of the organization through financial development, effective brand management, strategic board development, sound principles of governance, and financial responsibility

Objectives

Financial Sustainability – Responsibly manage available funds while building a more diversified funding stream for operational use

Brand Identity – Present a clear, compelling, professional image and message

Board and Governance – Recruit and retain active and engaged board and committees whose members are passionate in their support for KDS and its students

Strategies

Financial Sustainability

1. Continue to budget conservatively and use available funds wisely
2. Create a comprehensive plan for donor acknowledgment and recognition
3. Diversify and expand donor base
 - a. Pursue potential business sponsorship of programs and projects
 - b. Develop methods to gain new individual donors
 - c. Research potential sources of government funding
 - d. Pursue opportunities to apply for applicable grants
4. Cultivate and maintain positive relationships with alumni through targeted communications and special events
5. Develop and promote a compelling planned giving strategy
6. Increase donor retention and encourage current donors to increase gifts
7. Maintain a list of current school and program needs to publish and distribute



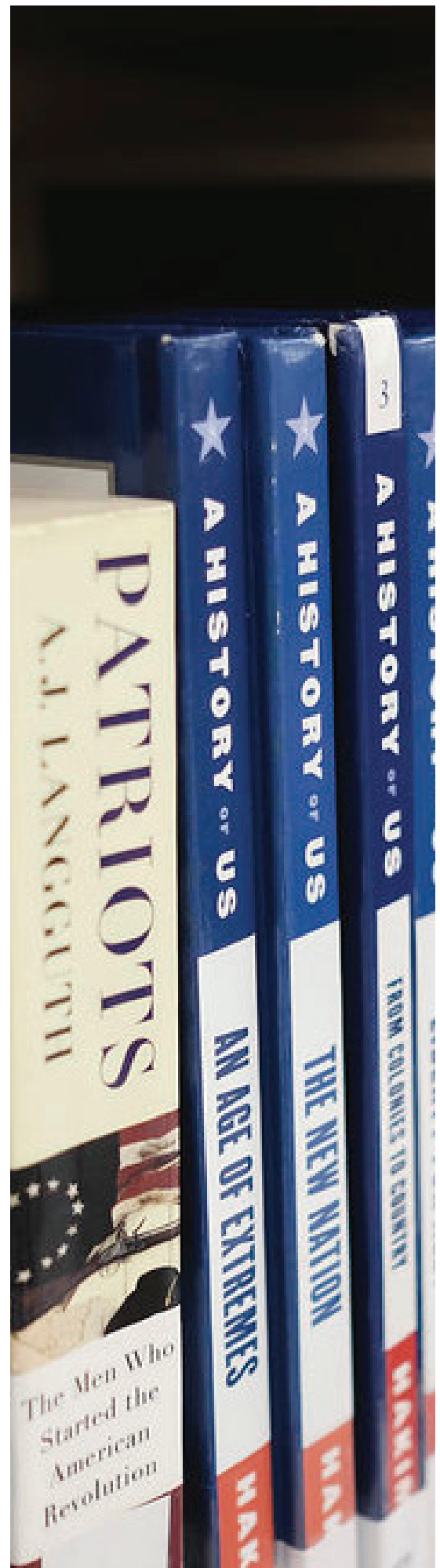
8. Plan and implement quarterly development and outreach events such as regional alumni gatherings, hosted dinners, etc.
9. Develop a plan to grow unrestricted/annual fund and building and maintenance funds
 - a. Develop a plan to increase the annual fund goal to \$150,000 in three years and \$200,000 in five years
 - b. Develop a plan to increase the building and maintenance fund to \$1.5 million in five years
10. Develop a plan to increase the value of the endowment fund
 - a. Increase endowment fund contributions by 2% each year
 - b. Annually evaluate investment strategy to maximize earnings

Brand Identity

1. Develop a comprehensive, proactive communications plan that leverages promotional opportunities
 - a. Evaluate current marketing materials for possible improvement
 - b. Continue to expand and improve the Patriot E-newsletter as a communications tool
 - c. Utilize bi-weekly social media posts to communicate with and engage audience
 - d. Conduct a periodic review of website content to ensure information is current and accurate
2. Increase the school's visibility in the community and the region
 - a. Seek opportunities to promote the school's historical legacy
 - b. Administration Staff to attend school events whenever possible
 - c. Administrative Staff to participate in community events as warranted
 - d. Administrative Staff to participate in County and State events when relevant

Board and Governance

1. Develop and implement a plan for board recruitment, orientation, and evaluation
 - a. Develop and follow protocols for filling board and committee vacancies
 - b. Create written guidelines for board and committee member roles and responsibilities
 - c. Adopt and promote modest goals for board and committee annual giving
2. Conduct an annual review of organization Bylaws
3. Conduct an annual review of organization policies and procedures
4. Increase board and committee engagement in fundraising activities through clearly defined responsibilities and expectations



III. INFRASTRUCTURE

- > **GOAL:** Improve and maintain the physical infrastructure to support the current needs, programs, and future growth, while providing a safe and secure learning environment

Objectives

Facilities – Develop a facilities plan to address long-term maintenance needs, building renovations to meet changing needs, and, as needed, new construction

Campus – Maintain the campus in a manner to accentuate its natural beauty and provide a low-maintenance landscape

Safety & Security – Provide a safe and secure learning environment and campus

Strategies

Facilities

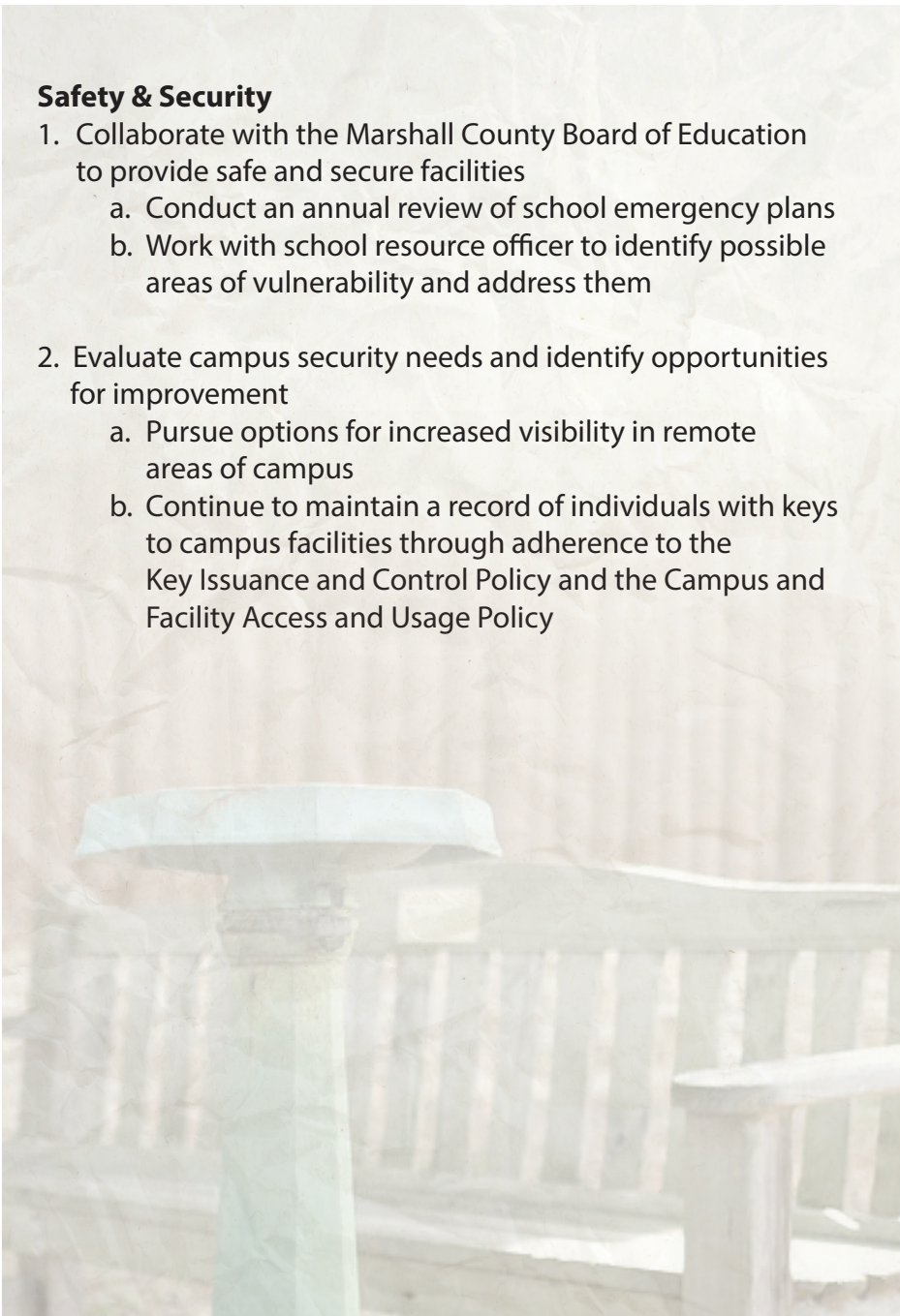
1. Utilize a comprehensive Facilities Planning Assessment to determine maintenance priorities
 - a. Follow priorities set forth in Facilities Planning Assessment to determine most critical areas in need of maintenance and repair
 - b. Maintain and adhere to a planned and preventive maintenance schedule
 - c. Re-evaluate needs and update assessment quarterly
2. Evaluate current facility needs and available space for possible future growth
 - a. Develop a comprehensive Facilities Plan to identify and analyze current space needs
 - b. Conduct an annual review of available space and determine future space needs
3. Work with Marshall County Board of Education to ensure technology infrastructure meets current classroom and support requirements

Campus

1. Engage in landscaping work designed to enhance the natural beauty of the area
 - a. Plant perennials whenever appropriate
 - b. Utilize native plant materials to enhance the natural landscape
2. Develop and follow a low-maintenance landscape plan for campus
 - a. Take advantage of natural materials whenever possible
 - b. Utilize ground cover instead of grass in areas that are difficult to mow
3. Utilize available resources to provide event and program space for community outreach
4. Develop a comprehensive plan for campus directional signage

Safety & Security

1. Collaborate with the Marshall County Board of Education to provide safe and secure facilities
 - a. Conduct an annual review of school emergency plans
 - b. Work with school resource officer to identify possible areas of vulnerability and address them
2. Evaluate campus security needs and identify opportunities for improvement
 - a. Pursue options for increased visibility in remote areas of campus
 - b. Continue to maintain a record of individuals with keys to campus facilities through adherence to the Key Issuance and Control Policy and the Campus and Facility Access and Usage Policy





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