



Students Run Oakland Three Year Strategic Plan

July 16, 2010



About Students Run Oakland

“Before I joined SRO, I wasn’t comfortable looking up when talking to someone, but now here I am tonight speaking to all of you...”

- Cliff, 9th Grade speaking at SRO’s annual celebration dinner.

“Crossing the finish line was one of the best feelings in the world because I was able to prove that I could put my mind to something and accomplish it. The race also assured me that if you push yourself, and put your ‘mind over matter’, that anything is achievable.”

- Marcus, 11th Grade

“SRO helped me through the struggles of high school by giving me confidence and people that love and support me.”

- Aja, 12th Grade



10th Anniversary

A Decade Of Service. One Student At A Time

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Dear Students Run Oakland Community,

I have had the privilege to serve as Students Run Oakland's Executive Director for nine seasons. Over the decade since SRO's inception, we have served over 500 students from some of Oakland's most underserved communities. I have had the incredible experience of seeing firsthand the transformation of the students we serve.

Each year, we seek to improve upon our programs and provide a variety of tools and resources to further our work in preparing the next generation for life.

The catalyst for developing a longer term plan was to help us build the foundation to become one of the East Bay's premier youth development organizations, enabling greater numbers of underserved youth to have promising futures and become successful contributing members of society. Our goal is to continue to deliver on our mission, but to also broaden our reach, deepen and expand our programs in the areas of comprehensive wellness and academic success. Ultimately, we aim to positively impact and transform youth throughout disadvantaged communities in Oakland and beyond.

This Strategic Plan provides the tools to guide our organization over the next three years, with the flexibility to ensure that we can adapt to future challenges and opportunities. Undoubtedly, modifications to this Strategic Plan will be made over time. However, I am confident that it comprehensively captures our collective mission, vision, goals and objectives, which will drive the success of Students Run Oakland for the next decade.

I applaud the efforts of the entire Strategic Planning Committee and all of our community partners, collaborators, and supporters who made our plan a reality.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us over the last decade and for the years to come.

Spencer Hooper
Executive Director

Dear Supporter of Students Run Oakland,

When we first embarked on developing a strategic plan, we were very fortunate in that there was complete organizational alignment on the need and the approach that we wanted to take. We knew that we wanted to develop a comprehensive plan that incorporated the insights, feedback and wisdom of SRO's key constituents – board members, staff, volunteers, community partners, funders, and of course our students.

And, while our efforts to complete the plan spanned over a season, we remained committed to the process of total stakeholder involvement and investing the additional time and resources to build an implementation plan ensuring that there was a documented path to executing on the Three Year Strategic Plan.

Over the months, we had wonderful engagement from all of our stakeholder groups. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for your time and insights. We hope as you read the plan, you will see that your input was incorporated into our thinking.

Throughout the planning process, we also had complete commitment and diligence of the strategic planning committee comprised of SRO Board, Staff, Volunteers and Students who met for countless hours, weekends and nights, building the strategic plan and the accompanying implementation plan. There were also a few key organizations and consultants that worked with SRO to aid us in completing significant components of our work. The plan would not have happened without your contributions.

We are very proud to share SRO's Three Year Strategic Plan with you and express sincere thanks and gratitude to all who played a role in the development and completion of the plan.

Bridget Harper
Chair, Board of Directors

Dear Students Run Oakland,

When an organization is really making a difference, I try to lend my support in whatever way that I can. I am pleased to have been asked to write opening remarks for SRO's Three Year Strategic Plan. This roadmap will position SRO to reach its full potential and have an even greater impact for our young people and the East Bay at large.

One of the things that most impresses me about SRO is its steadfast belief that if you set a high bar for students they will rise to the standard with the proper tools and support.

Several years ago, when exploring different ways to further its impact in teaching and instilling accountability SRO introduced the Student Contract. Spencer and I spoke about the inclusion of the GPA requirement and the need to balance the realities associated with the types of students SRO is dedicated to serving and having a measure that was a stretch, but at the same time achievable. I put a challenge to the organization. Spencer understood that a student with a very low GPA would require more than few months to turn that around. However, with the right support, the organization could have a material impact on that student's GPA improving substantially. The approach adopted was to get all students to a minimum 2.5 GPA and require any with less than a B average attend tutoring.

What also impresses me is the creativity to reach solutions such as balancing realities and yet continuing to push not just the students but the organization as well. SRO is a great product and has consistently executed on its mission and core values for the past decade. Even with this track record, it's leadership had the foresight to understand this blueprint was needed to get to the next level. I congratulate SRO for its past accomplishments and forward thinking.

Arnold Perkins
Former Director of Public Health Alameda County

Dear SRO Community,

It gives me great pleasure to fully endorse the vision, values and goals of this Strategic Plan. Our strategic planning committee spent more than a year developing an impressive guide focused on providing inner city high school students a broadened program. This will further our efforts towards preparing students for success in life.

A select team of volunteers and staff will implement this plan with the goal to create sustainable support services that prepares each student for higher education and a quality standard of living. We will do this by providing assistance and networks that may not be generally available to them. With a planned continuum towards expanding and deepening programs, SRO will better serve targeted students from underserved communities and provide committed volunteers and supporters an opportunity to make a major difference in our community as our students enter the world. I look forward to working with the planning team, board of directors and other community-minded individuals over the months and years to come to bring this excellent plan to life.

SRO Volunteer Charles Mance
Mance & Associates, Incorporated

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SRO utilized several resources to build the framework for the planning effort and the written documents – the three-year plan and the detailed operating (implementation) plan. The phases that we have completed are the following:

- Planning Phase – consisted of outlining the reasons for planning and communicating key objectives, outcomes, and timelines to stakeholders.
- Re-visiting the Mission, Vision and Values – during this phase we examined the mission, vision and values and held discussions internally and externally to compare our delivery against the organization’s intent and purpose. We also used this phase to explore if we should take a different strategic direction and modify or alter the mission.
- Assessment – we conducted a detailed stakeholder review encompassing interviewing board members, staff, volunteers, community supporters, donors and our clients – the students.
- Priority Setting – during this phase, we made sense of the data that we collected, agreed on growth and expansion strategies, summarized future program offerings, and finalized administrative, financial and governance priorities.
- Adopting the Plan – in this phase, paramount to our work was committing our planning to a formal set of documents. To do this, we finalized our goals and objectives, developed long-range financial projections, wrote the Strategic Plan and a detailed operating plan.

Planning efforts helped us to crystallize our thinking, build organizational alignment on the approach, and get to a defined set of priorities to ensure our collective success in implementing the plan. The results yielded three major pillars to our Strategic Plan:

Students – Significantly Improve Our Impact on Students’ Lives

To be a compelling after school program for students that provides them a safe environment and the tools to improve their health and wellness, academic performance, and build their self-esteem by demonstrating to them their capabilities through physical activities and targeted academics.

Volunteers – Improve Volunteer Effectiveness

To recruit and retain a core group of diverse volunteers who share a common understanding of, and commitment to, the goals and objectives of SRO.

Sustainability – Become a Strong and Vibrant Organization for the Long Term

To become a strong and vibrant organization that can withstand changes in leadership, economic, political, and other environmental factors.

The final phases of our work is where we are today – implementing the plan. The 2010-11 season is the first year of implementation – Year One in the document. Our final phase will be centered towards keeping the plan relevant. Each subsequent year we will monitor the plan by evaluating the prior year and through the planning process revise the rolling three-year view as needed.

Paramount in this evaluation will be continuing to assess how we deliver against our mission:

Students Run Oakland (SRO) is a unique youth development program passionate about transforming lives of youth from underserved communities. Our mission is to improve the health and overall well being of young people through structured physical fitness training, academic support, nutrition education, and mentoring. SRO participants will take on the challenge of training for a marathon (26.2 miles) to help them develop long-term goals, improve their health, and overcome obstacles. SRO aims to build character, confidence, discipline, resiliency skills, and reinforces the values of commitment and hard work. Students can then draw on these values for achievement in academics and other areas throughout their lives.

Vision Statement

We aspire to be a premier youth development organization, that helps prepare East Bay underserved youth to have promising futures and positioned to be successful contributing members of society. By broadening our reach, deepening and expanding our programs in the areas of comprehensive wellness and academic success, we will impact and transform increasingly larger numbers of youth.

Values Statements

- High standards and expectations
- Belief in the potential of young people
- Commitment
- Hard Work
- Personal Accountability
- Diversity and inclusiveness

We are About

- Preparing young people for life
- Holding young people accountable; they adhere to a code of conduct
- Character building
- More than running
- Programs at no cost to students
- Broadening horizons for young people
- Building community / networking
- Social skills / self-esteem building

SRO's Mission Statement

Students Run Oakland (SRO) is a unique youth development program passionate about transforming lives of youth from underserved communities. Our mission is to improve the health and overall well being of young people through structured physical fitness training, academic support, nutrition education, and mentoring. SRO participants will take on the challenge of training for a marathon (26.2 miles) to help them develop long-term goals, improve their health, and overcome obstacles. SRO aims to build character, confidence, discipline, resiliency skills, and reinforces the values of commitment and hard work. Students can then draw on these values for achievement in academics and other areas throughout their lives.

Motto

Training for Life One Step at a Time

GOAL ONE: STUDENTS – SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE OUR IMPACT ON STUDENTS’ LIVES

Strategy Statement

To be a compelling after school program for students that provides them a safe environment and the tools to improve their health and wellness, academic performance, and build their self-esteem by demonstrating to them their capabilities through physical activities and targeted academics.

Lead Accountability

Student Liaison

Goals and Objectives

Year denotes the timing to begin implementation of targeted objectives. As initiatives and programs are launched, they will continue forward into future years as appropriate and will be evaluated as part of the annual plan update process.

1. Improve SRO’s impact on Students’ Academic Lives

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Improve tutoring program.	X		
B.	Increase percentage of Students’ graduating from high school from 90% to 95%.	X		
C.	Increase percentage of students attending college from 80% to 90%.	X		

2. Increase access and participation from schools

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Build strong working relationship and collaboration within each participating school.	X		
B.	Foster working relationship and collaboration with OUSD.		X	

3. Increase Student Retention Rate by 10% each year

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Strengthen program components to improve retention by 10% each year.	X		
B.	Increase parent participation.		X	
C.	Create a formal student leadership model.	X		

STUDENTS (contd.)

4. Improve SRO’s impact on Students’ Health and Wellness

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Build more formal annual calendar of health and wellness clinics.	X		
B.	Targeted physical health interventions by specific health conditions.		X	
C.	Create a comprehensive mentor program.		X	

5. Improve SRO's Impact on Students' Ability to be Self Sustaining Adults

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Create program to develop plans with measurable goals beyond high school for non-college bound students.	X		
B.	Develop collaborative internship and part-time job program for SRO students.			X

Budget

1. Expense Impact: Yes
2. Revenue Impact: No

Desired Outcomes

1. Reduce ratio of students to tutors.
2. Reduce the numbers and percentages of students that require tutoring.
3. Increase percentage of Students' graduating from high school from 90% to 95%.
4. Increase percentage of students attending college from 80% to 90%.
5. Improve retention of students, with a focus on those groups with historically higher program drop rates.
6. Maximize partnerships and collaboration at OUSD and school site level.

GOAL TWO: VOLUNTEERS - IMPROVE VOLUNTEER EFFECTIVENESS

Strategy Statement

To recruit and retain a core group of diverse volunteers who share a common understanding of, and commitment to, the goals and objectives of SRO.

Lead Accountability

Volunteer Coordinator

Goals and Objectives

Year denotes the timing to begin implementation of targeted objectives. As initiatives and programs are launched, they will continue forward into future years as appropriate and will be evaluated as part of the annual plan update process.

1. Increase diversity of volunteers

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Develop program evaluation system to identify types of volunteers needed, volunteer criteria, and processes for interviewing volunteers.	X		
B.	Develop targeted recruitment plan.	X		
C.	Increase number of volunteers focused on non-running activities from current rate of 12% to 20%, as well as number of hours spent by volunteers outside of weekend runs.	X		

2. Increase effectiveness of volunteers

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Improve performance appraisal process.	X		
B.	Improve Volunteer satisfaction.	X		

Budget

1. Expense Impact: No
2. Revenue Impact: No

Desired Outcomes

1. Volunteer base that is more representative of the populations that SRO serves.
2. Broader base of volunteers' skill sets and interest to draw from and deploy.
3. More effective utilization of volunteers.

GOAL THREE: SUSTAINABILITY - BECOME A STRONG AND VIBRANT ORGANIZATION FOR THE LONG-TERM

Strategy Statement or Strategic Direction

To become a strong and vibrant organization that can withstand changes in leadership, economic, and other environmental factors.

Lead Accountability

Board of Directors

Executive Director

Operational Tactical Team (OTT)

Goals and Objectives

Year denotes the timing to begin implementation of targeted objectives. As initiatives and programs are launched, they will continue forward into future years as appropriate and will be evaluated as part of the annual plan update process.

1. Increase and Diversify SRO's Income Streams

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Raise 100% of operating budget by year one.	X		
B.	Increase Individual donations by category: - Major Donors - Mid-size Donors - Board of Directors	X		
C.	Increase Foundation Grants.	X		
D.	Increase Government Grants.	X		
E.	Increase Corporate and Small Business Support and Sponsorship by category: - Monetary contributions - In-kind Goods - In-kind Services	X		

2. Develop a strong Board of Directors

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Board Recruitment Plan to increase number of board members.	X		
B.	Improve Board of Directors' financial support for SRO	X		
C.	Improve Board of Directors effectiveness in Governance: - Planning - Policy	X		

SUSTAINABILITY (contd.)

3. Develop a succession plan

- Board
- Executive Director
- Staff

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Formal succession plan for all critical positions.	X		

4. Improve measurement and assessment capacity

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Improve capacity for data capture.	X		

5. Increase SRO’s relevance and impact in the community at large

Note: By executing in the areas of students and volunteers we begin to achieve increased relevance, participation and impact in the community. During Year 2, this area will be further built once there is progress in other plan focus areas. .

Objectives		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A.	Foster improved collaboration and increased interaction with community leaders, government agencies, and other key community organizations and constituents.		X	

Budget

1. Expense Impact: Limited
2. Revenue Impact: Yes

Desired Outcomes

1. A dedicated Board of Directors committed to the vision and vitality of the organization.
2. Diversified funding streams and an improved pipeline.
3. A detailed plan implemented for future Earned Income stream.
4. Improved systems for documenting realized outcomes.
5. Improved marketing and promotion of SRO’s impact.
6. Increased relevance and impact in the community at large.

APPENDIX: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all of the following individuals for their contribution to SRO's Three Year Strategic Plan.

Students

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SRO Volunteers

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Charles Mance *
Tiffany Margulici
Nicole Simeus Patterson *
Martin Walasek *
Joye White
Katie Wojnoonski *
Jerry Wolfe *

Institutional Donors / Community Supporters

Brett Lamb
Brian Rodgers

Individual Donors

Jim Barnes
Jeannett Mack
Mark Magers

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Peter Gertler *
Bridget Harper *
Spencer Hooper *
Tony Iton, M.D.
Frank Rose

**Indicates Member of Strategic Planning Team*