Clara B. Ford Academy

3 - Year Strategic Technology Plan

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Executive Summary

Clara B Ford Academy (CBF) is strict discipline academy that provides an innovative learning environment integrating treatment and academic goals for students in grades 5 – 12 who are placed at Vista Maria.

CBF strives to treat, heal, and educate its students. To be most effective in this endeavor, a school discipline system must be intertwined with the student's treatment goals and strategies. Its emphasis is on preventing discipline issues through integrating an effective Social-Emotional Learning component - teaching students self-regulation skills and social skills that can help them control their emotions, make more responsible choices, and get along with others. It recognizes that we do not have the ability to change our student's daily challenges that they experience outside our walls. The ultimate goal of all discipline is to shape the student's behavior, allowing them to develop self control and make appropriate decisions that ultimately will enhance success in the community. To this end, a "one size fits all" discipline system does not effectively address the depth and breadth of our student population.

Embedded in CBF's discipline system are the philosophies and theories of three researched-based programs: *Smart Character Choices*, *Transition to Independence Process (TIP) System*, and *Lezotte's Correlates for Effective Schools.* Each of these provides important elements upon which CBF discipline system is predicated.

Introduction

Mission Statement

Clara B. Ford Academy's mission is is to engage our students in a safe, innovative learning environment within Southeast Michigan that will enable them to function as contributing adults.

Vision

The vision of CBFA is to be the premier alternative educational center for high risk students and disadvantaged families.

Touchstone and Core values

Clara B Ford Academy's caring learning community is built on a foundation of: Safety, Respect, Leadership, Innovation, and Integrity. Incorporated in the Village of Hope Academies mission are the following core values:

- Academic achievement and creativity
- Respect for self and others
- Diversity

- Integrity
- Teamwork

Core Goals

Clara B Ford Academy has a variety of core goals:

- To create a learning community that helps students put meaning into their learning so they can succeed in college, have a quality life, know themselves well, and build positive and satisfying relationships with others.

- To teach students how to participate in a decision making process that uses different methods, including comparisons, patterns, analytical, and systems thinking strategies.

- To encourage outstanding academic performance for each student and recognize that academic success is only one factor shaping a well-rounded individual.

- To foster a strong work ethic through persistence and determination that is modeled and reinforced by adults.

- To create and maintain a positive learning environment for all students. Teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, and students must assume a responsible role in promoting behavior that enhances academic and social success. Courteous, respectful, and responsible behavior fosters a positive climate for the learning community.

Goals for Technology

Goal 1: To increase the use of technology for academic instruction

Goal 2: To implement flexible delivery of technology

Goal 3: To integrate technology in the classroom to aid instruction and collaboration

Goal 4: To enable all students to become technologically literate, equipping them with the technical and computer skills necessary to compete in today's workplace, while enabling them to discover how new and ever-changing technologies offer them unlimited opportunities to participate in society.

I. Curriculum

Overview. The Academy's curriculum is student-centered and strength-based utilizing a diagnostic-prescriptive approach. Emphasis is on obtaining high standards in the core academic subjects. Students are regularly assessed using a variety of tools: MEAP, Scantron, computer-based performance tracking, monthly progress reports and student-teacher-parent/guardian conferences. Students complete any required course before earning credit, even if this takes longer than the regular time period. The Academy's focus is on encouraging its students to master the material and acquire new skills before advancing to subsequent levels. Summer and extended year sessions are provided to assist slower students in staying on track with peers of similar ages.

The curriculum and coursework is aligned to the Michigan Merit Curriculum while utilizing programs that have a track record of success. At its foundation, the curriculum incorporates Core Knowledge principles and sequencing, along with computer-based instruction from PLATO Learning.   Both programs are nationally recognized, aligned to the Michigan Standards, and are being used successfully with proven results in hundreds of schools around the country.

Core Knowledge embraces the following four principles:

- All students need to master the building blocks of reading, writing, and mathematics in order to be prepared for more advanced material in later grades.
- Students want to achieve both in school and in the community.
- Subject matter is at least as important as the learning process in providing a context for further exploration, analysis, and understanding.
- Schools must be responsible for ensuring that students achieve mastery of the material.

The Core Knowledge approach uses specific sequencing by grade and ability level within each core academic area. Students progress through each level based on performance and acquisition of pre-identified skills. Supporting materials are aligned to teaching and learning activities at each level, ensuring consistency throughout the program for both teachers and students, as pupils progress from one level to the next.

The PLATO program is computer-based, self-paced, and places a heavy emphasis on essential skill development. The program provides for on-going assessment for both students and teachers, enabling the mapping of course work to pre-identified student needs. This program is aligned to standards in over thirty (30) states, including Michigan, as well as all nationally recognized standardized achievement tests used by colleges and universities.

A. Curriculum Integration

The Academy's educational goals and objectives, as required in our charter school application and contract, are aligned with the Michigan Merit Curriculum, including the Michigan Educational Technology Standards (METS), and all requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, including national technology goals.   (Please see www.techplan.org). We select teaching and learning materials, including software, hardware and other equipment that corresponds to our stated mission and educational goals.

B. Student Achievement

The Academy was planned with integration in mind -- technology is integrated into classroom instruction, as well as made available through computer stations and mobile labs. The Academy utilizes a server-based network (both hard-wired and wireless) so that data can be exchanged easily and as needed between and among all stakeholders. With a solid infrastructure in place, we are able to focus on student achievement using the following strategies:

- Improve classroom instructional capabilities: integrate the use of technology into instructional activities through the use of software applications and hardware that can

be deployed for groups of students and individual students.

- Incorporate computers as productivity tools: teach students and staff how to use computers, software and various hardware components to produce work products that demonstrate acquisition of core academic skills. Primary skill areas include word processing, multimedia development, desktop publishing, and programming.

- Deploy computers as communication tools: teach students, staff and parents how to use technology to enhance the learning experience. Key activities include inter-school collaboration, research, and school-to-home communication, all based on the use of the Internet and remote connections to the school's server(s).

- Enhance academic skill acquisition and when necessary, remediation. Employ instructional software that provides instruction and remediation tailored to a student's specific needs and that provides them, as well as their teachers, parents and guardians, real-time feedback on progress and performance.

The above strategies are deployed by program area, including those unique to our school, according to the target timelines indicated in the chart below:

Program / Area	Full Implementation
Science and Social Studies: computer-based activities	One Year
PowerSchool: access for parents/guardians	One Year
Wireless Mobile Learning Centers (In Unit School)	One Year
Web-based Communication and Community Outreach	Two Years
Computer-based Assessments fully integrated and in use by all staff.	Two Years
SmartBoards / Multi-Media Tools Expanded to Additional Classrooms.	Two Years
Computers as Communication Tools – across the entire campus	Three Years

C. Technology Delivery

As middle/high school Academy we anticipated a great need for highly specialized and rigorous courses offered via technology and designed the Academy's programs accordingly. We plan on making use of all available resources that meet the needs of our students including those offered online through the Michigan Department of Education and its technology partners. In addition, the Academy will identify and explore establishing distance-learning opportunities between partner schools and other educational service providers.

- Deploy assistive and adaptive software, as needed, to serve students with special needs.

- Incorporate internet-based courseware programs from one or more educational

vendors, in special areas including: career exploration, aptitude and attitude assessment, and test-taking.

- Enable students to take advance placement courses that are offered via the Internet.
- Explore the use of the Michigan Virtual High School for gifted, talented and advanced students.
- Partner with other schools, regional centers and institutions of higher learning for distance-learning opportunities.
- Partner with other schools to explore the possibilities of sharing teachers, specialized instructors and outside resources via distance-teaching possibilities.

D. Parental Communications & Community Relations

The Academy encourages and supports parental/guardian involvement. Orientations are held each summer and at other times during the year, in order to introduce parents/guardians to the staff and programs. Periodically scheduled parent/guardian conferences encourage parents and guardians to be involved. Communicating with parents/guardians via multiple methods, including the use of email, a web-site and a secure PowerSchool portal, will be key methods for keeping them and the community involved in the school. Strategies the Academy intends to use and improve over the next three years include:

- Introduce parents/guardians to computers, including how computers are used in our Academy, through periodic workshops, computer training sessions, the school newsletter, special events, and a mobile lab.
- Enable parents/guardians to meet with teachers during parent-teacher conferences, at a computer workstation, to review courseware and programs utilized for classroom instruction.
- Provide training specific to parents/guardians in how to access their child's information via the Internet through our PowerSchool server.
- Provide parents/guardians an email account, if needed, within the PowerSchool system.
- Provide parents/guardians information and names of local agencies and libraries that offer public access to the Internet.
- Assist parents/guardians with home computer acquisition by providing information that includes recommended minimum requirements, ISP's information and anticipated costs.
- Provide parents/guardians opportunities to work with their children, in the school's lab, during special sessions.
- Encourage parents/guardians membership on the Academy's Technology Planning Committee.

E. Collaboration

At this time, the Academy has no plans to develop or offer its own adult literacy program.

Parents who are seeking such assistance are referred to other community-based agencies and resources, which can assist parents in identifying local literacy programs available in their neighborhood.

The Academy maintains collaborative relationships with other social serving and support agencies through its primary relationship with Vista Maria, and through working with staff and professionals of other local agencies and organizations.

II. Professional Development

F. Professional Development

The Academy focuses on the following professional development areas to ensure that all staff are effectively trained in the use of technology as a teaching, communication and task management tool:

- Training for all staff, scheduled regularly throughout the year and during the summer in the use of PowerSchool and PowerGrade.

- One-on-one and small group workshops, as needed, for specific uses of PowerSchool, PowerGrade and administrative modules.

- Comprehensive on-site teacher training for new hires in the use of PLATO instructional software.

- Individual coaching and direct support in how to use a computer, including word processing, spreadsheets, email, the Internet, and network administration.

Professional Development Type	Timeframes
PowerGrade/PowerSchool Training	Monthly and as-needed, 4 hours per session, on-site.
PLATO Training	Biannually, 4 to 6 hour sessions, off and on-site.
Teacher use of Laptops to increase Technology Integration	At least 1 major consortium-wide day-long session per year, with monthly on-site follow-up and in-class support.
Identification of Lead Teacher(s) to work with Teacher Groups (Train the Trainer)	On-going and based on staffing levels and/or changes, each year.
Windows: learning to use different platforms in a mixed network environment	As needed, based on assessment of teacher computer competencies.

During the next technology improvement cycle, staff will be surveyed annually about their technology and other professional development needs in order to prioritize each year's training schedule. In addition, and based on yearly standardized assessment results (including MEAP and Scantron trend data), and as part of its continuous improvement

process, the team will identify additional training needs unique to the Academy that may change from year to year. Surveys will assist in assessing staff member's technology competency and awareness as it relates to state, National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) and International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). Once prioritized, training workshops and activities will be selected and added to the school calendar and budget.

G. Supporting Resources

The Academy will employ the following strategies to ensure successful and effective uses of technology:

- Ensure that one or more staff attends all technology-related training sessions and workshops offered by Wayne RESA.

- Contract with one or more outside vendors to be responsible for maintaining the network and equipment.

- Make available to staff copies of all training materials via CD ROM and webinars.

- Teach staff how to access PowerSchool's OnLine Help, including specialized courses available through PowerSchool's Virtual University.

- Explore and identify on-line and web-based training modules, which meet the needs of the Academy as well as individual staff.

- Maintain an up-to-date Teacher Resource Center that includes books, CD-ROMS and other multi-media materials; providing examples, how-to's, lesson plans and teaching activities based on the use of various technologies.

- Identify and provide links to reputable on-line resources including Teacher Networks, the U.S. Department of Education, the Michigan Department of Education, and others.

- Ensure post-training evaluations are conducted for all workshops, sessions or classes in which staff participate.

- Compare and analyze student achievement data, over time, and identify correlations between changes in such data, teachers, programs and professional development activities.

III. Infrastructure, Hardware, Technical Support, and Software

H. Infrastructure Needs/Technical Specification, and Design

The Academy currently has 25 HP ProBook 6560 laptops, 46 HP 6715b Laptops and 3 HP desktops running a combination of Windows XP SP3 and Windows 7. The desktops are hard wired and the laptops are all wireless. The Academy obtains its Internet connection through Comcast and redundant service through AT&T and operates its own network separate from Vista Maria. VOIP phone service is provided through Comcast.

The infrastructure includes 2 servers, both using, which serve as the domain controller, file server, printer server, firewall and content filter. The school building is wired with Category

5 cable and at least one (1) RJ-45 jack is in every classroom or office. Cable Management is in place for the infrastructure. Desktop and network support are contracted through a vendor. A firewall device handles content filtering, protection and security for the network.

The Academy will continuously update connectivity devices across the Vista Maria campus (to In-Unit Classrooms) over the next three years, utilizing Universal Service Funding, as well as within the school building, as the student and staff population requires.

The team employs four main strategies to identify infrastructure needs and to determine interoperability among the components.

1. We rely on our in-house technology experts to keep us abreast of changing technologies and to help us evaluate on an on-going basis, which existing or emerging enhancements the Academy might consider adding to the existing infrastructure.

2. We utilize our contracted vendors and technology consultants to ensure interoperability between existing components and any new additions we might desire to add.

3. We collect, review and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data, over time and from year to year in order to more effectively make decisions regarding technology purchases, training deployment, and any changes to our instructional techniques.

4. We obtain on-going staff and other stakeholder feedback in order to measure effectiveness and satisfaction with existing services.

I. Increase Access

As a small school, the primary strategy to increase access to technology for both students and teachers is to deploy technology "out into the classrooms." Solidifying the infrastructure to accommodate future growth and to achieve increased access throughout the existing facility and across the campus was a primary focus during the past three years. Maximizing the use of this new network will be a primary focus for the next three years. The Academy will continue to seek state and other grant support to strengthen these efforts:

- Purchase additional computer stations and/or laptops as needed, per year.

- Provide computers to teachers and support staff as needed on campus.

- Identify other resources, including federal grants, foundations and the business community, for assisting the Academy with continued technology deployment.

- Identify for parents and students all public places within our geographic area that provide free Internet Access and/or free use of computers.

- Coordinate school events and conferences with technology initiatives so that parents, guardians and other stakeholders remain committed and supportive of technology expansion.

IV. Funding and Budget

J. Budget and Timetable

ESTIMATED BUDGET DETAIL - CLARA B. FORD ACADEMY				Assumes a 3% Yearly Increase, unless otherwise negotiated.		
Function Code / Item	Cost	Qty	Base Cost	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
110 Supplies and Materials						
Consumable Student Supplies & Materials / per student	$50	181	$9,050	$9,050	$9,322	$9,601
110 Other Expenses						
Anti-virus & filtering subscriptions	$75	45	$3,375	$3,375	$3,476	$3,581
Yearly Instructional Software allocation per core curricular area.	$100	4	$4,000	$4,000	$4,120	$4,244
Instructional Software (licenses)	$900	30	$27,000	$27,000	$27,810	$28,644
Network Operating Licenses	$100	50	$5,000	$5,000	$5,150	$5,305
			$48,425	**$48,425**	**$49,878**	**$51,375**
220 Purchased Services						
Yearly Teacher/Staff Training	$500	20	$10,000	$10,000	$10,300	$10,609
Administrative Training	$500	4	$2,000	$2,000	$2,060	$2,122
			$12,000	**$12,000**	**$12,360**	**$12,731**
250 Purchased Services						
PowerSchool Student Data, Teaching Grading, and Parent Communication System / License per student	$25	200	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000
Program Audit	$600	1	$600	$600	$618	$637
			$5,600	**$5,600**	**$5,618**	**$5,637**
260 Purchased Services						
Annual Connection / Monthly Including Circuits (ISDN, TI,VOIP etc.) and MiCTA Affiliation / Monitoring Fees	$1,120	12	$13,440	$13,843	$14,258	$14,686
Telecommunications (phone and cells)	$129	12	$1,548	$1,594	$1,642	$1,692
Technical Support Contract	$30,000	1	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000
			$51,600	$51,600	$52,248	$52,248
On going IT support and Power School Support	$45,000	1	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000
Web hosting	$1,795	1	$1,795	$1,795	$1,795	$1,795
			$89,988	**$92,233**	**$92,696**	**$93,173**
260 Other Expenses						
Wireless Configuration	$2,000	1	$2,000	$2,000	$0	$2,000
			$2,000.00	**$2,000.00**	**$0.00**	**$2,000.00**
260 Supplies & Materials						
Consumable Printing & Maintenance Supplies / per Month.	$500	12	$6,000.00	$6,000.00	$6,180	$6,365
			$6,000.00	$6,000.00	$6,180.00	$6,365.00
Total Estimated Costs			**$164,013**	**$166,258**	**$166,732**	**$171,281**

USF Anticipated Discount rate:	90%	$33,459	$34,463	$35,497	$36,562
Grand Total		**$130,554**	**$131,795**	**$131,235**	**$134,719**

Area	Item	Target Completion
Enhancements	School Website upgrade	2013-2014
	Updated Software Programs & Equipment	On going
	Specialized Technology Integration (Music, Art, Science, etc.)	On going
Professional Development	How to Use a Computer How to Use PowerSchool and PowerGrade	Yearly and on-going: for new staff and advanced training for existing staff.
	PLATO Teacher Training	Annual.
	Incorporating Technology into Classroom Instruction	Yearly and on-going
	Using Wireless Technology	Annual.
	Internet Use: Policy	Yearly and on-going:
	Teacher Training in Basic Skills: word processing, spreadsheet, graphics, email, and Internet	On-going.
Interoperability	Choosing and integrating added technology components	Yearly and on-going: provided by outside consultants and vendors.
	Inventory of all components	Yearly.
Maintenance	Upkeep and regular maintenance.	Yearly and on-going: provided by outside consultants, vendors and internal administrative staff.

K. Coordination of Resources

State and local resources, available to the Academy through its federal Consolidated Application, are coordinated by the Academy using a team approach. The administrative team meets regularly with the staff, educational consultants, technology experts and vendors to develop yearly and program plans and budgets. As required, formal adoption of budgets, major purchases and approval of any significant program changes are provided by the Board of Directors. Many major decision processes take place during the months of June, July and August.

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

L. Evaluation

The Academy uses a continuous improvement process to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all Academy programs. The rate and range of student achievement in core academic areas has the highest priority when determining the effectiveness of any strategy. Other monitoring methods include:

- Oversight of the plan by the School-based Administrative Team.

- Year to year trend data of student achievement in core academic subjects for student groups, disaggregated by all categories required under federal law, and also disaggregated by teacher.

- Teacher, student, and parent satisfaction surveys.

- Monthly meetings with the Board of Directors.

- Quarterly reports to the authorizer and annual reports to the Michigan Department of Education.

- Feedback from outside technology vendors and consultants.

- Unmet goals will be reevaluated to determine if modifications are needed to the strategy in order to achieve set goals.

M. Acceptable Use Policy

The Academy has adopted an Acceptable Use Policy that fully conforms with federal law. In order to monitor compliance, the Academy will take the following steps:

- Explore the use of software that enables full, yet simple, computer access logs.

- Provide Internet training sessions to students and teachers which focus on safety and privacy issues.

- Post Student Internet-Use Rules throughout the school.

- Provide training to staff on how to monitor students' use of the computer.

- Add the Acceptable Use Policy to the Student Handbook, Parent Workshops, and other forms of communication mediums shared with students, families, guardians and teachers.

- Update the Student Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct to include provisions for violation of the Internet Use Policy.

NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

The Academy is committed to the effective use of technology to both enhance the quality of student learning and the efficiency of Academy operations. It also recognizes that safeguards have to be established to ensure that the Academy's investment in both hardware and software is achieving the benefits of technology and inhibiting negative side effects.

In order for anyone to use the local and wireless network, Internet connection and/or data and exchange servers, he/she must read these guidelines and sign this Agreement.

A user name and password will be issued to users upon receipt of this signed Agreement. Until then network use will not be allowed.   The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. **Inappropriate behavior or violation of the acceptable use agreement may lead to penalties including the revocation of a user's account, disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, and/or legal action.**

Inappropriate Internet and network use is not limited to the following:
- using offensive or inappropriate language or language that would promote violence or hatred;
- revealing one's (or other's) personal address, phone number or credit card information;
- harassing anyone by sending uninvited communication;
- sending or accessing electronic information from accounts that do not belong to you without the owner's authorization;
- accessing unauthorized or inappropriate areas of the network and changing or interfering with information found in the network;
- accessing areas blocked by the Academy's firewall without authorization;
- soliciting or distributing e-mail for non-educational or non-business purposes;
- misrepresenting oneself or others;
- making unauthorized copies of software or information, such as software pirating;
- printing of materials excessively;
- downloading and/or installing unauthorized software, including games, on Academy computers;
- accessing, uploading, downloading, distributing, or transmitting pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, or threatening material or other materials harmful to minors;
- violating federal copyright laws or otherwise using the property of another individual or organization without permission. All work must be original work. Copy and pasted material may only be used as a resource when properly cited;
- violating any local, state or federal statute; and
- accessing personal social networking sites, such as but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube, etc. without specific permission from the Administration.

I agree to comply with these Network and Internet Acceptable use guidelines as stated in this Agreement and the Academy Student/Family Handbook.

I understand that the Academy administration reserves the right to change these rules at any time.

I understand that the assignment of a password does not guarantee confidentiality. There is no expectation of privacy as to prevent examination or monitoring. I understand that the Academy reserves the right to examine all data stored in the machines and/or network (including e-mail) to make sure that all users are in compliance with these regulations. The Academy reserves the right to monitor or review Internet files, including web pages and usage logs. Any flash drive used at the Academy must also be free of any inappropriate content.

I agree not to participate in the transfer of inappropriate or illegal materials or material that may be considered treasonous or subversive through the Network and Internet connection. I realize that in some cases, the transfer of such material may result in legal action against me.

I understand that the Academy monitors the on-line activity of all users in an effort to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Should I happen to find materials that may be deemed inappropriate, I shall refrain from downloading this material, immediately leave the Internet site, shall not identify or share the location of this material, and will immediately report it to a teacher or the Administration. I am aware that the transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal, and punishable by fine or jail sentence.

I understand that all computers, local and wireless network, Internet connection and/or data and exchange servers are the Academy's property and shall only be used for educational and business purposes.

I understand that computer hardware (monitors, terminals, keyboards, mice, etc.) are Academy property and any mistreatment or damage will be considered destruction of property or vandalism.

I understand that the Academy makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. The Academy and any of the sponsoring organizations shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the Internet connection.

I understand that the Academy strongly condemns the illegal distribution of software otherwise known as pirating. I understand that software piracy is a Federal offense punishable by fine or imprisonment.

I agree not to allow other individuals to use my account or use other individuals' accounts for Network and Internet activities.

I understand that through the use of the Internet any actions taken by me will reflect upon the Academy system as a whole. As such, I shall behave in an ethical and legal manner.

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

A parent or legal guardian must also sign the following section:

I, _____ (print name), the parent/guardian of _____ (print student's name), agree to accept all financial and legal liabilities that may result from my son's/daughter's use of the Academy's Network and Internet connection. I release and agree to hold the Academy, and all other sponsoring organizations related to the Internet connection, from any and all liability foreseeable or unforeseeable for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from the use of the Internet connection. I also agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Academy, its Board members, staff and agents from and against any such claims, demands, suits, damages, liability, costs, and expenses (including reasonable attorney fees) incurred as a consequence either directly or indirectly of the granting of this agreement.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____

This policy and all its provisions are subordinate to local, state, and federal statutes.