

Strategic Plan



Mt. Vernon Education Foundation

2018 through 2022



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Introduction

This Strategic Plan describes Mt. Vernon Education Foundation's priorities and initiatives for the five-year period from 2018 through 2022. The Plan illustrates how we, MVEF, will catalyze exciting and enriching educational experiences for the students, teachers, and staff of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation, and for community members throughout Hancock County, Indiana.



Mission and Vision

Our mission statement summarizes the reasons for our foundation's existence and guides our daily activities. This is our mission statement:

We encourage and support creativity, innovation, and excellence that connect and enhance educational opportunities.

Our vision statement summarizes the results we will pursue through our commitment to the mission. This is our vision statement:

Creativity, ingenuity, and opportunity will flourish in our community.

- MVEF will operate on the forefront of education foundations.
- MVEF will invest in practices, programs, and initiatives that prepare students of all ages to be successful.
- MVEF will collaborate with educators to create challenging, meaningful, and relevant learning experiences.
- Students will have a passion for lifelong learning. They will be critical thinkers, innovators, respectful and compassionate individuals, and socially responsible global citizens.
- Education will be a shared responsibility among parents, students, school personnel, higher education partners, and community members at large.

This Strategic Plan describes how we will advance our mission and vision. Some of our approaches are designed to build the capacity and capabilities of MVEF. Others focus on our desired community impact.

Strategies

We will initiate and invest in activities that make education engaging, empowering, and exciting. We will launch five themes for our future. These themes shall advance and reinforce our mission.

Organizational Strength

❖ **Sustain and grow our resources.**

- Build our capacity.
- Raise money through donations and sponsorships.
- Bring classroom voices onto our team.

❖ **Resonate with our audiences**

- Convey a clear identity.
- Celebrate our heritage.
- Share stories of enrichment and achievement.

Community Impact

❖ **Encourage and applaud excellence.**

- Foster professional growth for educators.
- Be a visible advocate for ingenuity and academic achievement.

❖ **Bring the community to the campus and the campus to the community.**¹

- Make school welcoming for lifelong learners.
- Connect youth and adults on journeys of learning.
- Consult the visions and strategies of schools and communities.

❖ **Unveil the world and its wonders.**

- Show how things go.
- Embrace creativity.
- Promote national and global perspectives.

The following pages describe the specific roles we will play in these initiatives.

¹ For ease of reading, this document uses “campus” as shorthand for all the locations where classroom education occurs in the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. In other words, aside from any mention of a specific site, “campus” may refer to any school grounds in MVCSC.

Roles for the Foundation

For each Organizational Strength and Community Impact strategy, MVEF could perform a wide range of roles, so we distinguish what we *will* do from what we *will not* do. The table below lists overall categories for roles we could play (left column) and the specific roles we will or will not perform (right column).

Role Category	Description of the Category and the Roles We Will or Will Not Perform
Catalyst	<p><i>Be the driving force for capacity-building activities and educational initiatives that will advance our mission and vision.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance all Organizational Strength strategies to build, sustain, and grow our operations. • Advance all Community Impact strategies to bring exciting new opportunities into the schools and across the Mt. Vernon area <p>We will establish a visible presence in the Mt. Vernon area, communicate our impact and identity clearly, and reach out to audiences that may support and advance our work. We will catalyze philanthropic support through our proactive engagement of community members.</p> <p>We will also set a tone of high aspirations through investments in experiences that stimulate ingenuity, academic achievement, professional growth, lifelong learning, campus-community educational partnerships, and national and global learning. We may also serve as Connectors, Filler funders, Steady streamers, or Promoters, with the aim of spurring outstanding opportunities for educators and learners.</p>
Connector	<p><i>Identify resources, provide introductions, and facilitate enrollment for community and campus members who share educational goals.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make school welcoming for lifelong learners • Connect youth and adults on journeys of learning • Show how things go • Embrace creativity • Promote national and global perspectives <p>Through personal meetings, public events, research into directories and associations, online communications, and other means, we will build our network and knowledge of people and places whose skills, interests, and resources are suited to educate learners both on and off campus. We will connect these people and places so <i>they</i> may then work together to implement a specific activity or program. Our value comes in identifying promising opportunities and making the links, while those we connect are better equipped to handle the logistics that follow.</p>

Continue reading on the next page

Role Category	Description of the Category and the Roles We Will or Will Not Perform
Filler funder	<p><i>Fill a gap in the finances needed to launch this solution.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster professional growth for educators <p>We will augment the professional development funds available through MVCSC so long as our role will advance our strategic initiatives. We may fund but we will not run training courses. We will also provide “initiative boosters” that supplement MVCSC’s funding for classroom programs that will captivate students and span several years. If local education-oriented capital projects emerge, we may decide to raise funds on their behalf.</p>
Steady streamer	<p><i>Provide annual operating grants for a solution.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a visible advocate for ingenuity and academic achievement • Embrace creativity <p>We will fund such activities to show appreciation for educators; draw attention to our mission, work, and priorities; and catalyze experiences that promote creativity, ingenuity, empathy, and excellence via education.</p>
Promoter	<p><i>Be a vocal and visible proponent of items that advance a strategy.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All our Organizational Strength and Community Impact initiatives <p>We will enthusiastically spread the word about what we do, why it matters, and what it accomplishes!</p>
Lead funder	<p><i>Finance a large capital need, such as for a building, land, or signage.</i></p> <p>Such a role would exceed our needs and aims. We will not invest in large capital projects.</p>
Nudger	<p><i>Nudge a civic plan in a direction that will advance our mission.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult the visions and strategies of schools and communities <p>We will stay informed about “big picture” developments in the Mt. Vernon area and assess the implications and opportunities for us. We will voice our wishes, reservations, or advice to concerned parties as appropriate.</p>
Vision shaper	<p><i>Convene the civic and private sectors to shape a community-wide vision.</i></p> <p>Although this role is possible, it is beyond our scope. We do not expect to have the time or political capital to play such a prominent role.</p>
Feedback facilitator	<p><i>Host community discussions to gather input on the design of a solution.</i></p> <p>“Town hall-style” discussions are beyond our capacity, but we will personally engage educators, learners, and community members in the fuller development and execution of the initiatives in this Strategic Plan.</p>
Spectator	<p><i>Watch other people and groups bring an idea to life. Be minimally involved in the idea’s creation and operation.</i></p> <p>We will observe, rather than engage in, happenings elsewhere that could easily divert us from our priorities.</p>

Community Partners

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, Mt. Vernon Community Foundation has its own board of directors, staff, and financial resources, but we also collaborate with entities in Hancock County and beyond. We will encourage, enable, and advance educational opportunities for teachers and learners of any age, drawing upon the capabilities, connections, and capital of our community. These partners will be pivotal to the success of our Strategic Plan:

- **Individuals and families** may be students, parents, alumni, educators, employees, employers, or others throughout Hancock County and beyond. We will spread news about MVEF among them and will encourage them to join us as idea generators, board and committee members, event planners, publicists, donors, or other kinds of supporters.
- **Businesses, nonprofits, and Chambers of Commerce** employ and serve many of the families whose children we support. We will encourage their owners and employees to become student mentors, guest speakers, hosts of educational exchanges and industry tours, board and committee members for MVEF, equipment providers, and financial supporters for MVEF.
- **Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation (MVCSC)** provides office space for MVEF and its teachers, students, and administrators are frequent beneficiaries of MVEF's grants. MVCSC will be instrumental in the future by proposing educational experiences that may merit support from MVEF, handling the educational content and logistics for several concepts described in this plan, and providing insights, publicity, and office space for MVEF.
- **Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTOs)** advocate for students' learning, host events that make campuses more vibrant communities, and raise funds in support of education. We will join them in creating events that connect community members with the schools, raising support for educational endeavors, and publicizing the work of MVEF, the PTOs, and the schools.



- **Hancock County Community Foundation** (HCCF) promotes learning among youth and adults through its “Education Across Ages” initiative. This initiative encompasses early childhood literacy, scholarships, research into adult learning models, and the eventual funding of adult education courses. We intend to collaborate with HCCF on the development of college savings plans for families and the promotion of adult learning opportunities at MVCSC and beyond. We do not intend to invest in scholarship programs because entities such as HCCF already offer a wide range of scholarships to local students.
- **Town leaders and town planners** set community-level priorities and track the trajectories of neighborhoods throughout Hancock County and neighboring areas. They also guide the advancement of businesses, health centers, civic institutions, and other groups that may provide off-campus learning opportunities to local residents. We will join in conversations with such individuals so we might understand each other’s initiatives and factor them into each other’s plans.
- **Universities** may advance the role we will play as a connector between field practitioners and K-12 students and teachers. They may furnish mentors, speakers, or professional development resources for students and teachers, and host educational site visits. They may also advise us on how demographic trends and economic dynamics may affect MVEF.
- **State and federal funders** provide funding streams and set policies that may affect our work or the work of community partners such as nonprofits city leaders, town planners, or MVCSC.
 - We may seek state and federal grants to support our initiatives. Multi-year public grants could provide substantial and consistent financing for our work.
 - Public officials and agencies may channel money towards our geographic area to a) promote education that is geared towards certain age groups, industry-campus partnerships, or facilities; b) affect the growth patterns of towns; or c) stimulate the growth of certain industries that might then enter or grow in our area.

Our board members and community partners will be instrumental to our pursuit of state and federal funding opportunities. They will also help us plan and adjust as government funding programs emerge and change in the coming years.

- **Grant giving foundations** may be local or national entities whose priorities overlap with ours. They may influence our work in manners similar to those of state and federal funders. In addition, they could direct funding to MVEF in support of our initiatives. We will meet with foundation officials who express a desire to invest in our initiatives and we may approach them with requests for grant support.

Our staff and board members will become more intentional than ever before in growing relationships with these partners. We will encourage all these partners to be active in the future of MVEF and those we serve.

Organizational Strength Strategies

Sustain and Grow Our Resources

These initiatives will strengthen our organization.

Build Our Capacity

What We Will Do

1. **Executive Director Position Fully Funded**
Make full-time, forty-hour-per-week employment of an Executive Director a top priority throughout the duration of this Strategic Plan. The Executive Director's commitment is crucial to the advancement of our mission, so he or she needs the financial means to focus on MVEF throughout each week and throughout each year.
2. **Volunteer Structure to Organize and Run Operations**
Develop a comprehensive volunteer program. Recruit, train, and deputize community members to organize and run grant competitions, social and fundraising events, outreach campaigns, and other activities on behalf of MVEF. Create more than one team to address MVEF's various needs and community members' diverse skills and interests.
3. **Board Member Integration and Growth**
Gauge the effectiveness of new board members and enable board members' progression towards greater responsibility.
 - **Bylaws**
Review and refine the bylaws. An example of a bylaw update would be to give each new board member a one-year trial period; towards the completion of that term, enable the board to vote on whether to extend the term an additional two years; and make each subsequent term for that board member be for three years.
 - **Progression**
Map the "progression plan" for each board member. As an example, a board member could at first serve on one committee, then lead a committee, and then become an officer of the board. In this example, such a progression could become a common practice among board members.
 - **Diversity**
Maintain a diversity of skills and perspectives. Seek a mixture of individuals who represent the schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other entities, and whose current status may range from school student through retiree, and from recent arrival through long-term resident.
4. **Software for Recordkeeping and Outreach**
Use software to track funds, estimate future financial needs, maintain records on gifts and donors, produce and communicate stories, run fundraising campaigns, etc.
5. **Fundraising Oversight**
Establish a team of board members, the Executive Director, and additional community members to lead and manage fundraising initiatives throughout the duration of this Strategic Plan.

What We Will Need

1. Steady revenue streams to support the Executive Director's work
2. Updates to our bylaws to provide for Board Member Integration and Growth
3. Ownership or licenses of software – word processors, spreadsheets, databases, e-mail management systems, desktop publishers, graphics and video editors, etc.
4. Committees in MVEF to sustain growth beyond the board's limited time and resources
5. Steady stream of communications
6. Advocates in our community who will recruit and recognize MVEF volunteers



Raise Money through Donations and Sponsorships

What We Will Do

1. Use of Auctions, Drives, and Other Prominent Public Events

Gauge the effectiveness of past events and the wisdom of staging such events again.

- a. If an event was too time-consuming and/or insufficiently profitable, redesign or replace it. Run each event in a way that will encourage and inspire participants to “join our family” as donors and/or volunteers.
- b. Coordinate the timing of fundraising events with other organizations in the Mt. Vernon area to ensure our events will occur when volunteers, audiences, and publicity are readily available.

2. Outreach to Potential Donors, Especially Among Alumni

Build personal relationships with community members who may become passionate supporters and advocates of MVEF and the initiatives we support. Give special attention to relationships with alumni of the Mt. Vernon schools.² Updates and brainstorming on donor relations activities and opportunities will be a regular agenda item in MVEF’s board meetings throughout the implementation of this Strategic Plan.

3. Donation and Sponsorship Packages for Our Initiatives

Through our board, produce a detailed fundraising process to finance the Organizational Strength and Community Impact Initiatives described in this Strategic Plan. Seek multi-year sponsorships that will provide a reliable level of funding and a solid basis for future budgets. We will integrate these activities into the fundraising process:

- a. A board team will list the philanthropists, locally run businesses, corporations, philanthropic foundations, and other entities our board members and Executive Director will cultivate as potential resource providers.
- b. From the above list, the board team and Executive Director will identify potential matches. They will link our Organizational Strength and Community Impact initiatives to the entities that have the highest potential to serve as donors, sponsors, and grant givers. *See the Appendix of this Strategic Plan for examples of frameworks we may use to match desired supporters with each initiative and to summarize our “value proposition” for each desired supporter.*
- c. Our Executive Director and a board team will develop budgets and “wish lists” each quarter to indicate the current resources and needs for each Organizational Strength and Community Impact initiative.
- d. Our Executive Director and any seasoned fundraisers on our board will periodically teach and advise the rest of our board on ways to identify and interact with potential givers to MVEF.

² For ease of reading, “alumni” refers to past students, teachers, and staff of the Mt. Vernon schools.

What We Will Need

1. List of individuals and groups to contact in order to build our audience
2. Paraphernalia we can auction/sell, space to run events, and volunteers to stage events
3. Involvement of board members and other volunteers in our outreach to potential supporters; these individuals may meet with others, give talks about education and MVEF, write to friends and colleagues, identify people for us to meet, etc.
4. Research to learn how to reach past students of MVCSC
5. Team to develop sponsorship packages and contact potential sponsors

Bring Classroom and Community Voices onto Our Team

What We Will Do

1. **Student Involvement on Our Board and Committees**

Interview Mt. Vernon High School students for board and committee roles. Participating students will gain leadership experience and will be able to comment on the attractiveness and practicality of ideas our board and committees are considering. They will also keep us attuned to the pulse of student life and the needs and wishes of students.

2. **Teacher and Staff Involvement on Our Board and Committees**

Enable our board's president to appoint teachers to the board. In addition, make committee roles available to teachers and staff from local schools. Teachers will contribute insights about the attractiveness and quality of ideas we are considering, the needs and wishes of teachers and students, and opportunities to make the most of the initiatives we run.³

3. **Community Involvement on Our Board and Committees**

As noted in this plan's section on "Board Member Integration and Growth," we will seek a diversity of perspectives on our board and committees. As we will do with students and teachers, we will also be intentional about populating these governing bodies with people whose backgrounds include business, social service, or other fields that would give us a holistic understanding of the educational aspirations and resources in the community at large. Each year our board will review the composition of MVEF's board and committees, and then identify priorities for the recruitment of future members.

What We Will Need

1. Updates to our bylaws to provide for the establishment of these board roles
2. Committee structures that will enable us to make the most of participants' skills and perspectives
3. Publicity in the schools, business circles, towns, and the social sector to raise awareness of these opportunities and to describe the selection processes for board and committee members
4. Interviewers to evaluate candidates for board and committee positions

³ We will design these positions to minimize the chance of a conflict of interest – e.g., we may deem teachers ineligible to compete for grants from MVEF if they serve on our board or committees, in which case we may provide initiative-oriented grants as a matter of course for those teachers who serve. Our board will develop the details for such arrangements in collaboration with our Executive Director.

Resonate with Our Audiences

These initiatives will lead community members to appreciate the purpose, quality, and impact of our work, and will enable them to build lasting and positive relationships with each other.

Communicate a Clear Identity

What We Will Do

1. Brand Identity Design

Create a new identity system for MVEF that may include a new logo, symbols, color palette, font hierarchy, vocabulary, and other elements that will give MVEF an attractive, distinctive, representative, and consistent appearance and tone.

2. Orientation Sessions

Run information sessions, produce publications, and use other communications to orient new and seasoned MVCSC staff and community residents about what MVEF is and does. These sessions will be especially helpful now since this we will now champion, more than ever before, a) strategically designed rather than ad hoc educational experiences, b) learning partnerships that link practitioners and residents to activities on campus, and c) support for professional development and the importance of holistic and global perspectives within and beyond school.

3. Organizational Culture

Cultivate and convey the values and spirit of MVEF as an organization that is trustworthy, responsible, proactive, collaborative, creative, and inquisitive. Communicate high standards for the educational experiences we intend to catalyze and support.

What We Will Need

1. Visual design team and the means to update our stationery, signage, shirts, online presence, etc. to reflect the new brand identity
2. Prominent spaces on campus and beyond to highlight MVEF's initiatives, impact, and values
3. Publications that draw attention to our programs and team
4. Communications channels with real estate offices in order to spread the word about MVEF through publications and real estate agents

Celebrate Our Heritage

What We Will Do

1. **Alumni Gatherings**

Host gatherings for past students, teachers, and staff of MVCSC schools. Give participants opportunities to socialize with each other, do service projects together, and meet with members of the current campus community. These gatherings may also inspire alumni to sign up for volunteer roles at MVEF or donate to MVEF.

2. **Hall of Fame**

Create a “Hall of Fame” to recognize those who have become great role models. Use public events, pictures, videos, plaques, scrapbooks, etc. to highlight the impact of each person who has become a member of our Hall of Fame. Hall of Fame induction ceremonies will also enable us to publicize the ways we connect learners with role models, which may in turn inspire community members to give financial support to our initiatives.

3. **Donor Recognition**

Create methods of recognizing donors to MVEF: Printed and online media, certificates, plaques, photo spreads, etc. Donor recognition will demonstrate our gratitude for financial gifts and make it easy for other potential donors to understand why and how to give to MVEF.

What We Will Need

1. Leadership team to stage 10th Anniversary and 50th Anniversary events, with these events ideally being embedded in programs we already do
2. Contact information for past students, teachers, and staff of MVCSC schools; at schools’ athletic events, music and theatre performances, PTO meetings, and other events, ask attendees to summarize their contact info and their prior involvement with Mt. Vernon schools
3. Access to space for alumni gatherings, Hall of Fame events and displays, and donor recognition events and displays (MVCSC Administrative Building’s new second-floor Alumni Hall of Fame space may serve this purpose)



Share Stories of Enrichment and Achievement

What We Will Do

1. **Images and Narratives**

Record the activities and experiences of educators, students, and community members via videos, photographs, narratives, and other media. Learn what works well, what does not, and what would be great to communicate to others.

2. **Exit Interviews**

Do exit interviews of students and teachers who have completed our programs. Use the insights as a basis for the continuation, refinement, or elimination of each program.

What We Will Need

1. Checklist to guide our outreach efforts: Be sure to take pictures of people who receive funds from us, take pictures at our events, and post images and stories on social media, on our web site, in printed materials, and in local newspapers
2. Cameras, video cameras, audio recorders, etc.
3. Writers, editors, graphics designers, and desktop publishers
4. Access to students and teachers who have completed our programs



Community Impact Strategies

Encourage and Applaud Excellence

These initiatives will encourage and recognize excellence and ingenuity among educators and students.

Foster Professional Growth for Educators

What We Will Do

1. **Professional Development**

Invest in professional development activities *that will prepare attendees to advance the initiatives described in this Strategic Plan*. Fund access to educational conferences and experiences that will train and inspire teachers, administrators, teaching assistants, and support staff. In addition, bring in practitioners, advisors, and retirees from within and beyond our communities who would be effective speakers, trainers, and mentors, especially for young teachers. Seek opportunities to synchronize such professional development across the district.

2. **Initiative Boosters**

Equip teachers and students with the resources to design, launch, and sustain ambitious campus initiatives. Fund the acquisition of curriculum materials, capital equipment, and durable and/or reusable supplies that enable several years of teaching and learning in pursuit of a transformational goal. Examples might include Purdue + NASA space science simulations; Junior Achievement entrepreneurial enterprises; student-run, campus-based businesses; or other interactive and applied-learning programs. Do not fund activities that would only benefit a few people, exhaust resources inefficiently, or diverge from MVEF's educational priorities. Require those we support to chronicle the results through journals, portfolios, multimedia, or other means of communication.

3. **Teacher Fellowship Information**

Identify fellowship opportunities beyond MVEF that might enable teachers to explore issues in depth beyond campus, such as public citizenship, poverty, crime, community planning, art, manufacturing, entrepreneurship, scientific research, or other topics. Limit our role to that of an information provider rather than a fellowship funder, recognizing that external organizations have more personnel and finance means to award fellowships.

What We Will Need

1. Knowledge of professional development programs and speakers
2. Application process plus criteria for the selection of professional development grant recipients
3. Awards judges for professional development grants, fellowships, and initiative boosters
4. Funds for capital equipment and reusable supplies related to Initiative Boosters
5. Summary information about teacher fellowship programs that may be useful for local educators.
6. Ways of observing and recording educational impact

Be a Visible Advocate for Ingenuity and Academic Achievement

What We Will Do

1. **Grant Award Ceremonies**

Stage public ceremonies to announce grant award winners (such as during halftimes at schools' football and basketball games). To encourage the generation of exciting ideas *and* the effective execution of those ideas, issue grants for new concepts, initiatives that are underway and deserve to continue, and initiatives that have proven successful and are primed for replication or expansion.

2. **Thank an Educator + Educator of the Year Awards**

Host public recognition events that applaud passion and ingenuity in education by teachers, administrators, internship hosts, and mentors for students.

3. **Promotion and Support for College Savings Programs**

Raise awareness about Indiana's statewide 529 education savings plan that helps families set aside money for future college costs.⁴ Connect families to Promise Indiana funds for such plans. Explore funding for 529 savings plans that would benefit students who are making notable academic progress during elementary, middle, and high school.

4. **Pitch Competitions**

Stage public competitions in which students, student groups, and teachers pitch their ideas for educational experiences they want to bring to reality. Encourage participants to show how they will integrate concepts from several disciplines (art, business, engineering, literature, science, etc.).

What We Will Need

1. Training sessions with potential leaders and participants in these initiatives to design and define the educational aims, goals, roles, and expectations
2. Competition director and team, drawn from community volunteers, to publicize and stage these competitions, judge competitors, announce awards, and celebrate the results
3. Involvement by community members in the design and execution of each public event; community members may provide music, lighting, photography, art, and/or other amenities to turn each event into a lively experience that attracts, entertains, and inspires community members as well as award contestants and recipients
4. Design and coordination of partnerships with organizations such as Purdue University and Junior Achievement that create and run learning games and simulations
5. Ongoing guidance from Promise Indiana and/or the State Treasurer's Indiana Education Savings Authority, which work together to establish and promote 529 plans in Indiana; and collaboration with HCCF and MVCSC on publicity to help families understand how to participate in 529s

⁴ See <https://www.irs.gov/uac/529-plans-questions-and-answers> for information about 529 plans.



Bring the Community to Campus and Campus to the Community

These initiatives will connect learning opportunities on campus and across local communities.

Make School Welcoming for Lifelong Learners

What We Will Do

1. **Marketing in Multiple Towns**
Publicize the attractions and impact of MVEF and MVCSC via marketing activities in Fortville, McCordsville, and Cumberland that might otherwise overlook our area or feel disconnected from our campuses.
2. **Promotion of Lifelong Learning**
Publicize the value of education for people of all ages. Promote adult learning opportunities in partnership with HCCF, MVCSC, community groups that teach hobbies or skills, online education platforms, and other educators and resources. Encourage adults to learn new subjects together with their children and with fellow adults. Use social and traditional media to highlight adults who are enrolled in higher education or vocational education programs, and to demonstrate how their learning experiences are bettering their lives.
3. **University Bridges**
Recommend university alumni and faculty for the schools to include in events that promote higher education. Such guests could talk about their postsecondary experiences and share advice for prospective future university students of any age.

What We Will Need

1. Knowledge about where adults go in a typical day so we can place advertisements about MVEF and MVCSC in locations that will catch people's attention

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2. Interaction with community members via meet-and-greet gatherings at local restaurants; gatherings of the Fortville/McCordsville and Greenfield Chambers of Commerce; and other social settings.
3. Connections to media and public relations contacts who can spread the word about us
4. Connections to professors, alumni, admissions, and financial aid advisors from universities such as Anderson, Ball State, Butler, Indiana, Indianapolis, IUPUI, Marian, Purdue, and others

Connect Youth and Adults on Journeys of Learning

What We Will Do

1. **Mentorships**
Support a mentoring program through which career centers and/or nonprofits will connect students and mentors who have a shared interest in exploring an academic, artistic, or vocational subject. MVEF will publicize the program and direct potential mentors towards MVCSC. MVCSC will manage the mentorship screening, matches, and mentoring activities.
2. **Career and Academic Exploration Events**
Build a network of representatives from various industries and avocations who will meet with students via career fairs, academic interest fairs, and other organized career and academic exploration events on and off campus. MVEF will identify adults to represent the industries and avocations. MVCSC will coordinate and run the events.
3. **Conversations about Life Beyond School**
Connect community members with local schools that want to host conversations about life beyond school. Such adults can describe their avocations and bring examples of the kinds of activities they do from day to day. Teachers can help students identify the connections between classroom curricula and the community members' work. MVCSC will register the community members and coordinate the logistics for these gatherings.

What We Will Need

1. Discussions with leaders and participants from MVCSC and the community to design and define the educational aims, goals, roles, and expectations
2. Knowledge of local groups that can create and manage mentorships and career or academic fairs
3. Coordination of roles with school counselors and others who may be involved in these efforts
4. Personal connections to individuals of various industries and avocations; individuals may include employed and retired authors, scientists, and other professionals
5. Personal connections to educators in MVCSC who want us to serve as liaisons to the private and nonprofit sectors on their behalf

Consult the Visions and Strategies of Schools and Communities

What We Will Do

1. **Communitywide Strategy Sessions**
Schedule conversations about vision and strategy at least twice a year with each academic or public official whose work could intersect with the aims and needs of MVEF. Discuss the dynamics of life in local communities with Town Managers. Factor those dynamics (population projections, etc.) into our initiatives and outreach.
2. **Civic Knowledge**
Become knowledgeable about initiatives that are happening at the school and in local communities.
3. **Planning with Parents**
Meet with the Parent-Teacher Organizations several times each year to discuss each group's mission, goals, and roles. Compare and coordinate our schedules, marketing outreach, and other logistics to reach and engage students, parents, alumni, and educators.

What We Will Need

1. An open door to participate in school, town, and county planning sessions that are relevant to MVEF and MVCSC, and to comment upon planning drafts in progress
2. Subscriptions to news sources and ties to decision-makers and journalists who can keep us informed about and engaged in strategic decisions
3. Credibility as a “player” in strategic conversations, perhaps through the ways we publicize ourselves, make funding decisions, and involve other civic entities in our initiatives
4. An open door to participate in PTO activities
5. Board members' involvement as liaisons to academic and public officials, PTO leaders, etc.
6. Students' involvement in civic research and community outreach

Unveil the World and Its Wonders

For the “Unveil the World” theme, we will offer several tracks to students. Students will tour and/or work in physical settings such as those listed below, and they will meet with practitioners during such experiences:

Machines and Marvels

Tinkerers

Pens and Poets

Vocals and Visuals

Micros and Macros

Nature and Nurturers

Health and Safety

The following pages describe initiatives that could apply to any of these tracks.

Show How Things Go

What We Will Do

1. **Tour Series**

Enable students to go on multi-tiered industry field trips. MVEF will find contacts at companies to host these trips. MVCSC will handle the logistics of the trips for students and teachers.

- **Machines and Marvels or Tinkers tracks**

Show students how the “value chain” works from the spark of an idea through the design of the product through the manufacturing of the item through the sale of the good through the use in a home or an organization. Lead students on tours of architecture/computer-aided design/drafting studios; building sites/manufacturing plants; ground shipping/air distribution centers; retail destinations; and consumer environments. Discuss the roles of applied sciences, materials, business systems and methods, and logistics.

- **Pens and Poets track**

Reveal the livelihoods of novelists, journalists, copywriters, poets, and others who make a living through their literary eloquence. Lead students on tours of publishing houses, writers’ workshops, news rooms, ad agencies, printing presses, and bookstores. Discuss the range of writing styles and applications, the craft and discipline of writing, and ways the publishing and media industries are evolving.

- **Vocals and Visuals track**

Enable students to see the arts in practice. Run a tour series for students to visit art studios, museums, galleries, and retail spaces, plus music rehearsal spaces, concert halls, recording studios, and music stores. Discuss sound dynamics, composition, color theory, textures, lighting, recording technology, intellectual property, and retail strategy.

- **Micros and Macros track**

Enable students to visit chemistry, biology, and physics labs; tour observatories and amusement parks (to consider the physics of roller coasters and water parks, for example); and discuss theories and applications of math, science, and engineering.

- **Nature and Nurturers track**

Lead students through farms, gardens, greenhouses, nurseries, kitchens, zoos, animal shelters, and landscapes. Discuss the roles of agricultural science, solar energy, animal biology and physiology, and landscape design and materials.

- **Health and Safety track**

Visit health centers and hospitals, veterinary offices, public safety agencies, water treatment centers, and traffic safety centers. Discuss anatomy, physiology, hygiene, conservation, and policies and resources for public safety.

What We Will Need

1. Discussions with potential leaders and participants in these initiatives to design and define the educational aims, goals, roles, and expectations
2. Ability to monitor the quality of the tours
3. Connections to people across the value chain for a given product: Inventors, designers, prototype builders, managers, manufacturers, distributors, sellers, and consumers
4. Connections to writers, journalists, publishers, printing press operators, ad agencies, and bookstore operators
5. Connections to artists and scientists in studios, galleries, and labs
6. Connections to scientists, doctors, veterinarians, gardeners, landscapers, florists, park designers and builders, and public safety officials



Embrace Creativity

What We Will Do

1. **Program Incubation**

Seed the launch and growth of applied learning experiences for youth and adults. Award funds to people and groups that will teach lessons through the creation of things that engage the senses. Here are examples of experiences we may support through funding and connections; MVCSC or other educational groups will run the programs:

- **Imagination and Creation Camps**

Enable youth or adults to attend “learn it, imagine it, make it” camps during afterschool, evening, weekend, and summer sessions. Participants will learn and apply concepts and skills, culminating in the creation of art, experiments, objects, software, or other tangible items.

- **Maker Spaces**

Place learners of any age in places where they will design and build things under the guidance of professionals.

- **Green Growers**

Place learners of any age in places where they will grow, cultivate, and cook things under the guidance of professionals.

2. **Celebrations of Creativity**

Fund the exhibition of items that emerge from the above experiences and/or the staging of talent shows in which MVCSC alumni and other community members demonstrate how they are using their creative skills as broadcasters, musicians, artists, graphic designers, photographers, etc.

What We Will Need

1. Discussions with potential leaders and participants in these initiatives to design and define the educational aims, goals, roles, and expectations
2. Connections to studios, welding shops, “maker spaces,” gardens, farms, etc.
3. Knowledge of alumni and other community members who could demonstrate their creative skills

Promote National and Global Perspectives

What We Will Do

1. **Insights from Travels and Exchanges**

Fund and publicize educational sessions that encourage learners and educators to explore and share insights about our nation and the world. Our aim is to simply catalyze opportunities for learning, hosting, and traveling. Speakers at these sessions may describe their experiences as travelers and exchange students, and/or provide advice and connections for attendees who wish to host or travel through an exchange program.

2. **Cultural Gatherings and Performances**

Fund and publicize cultural learning activities that engage the senses and give participants an appreciation for the traditions, cuisines, and landscapes of other lands. Examples of activities we might support include movie nights, plays, musical performances, dances, or international fairs that broaden residents' awareness of traditions from other parts of the United States or the world. Artists, cultural groups, and other advocates for national and global learning will coordinate and stage the events.

What We Will Need

1. Knowledge of exchange programs, cultural groups, and travelers in order to develop a lively atmosphere for nationally and globally oriented conversations and events
2. Publicity to raise awareness of these programs, plus funds to make cultural events economically feasible for speakers, performers, and attendees



Strategic Planning Process and Acknowledgements

The strategic planning process was a collaborative experience that spanned the first half of 2017. This project progressed under the guidance of Renee Oldham, Executive Director of the Mt. Vernon Education Foundation; Rob Montgomery, Board Director for MVEF; and Bryan Richards, project leader and President of Aspen Impact.

Core planning team included teachers past and present, parents, business representatives, and board members from both MVEF and the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation:

Alyssa Prazeau	Renee Oldham
Anne Dunlavy	Rob Montgomery
Brandon Wiseman	Scott Shipley
Chris Walrod	Shane Robbins
Eric Kammerer	Shannon Walls
Greg Roach	Stacy Griner
Mike Staton	Susan Bennett
Noell Allen	Tom Shaver

MVEF’s board as a whole also participated via periodic discussions and reviews. The Indiana Youth Institute provided financial support for this project.

En route to producing this Plan, our core team performed research and idea generation activities:

- **Consultation with educators and community members:** To elicit ideas and feedback, we conducted individual and small group discussions, online and printed surveys, and field observations with members of MVCSC and the surrounding area.
- **Gathering of community data and plans:** We consulted demographic data for Hancock County and studied the published town plans of communities within the county.
- **Study of effective practices:** We generated additional ideas by researching the programs and operations of high-performance education foundations and other philanthropic foundations around the United States.



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