



**HEALTHY CITIES
TUTORING**

Strategic Plan
2017-2020

Fall 2017

Introduction

In 2017 Healthy Cities Tutoring undertook a strategic planning process to understand our work, consider our challenges and opportunities, examine our mission, define our vision, and develop the best possible path to continue to grow and thrive in alignment with our core values. The Board of Directors (the “Board”) and staff convened multiple working sessions over the course of several months to thoroughly and thoughtfully assure that this Strategic Plan (this “Plan”) sets forth an optimistic--yet realistic--path forward. This Plan is a record of the decisions reached during the planning process. This Plan and the other materials developed during the planning process (see Appendices) shall serve as a guide for the staff, the Executive Director and the Board for the next three years and shall continue to evolve by way of Board review and shall be updated as needed.

Our Work

- **History**

Healthy Cities Tutoring began in San Carlos in 1996 as a dream of school and community leaders seeking to provide support for children and families while promoting citizen participation in the public schools. It was conceived as an opportunity for strengthening the entire community by engaging high school students, parents, retired people, and other adults to invest in the success of our students and schools. Healthy Cities Tutoring was administered as a program of the City of San Carlos until 2010, and was established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 2011.

- **Program Services**

Twenty years after it was first established, Healthy Cities Tutoring has almost 400 volunteers who work one-on-one with students in twelve public and charter schools in San Carlos and Redwood City. At those schools teachers can refer struggling students to the program. The students are matched with a trained volunteer who meets with them each week for about one hour. They work on whatever skill are required to address the individual student’s specific needs. Services are provided for free to the students. A core strength of the program comes from the lasting relationships that are formed between the student and the tutor.

- **Funding Sources**

For the fiscal year 2016-17, Healthy Cities Tutoring’s expenses were approximately \$216,000. Ninety percent of expenses directly fund the program. Approximately 29% of the revenue needed to sustain Healthy Cities Tutoring comes from grants and contracts from local governments and school districts. Another 29% comes from grants from other community partners, corporations and foundations. The remaining 42% of the funds come from private contributions, including money raised during our annual fundraising event.

Our Mission

Healthy Cities Tutoring helps kids who struggle to succeed in school. Community volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to children who find school a challenge to improve their academic success and raise their self-esteem.

Our Vision

Healthy Cities Tutoring is a leading community-based non-profit organization dedicated to providing a one-on-one volunteer tutor/mentor for every student struggling to achieve success in school in the communities we serve. In collaboration with schools, parents, tutors, and the community, Healthy Cities Tutoring is distinctive in its approach and practices, going beyond traditional curriculum-based tutoring by innovatively addressing each student's unique social, emotional, and academic needs. Healthy Cities Tutoring creates an environment where:

- Students look forward to each tutoring session and see their tutor as an ally, champion and mentor. They are engaged in school because they have developed a learning mindset and have improved engagement in learning, confidence, self-advocacy, and communication skills.
- Tutors are high quality. They have a strong sense of purpose and continue to develop and improve their tutoring skills. They see themselves as an integral part of the Healthy Cities Tutoring family and build strong connections with their students, parents, teachers, and Healthy Cities Tutoring staff. They know they are valued for their contribution and feel their own lives are enriched by their experience.
- Teachers see the value of Healthy Cities Tutoring in their classroom. Teachers take ownership for successfully partnering with tutors in support of desired student outcomes. They see tutors as part of the team and proactively communicate on student needs and progress. They respect tutors' time and contribution.

The collective community values Healthy Cities Tutoring and provides funding, volunteers, resources, and advocacy. They see how Healthy Cities Tutoring positively impacts the lives of students, their families and the future of our community.

Our Opportunities and Challenges

Healthy Cities Tutoring has several important opportunities upon which we want to build and grow our impact in the community. We also face certain challenges in the years ahead. An important part of the strategic planning process was to take an honest look at both our strengths and weakness so that we could realistically prepare for the future.

- **Value of Our Service**

Our mission resonates with all of our constituents: students, parents, volunteers, teachers, school administrators, and donors. Healthy Cities Tutoring has a strong reputation in the community for being effective in the help we provide to students and being a great organization with which to volunteer.

Our one-on-one tutoring and mentoring model allows us to customize our support for each child as an individual with academic and social/emotional needs. Healthy Cities Tutoring is a particularly strong and fitting partner for our local school districts as they focus more on personalized learning and the “whole child”.

There is significant opportunity to support more schools and students in the Redwood City School District if we had the resources.

- **Staff**

Our Executive Director founded the program 20 years ago and has deep connections in the San Carlos community. The ED is responsible for overseeing the fundraising, marketing, finances, administration and programs using the strategic plan as a guide.

Because of a limited budget, Healthy Cities Tutoring relies on a handful of hard working part-time staff and fifteen dedicated volunteer coordinators. These people are among our greatest strengths. Over the years they have put processes in place that allow our organization to be well connected to our school communities and efficient in our work.

- **Technology**

As the organization has grown, our productivity has been greatly impacted by out-of date technology. We expect that updating our database, using a modern contact management solution, and establishing a social media presence will have immediate positive effect on our ability to efficiently communicate with our constituents and have better insight into our program services.

- **Board of Directors**

The role of the Board in leading initiatives, fundraising and outreach is an area to be better defined and improved.

- **Tutors**

Our volunteer tutors are a truly amazing resource. Tutors report to us that their role is very satisfying and that they get good support from Healthy Cities Tutoring. Many of them stay with us for years and some take on more than one student.

Every year we attract more tutors, but find it harder as competition for volunteers grows and as we expand into Redwood City where the demand for our service is higher and our connections to the community are not as established. We are fortunate to have many parents of school aged children willing and able to volunteer their time to support their children's schools. In the more economically and culturally diverse Redwood City School District, it has been challenging to recruit parents who can afford to volunteer their time. Since the beginning of the program, we have been very successful in recruiting retired people and high school students to be tutors and need to continue to find new ways to reach people who are motivated to help their community.

- **Funding**

Healthy Cities Tutoring has three months of reserve funding, but does not have an endowment. Each year we raise more money from private sources and are awarded more grants from foundations and corporations. Continued funding from the City of San Carlos has become less certain and public funding sources in Redwood City have not been established.

- **School Resources**

The limited resources of the schools we support directly impacts the quality of the tutoring services we can provide. Most schools do not have sufficient appropriate space for tutors and students to meet. Additionally, many teachers are overwhelmed by the demands of their regular teaching loads. The program relies on the teachers for guidance and support of the tutors providing appropriate learning materials specific to each student. Most of the teachers in our schools appreciate the success that our tutors have in helping their struggling students.

Goals and Strategies

In order for to achieve our vision and address our challenges and opportunities, Healthy Cities Tutoring must focus on the following six goals. These goals define the organization's direction for the next three years. During the planning process we defined the strategies we will use to meet the goals and developed a detailed action plan (see Appendix).

- **Goal: Sustained Growth**

Strategy: Build donor capacity to expand existing programs into neighboring communities.

- **Goal: Partnership and Community Outreach**

Strategy: Educate, engage, and collaborate with parents, school community, and other community organizations to share value, grow visibility, and make connections.

- **Goal: Tutor Success**

Strategy: Develop strategies, processes, and programs for tutor recruitment, retention, and development to ensure consistency, quality, and long term success.

- **Goal: Student Engagement**

Strategy: Create an atmosphere where students feel cared for and connected and stay engaged with Healthy Cities Tutoring over time.

- **Goal: Operational Excellence**

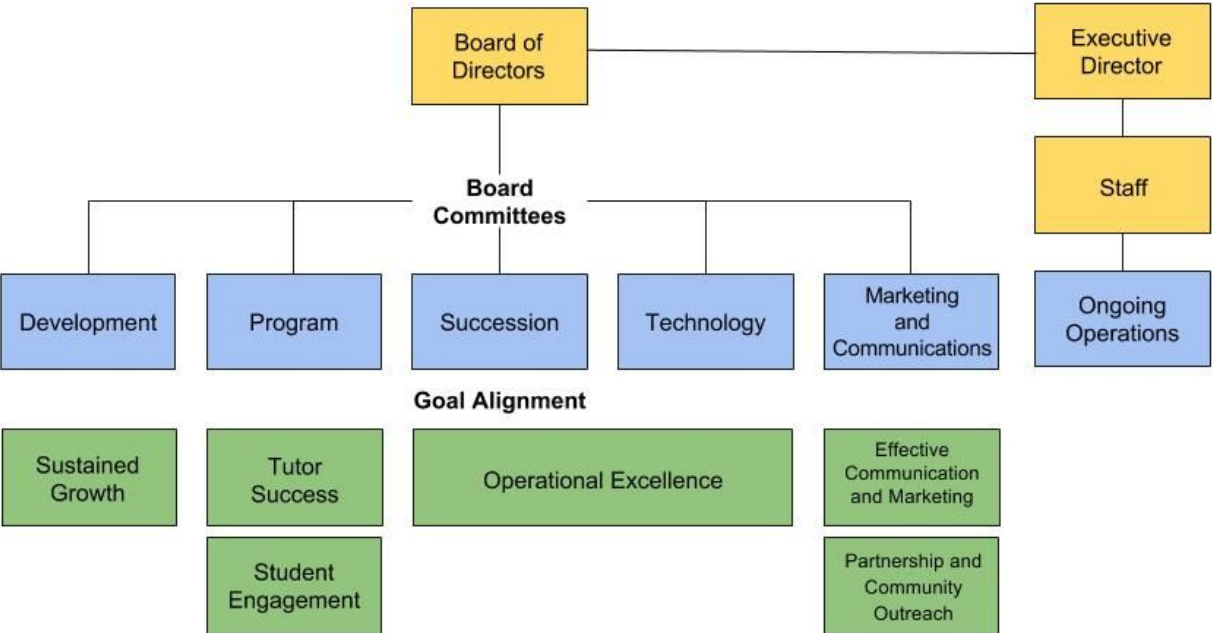
Strategy: Build an optimal structure of people, processes, and systems to enable Healthy Cities Tutoring to be a role model organization and sustain operations into the future.

- **Goal: Effective Communication and Marketing**

Strategy: Increase visibility, collaboration, and partnership through effective internal and external communications.

New Organizational Structure

Prior to undertaking the strategic planning process, the Board did not have a committee structure. As the first priority in connection with the goal of Operational Excellence, the Board has formed committees to align with the goals and strategies developed during the planning process. The committees are responsible for specific strategies to attain the vision of Healthy Cities Tutoring. Each committee is led by a member of the Board and includes the Executive Director and assigned staff members.



Implementation

During the first year of the Plan, Healthy Cities will focus on establishing the baseline plans in each priority area. We will put some quick wins into place, such as updating our technology, better defining roles for the Board members, and start succession planning for the Executive Director. We will also begin to work on building process to meet our longer term program goals.

During the second year of the Plan, Healthy Cities Tutoring will build upon the work in the first year and put longer term goals into place. We expect to begin to see the benefits of the changes we put in place.

In the third year we will complete final action plans such that all programs are running smoothly and goals have been achieved. We will have feedback processes in place so that program can be monitored and updated as needed.

It is our hope that by the end of the third year of this Plan we will have created more opportunities for Healthy Cities Tutoring to provide even greater service to our community.

Strategic Planning Team

Board of Directors

Lauren Pachkowski, President
Roger Bodamer, Vice President
Debbie Denton, Treasurer
Mindy Hill, Secretary
Marianne Jett, Board Member
Jo-Ann Sockolov, Board Member

Staff

Donna Becht, Executive Director
Cris Adair, Development/Volunteer Coordinator
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Cynthia Wiggin, Program Coordinator

Others

Gigi Luke, Facilitator
Allison Liner, former Board Member
Scott Jeffries, former Board Member