

Speak Out 2017 Notes

Mission Statement Ideas/Considerations:

- For girls to have the skills and attitudes to build and improve their community/world. To see where there is need. To find strengths in those around you/them. To nurture the ability to mobilize change for the betterment of humanity.
- Applied learning
- More general statement of mission needed (i.e., inquiry-based learning – will that always be the learning approach?) Something different or better or less prescriptive could emerge
- Students identify and articulate what makes each of them unique
- Aspirational and inspiring but also practical
- “Agents of change” in current statement. What does that really mean?
- Building skills to enable resilience in our girls
- Include stewardship
- Incorporate career and life management type skills
- Balance protection vs over-protection
- Academic learning is essential and soft-skills are important “value-add”
- Develop girls to identify their voice, their space and their confidence
- Good things for students
- Safe environment (physical and psychological)
- Questions about “agents of change?” What is this about? Is this still important? (research on girls’ achievement speak to need for change?)
- Learning about the ability to make mistakes, opportunities to learn from mistakes and to work through mistakes in a safe environment
- Promotes confidence through essential learning and mastery of curriculum
- Integrity and self-esteem/ try to provide authenticity
- Permitting vulnerability to promote growth
- Ensure practical skills are taught/learned
- Safe environment
- Purpose is building girls’ confidence
- Promoting adaptability and preparation for the real world
- Question about inquiry-based learning – is this too specific and will this continue?

Questions Arising from Discussions

- Can there be opportunities at school to celebrate that aren’t all just Go Girls events? My girls miss the fun events they had at other schools. Missing a sense of fun and celebration at the school.
- Why are uniform shirts only white? My daughter is messy and shirts are stained quickly.

- Advisory: My daughter is in grade 6 and is very bored in her group. It's time to shake this up.
- Online summative assessments: This is still somewhat confusing. More communication and notification that they are available for viewing. I don't know how my daughter is achieving compared to what she is supposed to be achieving.
- On-boarding of new families?
- Much more communication about how a child is performing – parents need to know more and know more clearly
- Can we explore the holidays of many cultures to appreciate differences?
- What really is "Go Girls"? Is it foundational? How can we create an engaged, empowered person?

CGS Values: Who are we and what do we care about most?

- Academics
- Real life
- Communication
- Safe environment
- Self-respect
- Positive regard/self-esteem
- Parents' knowledge of student's performance
- Partnership between school and parents
- High expectations
- Voice
- Sense of self but also valuing the importance of community succeeding together
- Doing my best and "being seen"
- Gaining independence
- Celebrating differences
- Fun events
- Community
- Freedom
- Non-judgemental
- Full potential
- Value excellence and personal best
- Relationships
- Passion and perseverance
- Responsibility and confidence
- Fostering internal drive
- Walking the talk
- Inclusion
- Developing critical thinkers
- Raise the bar- striving to build on strengths and not complacent

- Respect
- Kindness
- Global
- Value personal effort not just achievement
- Learning how to learn
- Honouring commitments
- Fostering hope and hopefulness
- Supportive
- Confidence
- Taking responsibility for action or non-action
- Compassion
- Self-knowledge
- Strengths based
- Opportunity to fail the way forward to success
- Taking responsibility for personal action
- Compassion
- Value sameness and differences
- Fairness
- Growth
- Resiliency
- Adaptability
- Voice & Speak Out
- Fairness

Vision – What do we want people to be saying about CGS ten years from now?

Vision needs to speak about the girls not about the school

- Barrier-free for girls to do well (girls can do well without barriers)
- More than just a school without boys Creating an environment where “people” are the focus in any environment
- How to differentiate us? Brand?
- How are we transparent to that point? (To esteemed institution)
- Developing the “whole” student to grow and thrive
- Vision for girls: responsible, confident, socially responsible, resilient, life-long learners
- Reputational: esteem/respected
- Girls know how to learn
- Parents just have to send their girls to CGS
- Is current state of school aligned and on path to the future (i.e., focused on STEM)
- Name of school (girl in title, transgender inclusivity)
- Seek commonalities and value differences
- Differentiation

- Responsible confidence
- Ethical component of leadership/ethical leaders not just leaders
- Responsible confidence
- Cultural safety and resilience = root
- Social responsibility
- If vision is clear then the reputational piece matters
- Aligning to the boys' school (i.e., comfortable with boys)

Speak Out 2017 Evaluation

All comments received on the feedback form are reported below. Note that not every participant completed a form and not all who did complete responded to every question.

1. What did you most enjoy about Speak Out?

The ability to share some of our experiences and then realizing that others have similar thoughts.

Talking openly with parents – seeing the many commonalities in our vision for our children

Opportunity to meet other parents and have my voice heard

Setting the stage with an ice-breaker (established comfort)

Icebreaker- did get us to think differently and get people talking

Enjoyed listening to other parents' comments and thoughts about the school

Opportunity to contribute

The opportunity to share with other parents and the board members

I liked the rotation of having ideas. I quite enjoyed the informal but structured nature of the iterations

Ability to hear the numerous perspectives of the school community

Opportunity to meet other parents

Share “likes” about the school

A great chance to meet other families and board members

Opportunity to share, listen and learn

The opportunity to hear a range of voices and perspectives

Diversity of topics, sense of community, food

2. What did you least enjoy?

Nothing

I felt I wanted more time to explore and understand concerns

The vegetables (kidding, nothing comes to mind)

Nothing

I felt the process for addressing the questions at the “kitchen table” were a bit vague. Came to the table, stared at “vision” and then was like, OK what about it?

Better parent attendance but connections made were excellent

Opportunity to hear the voice of stakeholders

That I did not start in a “box” (just kidding)

Nothing – the entire experience was very enjoyable

Needed more opportunity for feedback, areas of improvement and what’s missing

I didn’t always feel that what I wanted to discuss was appropriate as discussion topics were pre-decided

Would have loved to have more attendees

3. Do you feel that your voice was heard?

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes, and frequently

Yes, I saw my words turn into sticky notes and I saw heads nod and people ask follow up questions

Yes

Yes

Yes, and thank you! Hope the board will work and use the sharing as a base for commitment

Yes, was here to listen

Yes, it is interesting to listen to what parents expect of the school

I do!

Yes

Mostly

Yes

Yes

I will see when I get feedback about this meeting

4. Are you informed about next steps?

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes. Would be helpful if they are reiterated later in writing

Yes, although I know that words lose context when summarized with other thoughts

Yes

Not really clear, but I am hoping the voices will be taken into consideration

Yup

Yes

Yes

Yes

Mostly

Yes

Yes

Yes

5. What would improve Speak Out?

- Looking forward to the follow up from this session and the hope that some changes can be implemented from the feedback given tonight
- More voices/more people participating
- More parents coming out. Perhaps knowing what exactly happens at the event and how they can prepare (i.e., come with ideas for ...)

- As you progress with these, build on past years e.g., valid our journey or “generated some new ideas”
- More participants would help. Think about multiple mediums to market this process of Speak Out
- Need to get more voices – parent voices, video clips/post it notes by email
- Keep teachers and directors present and involved in this
- I think having an opportunity to have some collective discussion on key themes from each table discussion. Would have been useful to have less time in small groups and more time as a collective.
- In addition to discussing the ideas (input for mission, vision, values renewal) also ask for feedback on logistics of the school (e.g., communication tools for parents, functionality of the website etc., I don’t use Twitter so may miss information and the website is very difficult for parents to navigate.
- Website is confusing to parents. Need a one-stop way to get the information we need.
- Attract more parents to attend
- Start/Stop/Continue – parents had more to say
- The group sizes were very good and the mixture of staff, parents and board was just right
- Greater number of participants
- More parents. It was a small representation of school populations
- Facilitate without teachers/staff to promote more openness
- As much of the discussion was premediated (topics decided ahead of time) it would be nice to open up to families in advance to allow input on what families want to talk about
- Continue the journey of open-mindedness
- Sharing other ways that the organization allows for voice. It was very well run. Thank you.
- More meetings like this.