

VANCOUVER TALMUD TORAH STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2021



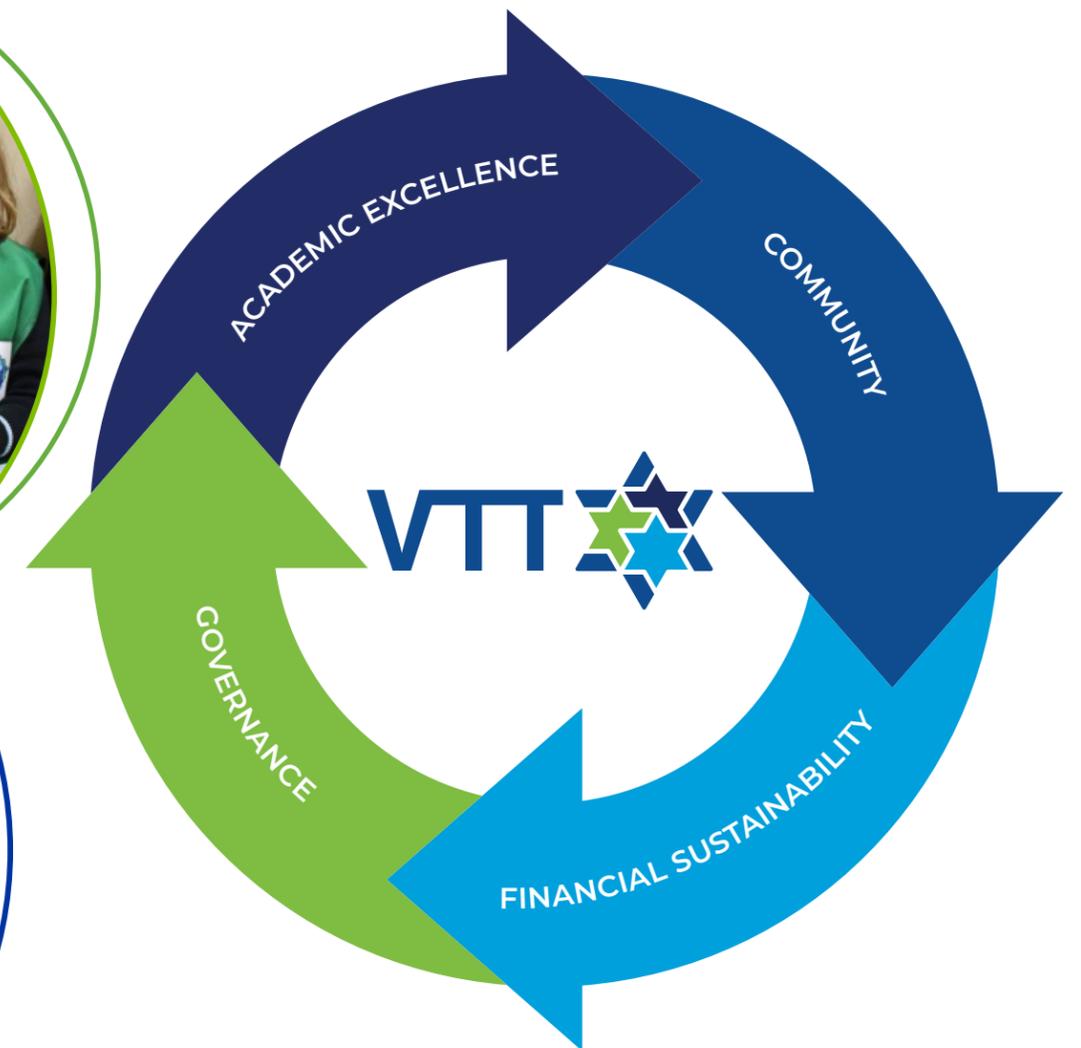


INTRODUCTION

VTT's Board of Directors and the school's Administrative team have engaged in a series of exercises over the last year to develop our new Strategic Plan. The planning process incorporated information received from a variety of stakeholder groups including parents, community members and school faculty. Additionally, VTT is in the final stages of receiving **CAIS** (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools) accreditation and gained valuable insights from the CAIS report issued in the spring of 2018. Feedback from the CAIS report has also been incorporated into this strategic plan. We are pleased to introduce the strategic initiatives that will shape our school for the next 3 years.

This plan has been developed in alignment with the **Mission, Vision and Values of VTT**. Our goal is to attract and retain a vibrant and engaged student body by offering both General and Judaic programming that is relevant, meaningful and forward thinking. The plan is fiscally responsible while being mindful of the current affordability situation in Vancouver, and is focussed on four core strategic initiatives:

- **Academic Excellence**
- **Community**
- **Financial Sustainability**
- **Governance**



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Our primary focus is the success of our students. To that end, we plan to continue to enhance our programming, support our students in their learning, and listen and respond to their feedback. Our goal is to retain existing students and attract new students to a VTT that provides a forward thinking and meaningful educational experience. Paramount to that is the continued support of our faculty to help achieve these goals.

The initiatives in this plan are categorized by academic area.

General Studies

We will enhance our student-centred personalized learning which is aligned with the new BC re-designed Education Plan. We will achieve this through the following:

- Continued development and support of our faculty as they update and design curriculum
- Strengthening our students' numeracy skills leading to greater computational fluency
- Reviewing current uses of technology and its integration across curriculum areas to support and enhance learning

We will provide more academic and social support through:

- The training of teachers and the launch of the "MindUp" program to provide social/emotional support to all students
- Expanded use of the Resource Centre to support individual students in their learning
- Reviewing and assessing the needs of our English Language Learners

Continued development of specialized courses by:

- Continuing to enhance Physical Education, Art and Music courses
- Developing programming in the Learning Commons

General and Judaic Studies

We will continue to integrate General and Judaic Studies programs to provide a richer academic experience by:

- Continued collaboration of Judaic and General Studies teachers to integrate their programs as they naturally occur in the curriculum
- Integrating STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) programming into Judaic studies

Judaic Studies

We will conduct a full review of our Judaic Studies program in the first year of the strategic plan. The outcomes and goals determined by this review will be measured and achieved by:

- Canvassing our parent population on the desired scope and depth of Judaic studies for their children
- Based on the findings, consider the revision of the program and train the teachers appropriately
- Focus on enhancements to Tefila curriculum, Torah instruction and Hebrew Studies
- Continuing to support teachers in integrating critical thinking skills in their pedagogy
- Clearly articulate standards and exit goals for all programs

Creation of an Israel Studies Unit for Grades 6 and 7

- Support the General and Judaic teachers to create and deliver this unit

Prepare VTT Students for Success

We will monitor VTT graduates as they continue their studies by:

- Developing and implementing a student survey to allow students to assess their academic progress and preparedness for their next level of education
- Using the information to help inform future VTT programming

Faculty

VTT takes great pride in its faculty and is firmly committed to attracting and retaining the very best teachers for students in our competitive market.

We will recruit, retain and develop mission-appropriate faculty for General and Judaic Studies. In particular we will:

- Enhance professional growth plans and evaluation practices resulting in improvement to pedagogy and student experience
- Continue to provide leadership and mentorship opportunities

We will continue to obtain teacher feedback through:

- The refinement and implementation of our teacher survey that allows teachers to assess their professional growth, job satisfaction and captures their ideas for improvement





COMMUNITY

VTT is part of a much larger community, and we plan to engage with the community-at-large to a much greater extent through the measures outlined below.

We will provide more focussed communications by:

- Defining key stakeholders in our community
- Developing a comprehensive communications strategy that is tailored to each stakeholder group

We will engage with the community-at-large by:

- Identifying and liaising with key, strategic community partners

We will re-engage with VTT alumni by:

- Upgrading our database of VTT alumni
- Showcasing VTT alumni in community events

We will expand opportunities for community feedback by:

- Adopting a strategic and measured timeline for consultation with students, teachers and parents



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Board recognises that affordability is a critical and sensitive issue in Vancouver. We want to keep existing students at VTT and attract new students. The strategic plan outlines how VTT will remain financially sustainable while offering a rich and meaningful academic experience to our students. The new campus requires an innovative approach to debt management and building maintenance, and the Board is committed to its fiscal responsibility.

We will enhance our financial forecasting by:

- Modelling and updating a rolling three-year forecast taking various scenarios into account
- Developing a building condition and capital expenditure plan
 - Striving to balance the budget annually

We will strive to make VTT affordable to our stakeholders by:

- Continuing to refine how we provide Tuition Assistance (TAC) to those who need it
- Using data analysis to enhance our Alternate Discount Program (ADT) to retain and attract more families to VTT



We will actively engage in long range balance sheet planning by:

- Executing on our plan to burn the mortgage on VTT
- As the mortgage balance is reduced, we will begin rebuilding the school's "rainy day fund"

We will engage our donor base by executing on a Development and Fundraising plan that includes:

- Building an effective development team
- Building and growing our annual giving program
- Enhancing our annual fundraising events
- Expanding the number of major donors by engaging more deeply with them
- Growing and enhancing our donor stewardship program
- Launching VTT's legacy giving program to create an endowment fund

GOVERNANCE FOR LONG-TERM VIABILITY

The long-term viability of VTT is a priority for the Board. Long-term strategic planning is crucial to ensure that VTT endures for generations.

We will:

- Develop succession plans for the Heads of School and members of the Administration
- Strike and mandate a Risk Management Committee to continually scan all aspects of operations to minimize financial, managerial and reputational risks
- Strike and mandate a Long-Range Planning Committee to focus on forces that may enhance or impede VTT's plans

NEXT STEPS

This strategic plan is VTT's roadmap for the next three years. The Board will strike a Strategic Plan Monitoring Committee to ensure the successful execution of this plan, and will report back to the community on our progress.

We are confident that the measures undertaken over the next three years will enhance student success and ensure that VTT remains a strong, vibrant centre of Jewish education.



A VANCOUVER TALMUD TORAH GRADUATE WILL:

- V** Value a life that is informed by Torah, as well as Jewish traditions, rituals and culture and develop a strong moral compass grounded in Jewish ethics and teachings.
- T** Take responsibility for self, family and community and will understand their obligation to foster and model the principles of Tikkun Olam as proud members of K'lal Yisrael (the Jewish community).
- T** Think critically, continuing to develop analytical and problem-solving skills, while applying a love of learning to the lifelong pursuit of knowledge and new ideas.

