

Kalidasa

Youth Initiative High School

Vol. 17, Issue 3



LOOK BOTH WAYS BEFORE
YOU CROSS THE STREET

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Your parents always told you to look both ways before you crossed the street, and at Youth Initiative High School we still live by that lesson. Not only do we literally look both ways before crossing the street (whilst always using the crosswalk) we do it metaphorically as well. We aren't the kind of people who like change for change's sake, but we're not afraid of it either. We take stock of our environment and our resources, create a plan, and make our way for greener pastures. We've looked back at the last school year and written up an annual report. We've done years of data collection, discussion, and meditation and we've created a comprehensive five year plan to move our school into the future. We want to share both of these (and a few other things) with you here. Like good little boys and girls we've made sure that the light is green and that there are no cars coming from either side. So why did the little independent school cross the road? Read on and find out.

365 DAYS

Annual Report: 2011 — 2012

Every year is a good year at Youth Initiative High School, and we're not just saying that. This year was no exception.

Nearly everyone involved in our school believes firmly in the invaluable asset that it is to the communities, families, and students that it touches. So in a sense, our continued existence is itself the mark of our success. With so many good people involved, and with such high-minded ideals, the spirit of our school gives the political phrase *du jour* "too big to fail" a whole new meaning. But the truth is that we could fail and the only thing that keeps us from doing to is the tireless work of our staff, our parent and community volunteers, and our wonderful students.

There are a million different ways to measure our success, yet so many of them are unquantifiable. There is no "inspiration index", no metric for moments of enlightenment, no average rate of return on the seeds of knowledge and compassion planted by our work. However, we are constantly evaluating ourselves, and constantly striving to improve the quality of the education that we provide and to ensure that this education is available to all who desire it, now and into the future.

Please join us in a review of our work in 2011-2012:

Annual Report from our Faculty

Prepared by Program Administrator, Jacob Hundt

During the 2011-2012 school year, the faculty undertook a major set of revisions to the school's curriculum and schedule. The core objective of these changes was to carve out more time in schedule of most school days for artistic work and, especially, for manual and practical skills. English and Social Studies work was moved into the rotation of morning main lesson blocks, while the time in the afternoon was used to introduce a set of new classes emphasizing the hands: auto mechanics, home utilities and sustainable energy, sewing, doll making, soap making, robotics, woodworking, and wilderness skills, in addition to existing classes in nutrition, agriculture, drafting and 2 hours of music for each student each week. These changes were brought about in part because of Faculty observations of the growing impact of digital technologies in the lives of students. All the extra time being spent in the essentially mental "virtual" world needs to be counterbalanced by a more daily engagement with the physical world and the will-developing properties of practical manual tasks. At the end of the first year of this experiment, we can tentatively describe this format as a success. It will continue in an evolved form in 2012-2013.

In other areas, the Faculty was focused primarily on clarifying and insisting upon shared standards for behavior, timeliness, and attitudes within the classroom and school more generally. Starting at the beginning of the year YIHS instated a policy explicitly tying class grading to student attendance and timeliness. This policy was reviewed and revised with student input during the year. The Faculty also completed a major revision of the Independent Study process and created a comprehensive Faculty mentoring structure. In conversation with the students and Administrative Group, the Faculty also participated in the creation of school policy on cell phones and other electronic devices and began a discussion of how to invigorate Morning Circle.

All in all, about 35 people taught or co-taught classes at YIHS this year, representing a remarkable cross section of our rich and dynamic local community. This group was led by a core group of about 8 Faculty members who held the school on a daily and weekly basis through Faculty meetings, Care Groups, Student/Faculty meetings, and a hundred different daily interactions with students, parents, community members, and other Faculty. Faculty played a key role in 2 well-attended Faculty Showcase Events and 2 memorable public Art Nights, not to mention circus and play performances, dinners and fundraisers, field trips and more. Much of the time needed to put on these events was donated and we are deeply grateful for the generosity of so many in making Youth Initiative High School happen.



A new year and new class of freshman; welcome the class of 2017! From left to right: Jaia Wilbour, Arlo Townsley, Maris Bock, Isis Anacker, Penny Zinky, Gianna Leonards, Lydia Turino, Lauren Woody, Will Sherwin, Mari McPheron (not pictured: Althea Sky-Evans, Erin Hanson)

Annual Report from our Board of Trustees

Prepared by the President of the Board of Trustees, Matthew J. Voz

The board continues to forge its identity within our evolving organization, remaining relevant but being careful to let our staff deal with the day-to-day operations of our school. In the coming year we look forward to protecting and upholding the values of our institution by ensuring that they are carried out with vitality and rigor, and to driving our organization, its teachers, its students, and its families to reach their highest potential.

The YIHS Board of Trustees enjoyed a year marked by stability and steady progress while sowing the seeds of a revolutionary facilities change. There are five board mandated subcommittees responsible for various aspects of school and board business. Here is who they are and what they accomplished this year:

Facilities:

Together with the whole board, the administration, and the development office, our school has finally decided to give up any intention of purchasing the Landmark Center, the building whose 3rd floor we currently occupy. We have taken the first baby-steps toward becoming the owners (and probably builders) of our own facility!

Long Range Planning:

Long Range Planning has finished the extensive dialogue with our members and committees and has constructed a five year plan with eight strategic goals. This document will give our staff and our members a clear blueprint for building a stronger more sustainable organization.

Sports:

YIHS had a number of breakthroughs in scholastic sports this year. We forged successful cooperatives with Viroqua High School in Football, we sent one of our students to the state track meet in our cooperative with VHS, and we inaugurated YIHS' first ever WIAA certified team – Girls' Volleyball!

Development & Finance:

The board also oversees the financial health of the school through regular updates from the Development and Finance committees. Once again this year, members of these committees worked hard to ensure our unique education is available for all who desire it. (see below).

Annual Report from the Development Office

Prepared by Development Director Shawn Lavoie

Youth Initiative has a funding structure that is like no other independent school. Roughly 40% of our revenue comes from fundraising and donations: from our friends, extended families, and local businesses.

This year we exceeded our overall revenue goal, primarily through expanding the Matching Gift Circle. This year we had 19 Matching Gift members who gave a total of \$49,029. We also sent out a winter appeal letter, an appeal with our Spring Kaleidoscope and with the addition of unsolicited gifts brought in \$18,010 in donations.

The third revenue stream for the Development Office is *The Whole Plate: A Return to Real Food*, a nutrition curriculum created by teacher Jane Siemon. Overall, The Whole Plate through grants, sales and teacher training registrations brought in \$15,204.

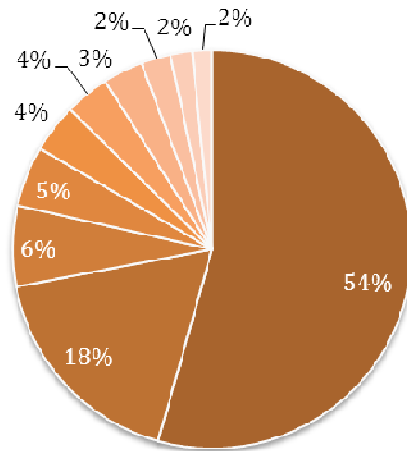
Highlights from Development:

- Art Night and Donor Appreciation Event combined at the Rooted Spoon
- Kaleidoscopes: 4 full, vibrant Kaleidoscopes came out this year thanks to the guiding editorship of Matt Voz. The themes for this year's editions: the 9th grade, Behind the scenes at YIHS, Gratitude, and Technology.
- Faculty Showcase evenings: Several of our teachers gave a sampling of their courses for the public.

Report from our Treasurer

Prepared by Treasurer Anna Jo Doerr and the Finance Committee

Income
\$278,062

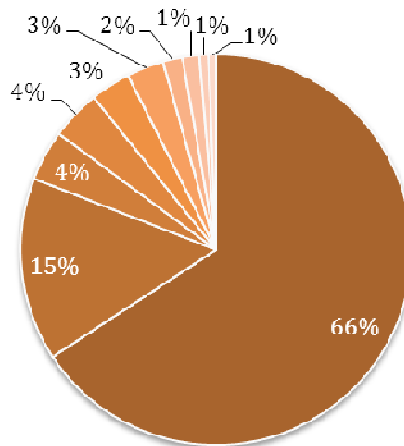


- Tuition and Fees
- Student matching gifts
- Donations
- Fundraising/Students
- Grants & Fees
- Donated teaching
- Fundraising/Parents
- Other program income
- In-kind contributions
- The Whole Plate sales

Our financial results in 2011-12 were positive. Revenue projections were exceeded for the year due to increased development and fundraising efforts. The Board of Trustees approved a budget in September 2011 with a negative ending balance and proudly finished the fiscal year with a net operating surplus. The successful completion of the school's 16th year demonstrates that our school is on steady financial footing and poised for new developments.

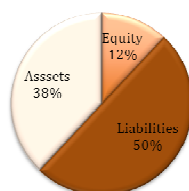
Income exceeded expenses by \$9,803 with our total operating income being \$278,062. The students exceeded their fundraising goal by \$1,678. The matching gift program that is directly tied to student fundraising surpassed its goal by \$13,029. Donated teaching hours annually impact our budget positively and this year that amount totaled \$10,003. The Whole Plate curriculum sales and trainings also have continued to positively contribute to the school's revenues. Cash flow over the course of the year was notably improved from previous years due to increased fundraising activities in the fall, early tuition payments, and prepayment from some of our matching gift donors.

Expenses
\$268,259



- Payroll
- Building Costs
- Equipment
- Instructional Supplies
- Office Expenses
- Other program expenses
- Other Expenses
- Conferences & Travel
- Membership dues
- Advertising/Marketing

Balance Sheet



Assets **\$133,568**

Liabilities **\$101,530**

Equity **\$ 32,039**

Thank You to Last Year's Donors

Advanced Electric Equipment
Ben and Julee Agar
American Family Insurance of Westby
Dan Atwood
Diane and David Banner
Mary and Neil Bard
Alvin and Nita Barshevsky
Harold Bergan and Susan Hundt-Bergan
Lars Bergan
Paul Bergquist and Carole Austin
Edwin and Charlotte Berndt
John Bossard
Tony and Reese Brenengen
Bill Brooke Realty
Ann Buche Conroy
Martha Buche and Jim Pattison
Dan and Heidi Burke
Elizabeth Caldwell
William Calkins
Debra Caspers
Mary and Steve Christenson
Citizens First Bank
Dan and Sally Colacino
Cox Builders
Bruce and Judith Cox
Dairyland Printing
Barbara Danner
Fred Dick
Marjorie Dick
Thomas and Doris Dolan
Patricia Dougherty

Elegant Stone Products
Barbara Evans
Evenstad Tax Service
Flower Basket
George Franklin
Anne-Marie and Wil Fryer
Therese Glatzhofer
Paul and Paula Grenier
Gundersen Lutheran
G.W. Hagerty
James Hallberg and Jenny Cain
Kevin and Shari Hauser
Deborah and Daniel Horan
John and Eileen Horan
L.J. and F.K. Horan
Marjorie Horan
Barbara Huckabay
Silas Hundt
Kenneth and Virginia Johnson
Mary Kehoe and Craig Scott
Kickapoo Coffee
Nicholas Korn
A.J. La Mar
LaBelle Lodge No. 84
Peg and Rick LaMartina
Mary and Richard Lofton
Theresa Marquez
Elizabeth Mellin
Timothy Mellin
Marcee and Mark Murray-King
Debra Nadeau
Anonymous Local Family
William Nagler

Kerri Cleven
Bernard and Darlene Obos
Organic Valley
Paper, Scissors, Stone
Paul E. Stry Foundation
Robert Polski
Prairie State Legal Services
Francis Pratt
Conrad and Marjorie Rehbach
Kevin Rodolfo and Kathleen Crittenden
Rotochopper, Inc.
George Siemon
Jane Siemon
Donna Simmons and Paul Newton
Sleepy Hollow Auto
Monica Sutherland
Madelyn Townsley
Susan and William Townsley
Tulips
United Way of Johnson County
Erin Varney
Anonymous Local Business
Viroqua Food Cooperative
Alexander and Jennifer Wade
Westby Cooperative Credit Union
Wheaton PSLS
Kathryn and H. Evan Williams
David and Mara Winningham
Brian and Monica Woody
James Zinky

YIHS Algebra Challenge

Below are some of the problems students have been working on in the Introductory and Intermediate Algebra and Pre-Calculus classes here at the YIHS. Solve each equation correctly and you will be entered in a drawing to win a free YIHS t-shirt! The winner will be announced in the next

Kaleidoscope. Mail submissions to the address on the back of this magazine; and, yes, you do have to show your work!

1. Evaluate the expression where $x = 2$: $|14 - 15| + 22 - (18x \div 6 \cdot 3) - 3x^2 + (2x)^2 - 6 + (36 \div 6 \cdot 2)$
2. Solve for x : $3x - 5y = 5$
3. A lighthouse beacon is 400 feet above sea level, and the sea around it is obstructed by rocks extending as far as 300 feet from the base of the lighthouse. A sailor on a ship's deck 20 feet above sea level measures the angle between his horizontal and the line of sight on top of the beacon and finds it to be 50 degrees. Is his ship clear of the rocks?

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

Not Just for Chairman Mao and Comrade Stalin Anymore!

A wise man once told me that planning hasn't been important since the '70s. I guess with cellular phones and the well-publicized failure of the Soviet economy, perhaps that statement is becoming truer every day. On the other hand, Al Capone once said that if he had to choose between a boatload of money, a gun, or a plan, he would choose the latter.

It's not often that our values line up with those of notorious gangsters, but in this case, it looks as though they do. We love plans, too, Al. The YIHS has been through a rigorous process of information gathering and gestalt-monitoring in order to devise this Long Range Plan. Through the hard work of just about everyone (most notably the Long Range Planning Committee) we have a vision of where we want to be five years from now and a pretty darn good idea of how we're going to get there. So without further ado, here is a digest of what we'll be doing for the next five years. If you want more information, visit our website and download the full document.

-Matthew Voz, President of the Board of Trustees

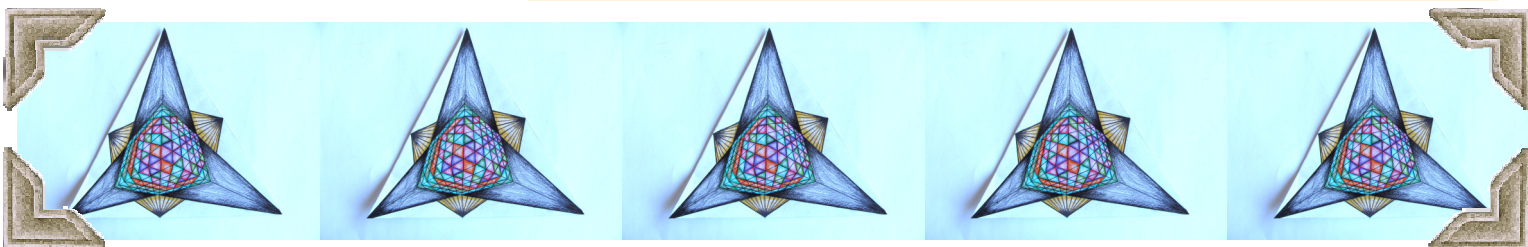
Goal: To Design & Build a New Facility & Campus

After years of debate and hesitation, we have embraced the fact that fundamental to advancing our goals is acquiring and creating a physical space that clearly represents our vision and gives us a sense of ownership and autonomy. The YIHS desires to plant gardens, erect workshops, and have complete control of the academic space we occupy.

OBJECTIVES:

- ⊙ YIHS will hire an external firm to carry out a feasibility study for the construction of a new school facility
- ⊙ The Board will form and populate a Capital Campaign Committee to procure the necessary funds for the construction of a new school
- ⊙ Land, suitable for the academic and financial goals of the school, will be purchased.
- ⊙ A project manager will be hired by the Board and will oversee the design and build efforts in collaboration with staff, parents, and students.
- ⊙ Construction will be carried out within the academic and financial requirements and goals of the school.

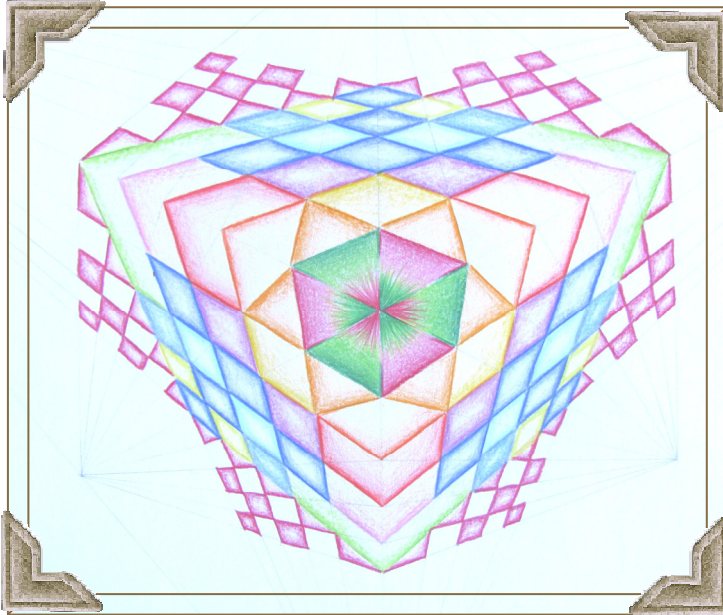
TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST:
\$1.1 MILLION



Images in this section provided by the 12th grade Projective Geometry Class

Goal: To Achieve an Enrollment of 60 Students

From an enrollment of 40 students in 2011-12, our goal is to increase our enrollment to 60 by 2015-16. To achieve this goal, we will focus on Marketing, Recruitment and Retention, and Development of a Boarding Program.



OBJECTIVES:

- ⚙ Applicants will be asked to produce a portfolio as part of the admissions process.
- ⚙ Clear guidelines for student dismissal will be drafted for use in the Care Group process.
- ⚙ The Development Committee will host annual panel discussions on relevant issues involving the wider community.
- ⚙ Shared marketing opportunities with Pleasant Ridge Waldorf will be identified and pursued.
- ⚙ A May application deadline will be promoted to applicants.
- ⚙ Development Committee will organize a series of events and outreach endeavors that include parent teas, presentations to 8th grade parents, open houses, etc.
- ⚙ Development Committee will invite 7th and 8th grade families to relevant YIHS events.
- ⚙ Faculty will redouble its efforts in making service and ambassadorship in the community a vital part of the curriculum.
- ⚙ Sports committee and Administrator will develop a clear agreement with VAS regarding sports co-ops in order to increase athletic opportunities for our students.
- ⚙ Faculty Chair and Administrator will meet with Superintendent and relevant bodies to develop a clear agreement with Viroqua Public Schools about the transfer of YIHS credits.
- ⚙ A Boarding Program will be implemented in three phases:
 - ⚙ Phase I:
 - ⚙ Development Committee and Administrator will create a list of 5-7 local host families.
 - ⚙ Finance committee will decide on an appropriate tuition for boarding students.
 - ⚙ Faculty will consider the educational needs of boarding students.
 - ⚙ Development Committee will build relationships and setup regular communication with the eight regional Waldorf grade schools.
 - ⚙ Phase II
 - ⚙ Development Committee and Administrator will research a residential dorm facility and its legal and insurance intricacies.

- ⊙ Facilities Committee will search for suitable building.
- ⊙ Personnel committee will begin searching for a boarding program coordinator and for dorm parents.
- ⊙ Phase III:
 - ⊙ The school will implement boarding program with family-stay and dormitory options for 10-15 boarding students.
 - ⊙ Facilities committee will choose a suitable residential dorm facility.
 - ⊙ Personnel committee will hire dorm parent.

TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST: \$255,000

Goal: To Realize Effective Local and National Marketing

Our web and print publishing should reflect both who we are as a school and what we hope to become. We plan to create a brand and unify our presentation materials, and to spread our net farther into the world.

OBJECTIVES:

⊙ Development Committee will create a marketing task force comprised of students, staff, parents, and at least one marketing professional and give it a set of directives and deadlines.

- ⊙ Marketing Task force will generate a number of branding options that embody the values of the school and send these to committees for comment.
- ⊙ Development Committee and Faculty will collaborate in organizing at least two public visual or performance art shows per semester.
- ⊙ Development Committee will update promotional materials to focus on post-secondary educational successes, college prep, our humanities program, the arts, innovative pedagogy, and Waldorf connection through print media and the internet.
- ⊙ Development Committee will update or create promotional materials in accordance with the themes of the brand.
- ⊙ Development Committee will develop a marketing campaign promoting a YIHS boarding program that targets schools in the Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Madison, and LaCrosse areas.
- ⊙ Development Committee will develop a national marketing presence through print media, advertisement and other national networks.

TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST: \$8,000

Goal: To Implement a Comprehensive Orientation Program

With our unique, participatory school structure and focus on youth empowerment, we see a need to better inform incoming parents and students about our philosophy and operations, providing them with the tools to take initiative within the organization.

⚙️ The Faculty Chair will draft and carry out annually, with the help of other core faculty, a comprehensive teacher orientation program.

⚙️ The faculty will develop a YIHS “Governance 101” course and implement for all students.

⚙️ The course will outline opportunities for student involvement in school, educate students on parliamentary procedure, and provide students with a platform to actively discuss the concept of student initiative.

⚙️ The Board and the parents will devise a strategy for educating and empowering parents in the ways that they can participate in the evolution of the school and in the quality of their students’ education.

⚙️ Review the Vision and Purpose and Mission Statements of the school each year and propose alterations when this is deemed appropriate.

OBJECTIVES:

TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST: \$0

Goal: To Attain Full AWSNA Membership

The Youth Initiative High School is a unique institution built on the strong self-reliance of our rural community and on the perception of human development fostered by Waldorf Education. As we grow, we seek to fully explore how we fit into the Association of Waldorf Schools and how a better understanding of Anthroposophy can inform our work as a high school.

⚙️ A three-year plan will be created, maintaining our “developing” status with the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.

⚙️ A decision will be made between full membership through AWSNA accreditation or through the self-study/peer review process.

⚙️ We will submit a formal letter of request for full membership candidacy.

⚙️ We will create a team to lead the self-study or accreditation process in collaboration with our AWSNA advisors.

⚙️ We will complete the self-study or accreditation process.

⚙️ We will submit completed documents to AWSNA.

OBJECTIVES:

TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST: \$5,000

Goal: To Grow & Develop our Full Time Staff

As the center of the academic experience, the YIHS Faculty commits to self-development and to prepare itself to mentor the part-time teachers we so value from our community. Our goal is to have five full-time staff members - comprising one administrator and department heads for Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Fine Arts - and to increase their level of understanding about Anthroposophy and Waldorf Education. We do this to ensure an intimate class size with a student/teacher ratio of 12-15 to 1.

OBJECTIVES:

- ⚙ Personnel Committee will create a rubric of qualification preferences in the hiring and evaluation process which can be used to compare and discuss potential teaching candidates.
- ⚙ Faculty will identify a group of qualified and interested YIHS parents and faculty to begin the work of developing an in-house short course on Anthroposophy fundamentals and Waldorf pedagogy.
- ⚙ This group will set curriculum and fully staff the first year's short course.
- ⚙ Personnel Committee will create five ideal job descriptions without regard to current personnel using paragraph seven of the Long Range Vision as a guide.
- ⚙ One faculty member will be enrolled in a month-long, accredited Waldorf teacher training until their graduation from the program.
- ⚙ The school will offer the two-week Waldorf Pedagogy course required of all full-time faculty and encouraged for all part-time faculty.
- ⚙ When enrollment reaches fifty students, we will hire a fifth position to complement the duties of the four full-time staff members already present using the "Ideal Job Description" document.
- ⚙ We will begin requiring and funding continuing education for all full-time faculty in a discipline or philosophy of their choice.

TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST: \$97,000

Goal: To Practice Clarity and Respect in our Communications

Communication between parents, students, and faculty is at the heart of our mission. Our goal is to engage our community in meeting and facilitation training to improve the quality and efficacy of our internal processes.

OBJECTIVES:

- ⚙ Personnel Committee will identify and hire the appropriate consultant to work with the school on developing a custom meeting and facilitation training program. This consultant will lead the initial year long training program.
- ⚙ At least 75% of the school community will participate in the meeting and facilitation training program by the end of the first training period (2013-2014) and repeat annually.
- ⚙ Administrative group will thoroughly map the current communications network at YIHS, including all regular communication methods between all members of the community, identifying gaps and unused or obsolete tools.
- ⚙ Administrative Group will assess what types of school communication platforms and processes work and which do not work, possibly utilizing the hired facilitation consultant.

- ⊗ After assessment they will add, augment, or discard communication systems as deemed necessary.
- ⊗ Board of Directors will publish an Annual Report with information pertaining to all aspects of the school to all members of the community.
- ⊗ The Board and Faculty will review the mandates given to their respective subcommittees and make amendments to ensure accountability and consensus but also to allow for more executive authority to be vested in these committees.

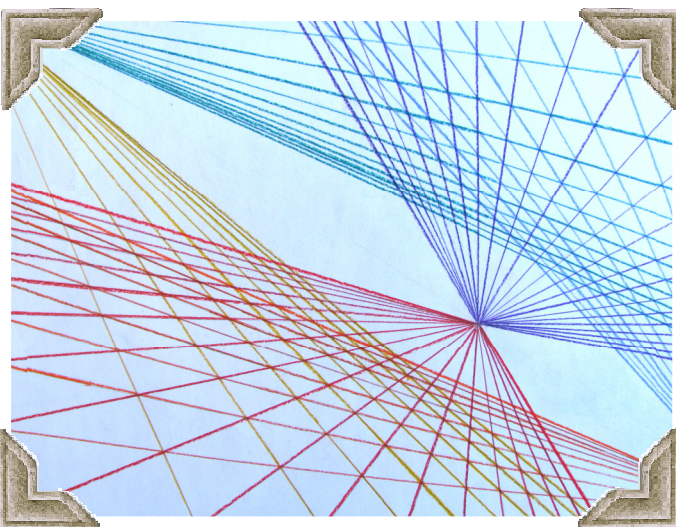
TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST: \$6,000

Goal: To Solidify Our Manual Arts and Outdoor Education Curriculum

With the global proliferation of digital technology and mechanization, we see a sincere need to develop the will of our students through manual arts. The human hand lies behind even the construction of even the most complex virtual reality, and we want our students to be adept and useful with hands, to have practical skills, both traditional and contemporary. In selecting specific curricula we have given priority to those technologies most basic to students' everyday lives.

- ⊗ Faculty will design a system to maintain instructional supplies in good working order and organization including storage and accountability.
- ⊗ The Board will meet with Driftless Folk School board to explore areas of collaboration between the two institutions in the areas of manual arts and outdoor education.
- ⊗ Curriculum committee will make a long term commitment to install an automotive mechanics and a computers class permanently into the curriculum.
- ⊗ Personnel Committee will identify and recruit potentially long-term instructors for these classes. These instructors work with the faculty to create a needs list for each class. This equipment will then be collected through purchase or donation.
- ⊗ Curriculum committee will make a long term commitment to install a carpentry and a fiber arts class permanently into the curriculum.
- ⊗ Personnel Committee will identify and recruit potentially long-term instructors for these classes. These instructors work with the faculty to create a needs list for each class.

OBJECTIVES:



- ⊗ This equipment will then be collected through purchase or donation.
- ⊗ Curriculum committee will evaluate and choose two manual arts or outdoor education courses to add to the permanent curriculum rotation.
- ⊗ Personnel Committee will identify and recruit potentially long-term instructors for these classes. These instructors work with the faculty to create a needs list for each class. This equipment will then be collected through purchase or donation.

TOTAL 5-YEAR ESTIMATED COST: \$15,000

THE STARTING LINE

This year the YIHS hired Dave Hibbard-Rode to play a substantial role in the everyday operations of the school. He joins Jacob, Liz, Matt, and Bean as the fifth employee at YIHS that shows up every morning, helping to create an atmosphere of stability, structure, and fraternity for our students.

Hello Everybody!

My name is Dave Hibbard-Rode and I am excited and honored to begin working at Youth Initiative this year. I was born and raised in Minneapolis and though I went to good public schools, they were largely unimaginative and weren't exactly positive environments for learning (in fact, my high school was designed by a prison designer and was built to be riot proof). I went to Earlham College where I studied geology and education and became acquainted with new pedagogies and methods of approaching schooling. I've spent seven years leading wilderness trips with high school students in the Boundary Waters, the Canadian Arctic, the coastal mountains of California, and many places in between. With every passing year, my passion for holistic, human growth-centered education has grown and intensified. I believe strongly in education playing a vital role, not in filling empty vessels, but in helping young people to develop the skills, perspective, and appetite for a lifelong pursuit of learning, anchored in the importance of being engaged and responsible citizens of a dynamic and amazing world.

I will be teaching many classes this year as well as working with Matt on the Development Team and am very excited about being a part of such a unique and invigorating school.

One of my first duties in my new position was to organize and lead this year's camping trip, which was a departure in many ways from the camping trips of the past. And as with all change, it hurt for a little bit.

The triumph of positive attitudes on this year's camping trip started as it usually does, with negative attitudes. A



If you see this guy, don't be a stranger, his name is Dave

general—sometimes barely and sometimes very—audible grumble rolled and crested amongst the group like a domino chain of earthquakes, all with different intensities. Earthquakes are unpleasant and destructive and many would wish them gone; just as many would wish that teenagers just quit their grumbling and got quiet already! But we must expand our view of what is really going on. Earthquakes are in essence, the growing pains of the earth. They signify change, growth, renewal. The earth's crust is constantly renewing itself and without this process we would live on a totally flat earth—eventually unable to sustain life at all—and really, really boring. Earthquakes do not drive this, but are symptoms of this beautiful and vital process of change and renewal.

In order to better relate this metaphor to Youth Initiative and this year's camping trip, I would suggest that earthquakes are simply a release of

energy and like anything they can have positive or negative consequences for the world around them.

It has long been recognized that the job of "Youth" is revolt: questioning, challenging, and a continued resurgence of new ideas and, hopefully, better ways of doing things. Without this our societies would most likely die of boredom, stagnation, and corruption. Yet it is equally important and vital to recognize the job of the mentor, the guide, to hold strong to core values and deep truths that are proven to nourish communities over the long term. In fact it is