



The Villages®

Charter School Autism Center

Strategic Plan Development

Premise: To articulate a set of goals, outcome metrics, priority strategies, and key activities that are focused on learners as the core of our beliefs and actions. A strategic plan will allow The Villages Charter School Autism Center to be purposeful in implementing our Vision, Mission, and the Core Values of Hospitality, Stewardship, Innovation and Creativity, and Hard Work as we develop greater independence in our learners.

Foundational Principles of the Strategic Plan

Vision

To create a compassionate environment that supports individualized learning and fosters each learner's unique skills, interests, and ambitions to reach their fullest potential as a contributing member of the community.

Mission

To partner with families to provide a safe and caring learning environment that supports, develops, and inspires learners with autism spectrum disorder.

Core Values

Hospitality – We believe in creating a learning environment that teaches our learners to be:

- Welcoming and engaging.
- Comfortable and safe.
- Warm and friendly.
- Happy and kind.

Stewardship – We lead by example, teaching our learners to be:

- Responsible and accountable for ourselves.
- Nurturing and courteous to others.
- Caring and respectful of our environment and school resources.

Innovation and Creativity – We support individual growth by encouraging our learners to:

- Embrace unique learning styles.
- Promote self-advocacy.
- Entertain new experiences.

Hard Work – We demonstrate the value of hard work and inspire our learners to:

- Strive for progress and be proud of their best effort.
- Have a willingness to learn and continuously improve.
- Participate in school and the community.

At The Villages Charter School Autism Center, it is our mission to partner with families to provide a safe and caring learning environment that supports, develops, and inspires learners with autism spectrum disorder. During our inaugural year, our founders, board members, and team members worked diligently to successfully launch The Villages Charter School Autism Center. The accomplishments of creating an entity, forming a board, establishing a charter, hiring a team, and preparing for learners, all within eight months, were nothing short of amazing! The dream and hard work joyously turned into a reality when we welcomed our first learners in January.

As we continue this journey, we are focused on our vision to create a compassionate environment that supports individualized learning and fosters each learner's unique skills, interests, and ambitions to reach their fullest potential as a contributing member of the community. Our core values of Hospitality, Stewardship, Innovation and Creativity, and Hard Work will guide us as we strive to serve our learners and their families in the best way possible. As we grow, our strategic goals will be: 1) learner growth, 2) partnerships with our learners' families, our team members, and our community, and 3) financial and operational responsibility.

Learner Growth

Learner growth is the main purpose of The Villages Charter School Autism Center, and at the heart of why we do what we do. We measure learner growth by progress on Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals and improvement in academic, behavioral, communication, social, and life skills. Our strategies to ensure learner growth include measuring progress, learner participation and engagement, and programs that incorporate academic, behavioral, and life skills. Our objectives related to learner growth include:

- Decrease in intensity, frequency, and duration of learner unique barriers.
- Increase in independence for each learner through skill acquisition that considers the whole child.
- Improvement in academics for each learner as demonstrated through increased absolute and level scores on standardized tests.
- Improvement in IEP goal progress and mastery.

Partnerships

We dedicate time and resources to ensure strong relationships are built among all stakeholder groups, including families, team members, and the community, by forming partnerships that positively contribute to the school's goals and enrich the experiences of our learners.

Research shows that parent involvement in education has a very positive impact on a child's development. For our learners, it is important to have a partnership between families and the school to provide consistency and continuity to accomplish learner goals across settings. Our strategies to ensure partnerships between families and the school include frequent parent communication, parent training, and opportunities to experience learner growth while participating in school activities. Our objectives related to family involvement include:

- Develop and maintain teacher connection pages as a resource for families.
- Maintain parent communication with monthly newsletters, weekly photos, and daily individual learner updates.
- Provide parents with quarterly progress updates on essential skills.

- Provide at least two opportunities for parents to be involved per month.

We recognize that the quality of the educational experience for our learners is intrinsically linked to the strength, expertise, and collaborative spirit of our staff. To truly embody the goal of "partnerships" and enrich the experiences of our learners, we are dedicated to cultivating a vibrant internal culture. This involves the strategy of fostering an environment where collaboration is not just encouraged, but is a fundamental aspect of our daily work, where every team member feels a sense of shared ownership in our collective vision and mission. Our strategies include a tangible investment in team members' professional growth and ensuring their vital contributions are recognized and celebrated. By prioritizing these strategies, we continue building a resilient and empowered team that is best equipped to achieve our school's goals and create a positive and impactful learning environment for all. Our objectives related to team member partnerships include:

- Communicate the school's goals and progress to all team members, highlighting individual and team contributions to shared successes.
- Establish regular, dedicated time and platforms for teams (e.g., classroom and learner support teams) to collaboratively plan, problem-solve, and share best practices.
- Implement systems for actively soliciting and incorporating team member feedback into school-wide decision-making processes and input on policies and initiatives.
- Utilize consistent feedback and strategic coaching practices to individualize team member support and positively impact instructional practices across the school.
- Provide diverse and accessible onboarding and continual professional development and learning opportunities that align with team members' needs and school goals, fostering continuous learning and growth.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive system for recognizing and celebrating team member contributions and achievements, both formal and informal.
- Provide opportunities for team members to take on leadership roles and contribute their expertise to school-wide initiatives.

We feel it is beneficial for our learners and our community to engage with one another. We engage the community through the strategies of our volunteer program, community events, outreach, and awareness. Our objectives related to community partnerships include:

- Establish and maintain strategic partnerships with key stakeholders by improving and maintaining effective communication to develop and build strong collaboration for highly effective community relations.
- Assess opportunities continuously for real-world learner independence experiences that bridge the classroom to life skills and access to the community.
- Explore opportunities to utilize expertise and knowledge in our local community, including retired educators and subject-matter experts, to expand engagement to optimize support areas of need.
- Create a volunteer program to facilitate relationships that will also benefit our school and learners.
- Provide no less than two community events per year.

Financial and Operational Responsibility

We aim to maximize funds, time, and resources that support classrooms and minimize operational costs while maintaining high standards for The Villages Charter School Autism Center's Learner Growth and Partnership strategies. Financial responsibility can be achieved by planning, developing, and monitoring budgets and operational practices. Financial strategies include implementing robust budgeting and oversight, and maximizing resource utilization and revenue generation. Operational strategies include streamlining processes to improve efficiency and to ensure safety, compliance, and risk management. Our objectives related to financial and operational responsibility include:

- Develop and adhere to a detailed annual budget with monthly variance analysis reports presented to relevant stakeholders.
- Establish clear approval processes and spending limits for all financial transactions to ensure accountability and prevent unauthorized expenditures.
- Identify and implement cost-saving measures each school year without compromising quality or essential services.
- Maintain at least 90% of expenditures within the state's Full Time Enrollment (FTE) funding source and develop new revenue streams (e.g., grants, fundraising, etc.) each school year for the additional 10% of funding.
- Establish Medicaid therapy service billing within the first full school year of opening.
- Identify and optimize key operational workflows (e.g., enrollment, communication, maintenance requests, etc.) to reduce processing time and increase staff efficiency.
- Implement a digital platform for managing key operational tasks and data to improve accessibility, accuracy, and reporting capabilities.
- Maintain a schoolwide classroom average of 3:1 learner-staff support for instruction, supervision, and safety with qualified staff, inclusive of additional support provided by Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT), Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA), instructional lead, clerical, health clinic, and administrative personnel.