

## Strategies for realizing a superior school at Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi Elementary School Karangdowo, Klaten

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### ABSTRACT

Excellent schools are schools that are in great demand by parents, to make this happen, a good strategy is needed. The principal at SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi created a superior program to attract parents' interest. The aim of this research is to describe the strategies implemented by school principals in creating superior schools at the Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi Elementary School, Karangdowo, Klaten. This research uses a qualitative approach to reveal events with a thorough explanation of what they are. The research design used is ethnography. Ethnographic research is a genre of qualitative research, developed from anthropological methodology. The research was conducted at Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi Elementary School with the research subject being the school principal. The validity of the data in this research uses triangulation. The principal's strategy in creating a superior school at the Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi Elementary School, Karangdowo, Klaten includes: Developing a school plan to the maximum, analyzing the obstacles, challenges and future opportunities that will be faced. Increasing the effectiveness of learning, by supervising the school principal and implementing appropriate learning strategies and methods. Improving the quality of teachers by participating in KKG, seminars and continuing education to the next level. Improvement Program in the Field of Student Development, through extracurricular activities that facilitate students' talents and interests. Establish relationships with parents, stakeholders and the surrounding community to increase cooperation and foster good relationships.

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### INTRODUCTION

Education is used as a parameter to see the success of a nation's development. To educate the nation's life is one of the state goals listed in the preamble of the 1945 Constitution in the 4th paragraph. Education becomes indispensable to realize the country's goals. Schools are expected to be the main pillar in improving the quality of human resources have not functioned optimally (Syarnubi, 2024). Schools have not been able to organize quality education. The quality and gap of education in Indonesia is reflected in the evaluation of the education system from all levels of education units through the 2021 National Assessment.

Mulyasa said that the importance of developing a quality education system needs to be emphasized more, because various indicators show that existing education has not been able to produce resources in accordance with the development of society and development needs (Mulyasa E, 2009). According to Timur, quality measures can be done by looking at teacher competence,

education and teaching methods, school vision and mission, curriculum, as well as school achievements and supporting facilities (Syarnubi, S., Mansir, F., Purnomo, M. E., Harto, K., & Hawi, 2021). In connection with the size of a quality educational institution requires the educational institution to always manage its management by carrying out careful strategic planning. The right management system approach will create a conducive work climate for principals, teachers and employees that can affect the increasing quality of educational institutions. Every educational institution or school is expected to have school leaders or learning leaders who have good competence and character (Syarnubi, 2019). According to the principal is a person who has power and influence in determining teaching and learning activities in the school, life in the school is organized in such a way through the leadership of a principal (Syarnubi, 2022).

The number of primary schools, both public and private, makes its own challenges in competition in its implementation, all competing to catch up in mastering modern science and technology for human welfare itself. To meet this backwardness, the implementation of education must be carried out with quality (Syarnubi, 2023). The positive quality of a school can be embedded in the minds of the community so that people want to see and approach the school. This is the result of a branding effort made by the school. Branding is a way of building perceptions and positioning a product, so educational institutions need a branding strategy to offer the best educational services for parents and students (Syarnubi, S., Syarifuddin, A., & Sukirman, 2023).

Schools can be likened to merchandise, merchandise with superior brands, attractive packaging that makes buyers will glance and be curious to know. Likewise, a school with an attractive status and title will attract parents to send their children to school. Good branding emphasizes the outstanding character and uniqueness of the school. Schools can focus on highlighting a particular identity that is unique and memorable, rather than pursuing all aspects of the brand that may be too overwhelming. Educational institutions are trying to compete fiercely, with the best and right strategies that can build a good name for the school being pursued in order to attract consumers. the advantages they offer to attract the public to want to send their children to the school. Among them by strengthening Human Resources (HR) by selecting teachers with the best and competent graduates, offering a lot of facilities and infrastructure at school, the existence of healthy schools, child-friendly schools, superior schools that offer skills in foreign languages and so on. School principals certainly have strategies that are considered appropriate to improve the quality of schools by looking at the potential in the form of the quality of teaching staff, facilities and infrastructure, student achievement, and superior school programs offered to the community.

Seeing the tendency of society in the current era of globalization. Where the era of technological disruption is so massive, people tend to be interested in schools that offer general learning but also have religious or spiritual religious education and also life skills This is a challenge for school principals as educational leaders, how to choose the right strategy to develop programs in their institutions (Syarnubi, S., Alimron, A., & Muhammad, 2022). The term strategy is *strategia* is Greek which means warlord or the science of war. The word strategy in the Big Indonesian Dictionary means tactics, tactics are careful plans regarding activities to achieve specific desired goals. Salusu (2014) argues that strategy is the art of utilizing the human resource capabilities of an institution or organization to achieve the desired goals in the most favorable conditions by establishing effective relationships with the environment. The right strategy is the determinant of the success of a program, so a leader can choose the right strategy so that goals can be achieved. Based on some of the definitions above, it can be concluded that a strategy is a plan that is prepared and is a guide in achieving the goals set by an institution.

Excellent schools are one of the goals of school institutions, excellent schools are schools that are in great demand by parents and children so that many want to register to be able to enter as students in the school. The Ministry of Education defines a superior school as a school that is developed to achieve excellence in its educational output. To achieve this excellence, the inputs, educational processes, teachers and education personnel, management, educational services, and supporting facilities must be directed to support the achievement of these goals. The term excellent school was first introduced by Wardiman Djojonegoro, in 1994. According to Wardiman, excellent

schools expect the distribution of knowledge and to prepare quality human resources and have insight into excellence.

In general, madrasahs that are categorized as superior must include three aspects, namely: input, process and output. For madrasahs, they can select school students with a very strict selection system. In addition to academic selection, other requirements are also given according to the goals that the school wants to achieve (Syarnubi, 2020). For example, IQ tests, learning achievements from previous education levels, health tests, ability to read the Qur'an, religious insights. It is an extraordinary advantage if a madrasah has been able to be selective in the process of admitting new students. Prospective students can later be nurtured, guided and learn according to their level of intelligence, which will be directed to produce superior graduates (Hasan, 2015).

Excellent schools are related to the ability of teachers, learning facilities, curriculum, learning methods, extracurricular programs, and cooperation networks. Teaching staff in superior schools at least have several criteria, including: 1). Have high competence in mastering the curriculum, learning materials, methods, strategies, and learning approaches with high quality, 2). Achievement, mastering learning evaluation techniques and mastering superior learning strategies. 3) Have high discipline and dedication, loyal, innovative and creative, and have superior talent and potential. 4). Physically and mentally healthy, with noble character, 5). Have special advantages over other teachers both in the field of skills, and guide students in extracurricular material. The school has adequate facilities, to master science and technology, The learning method used makes students active and creative accompanied by freedom in expressing thoughts (Syarnubi, S., Efriani, A., Pranita, S., Zuhijra, Z., Anggara, B., Alimron, A., ... & Rohmadi, 2024).

## METHODS

This research uses a type of qualitative research. Qualitative research is conducted on natural objects, namely about objects that develop as they are, not manipulated by researchers and the presence of researchers does not affect the dynamics of these objects. This research uses an ethnographic research design. This research investigates society and culture with human, interpersonal, social and cultural testing in all its complexity. The research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi Klaten with the research subjects being the principal, teachers, parents of students and foundation administrators who oversee the school. The object of the research is the principal's strategy in realizing a superior school at SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi Karangdowo. The main source of data used in this study came from interviews with the principal, foundation board, parents and several teachers at SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi. Data were obtained using observation, interview, and documentation techniques. Data validity in this study uses triangulation of sources and techniques which will then be combined into one to draw conclusions. Data analysis techniques are data reduction, data display, and verification.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

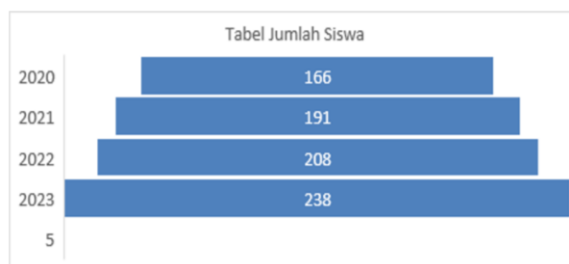
This research discusses the principal's strategy in heading a superior school at SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi. The condition of the number of students from time to time has increased, because of the existence of quality educational facilities to serve the needs of the community in the field of education. This school utilizes the Muhammadiyah 12 Junior High School building which is no longer operating. By the Muhammadiyah branch board of Karangdowo sub-district, it was utilized to become an elementary school. At the beginning of the year the students who registered as many as 8 students and developed until now has reached 238 students. This certainly cannot be separated from the efforts of the manager and head of the Education unit in promoting by offering various superior programs and guaranteeing the quality of graduates. The results of data collection conducted by researchers on student development in the last four years have increased and have not decreased. This is in accordance with what was stated by Mr. Juli Susila Margana:

"Parents who are interested in sending their children here are quite a lot but we only accept students as many as two rombel only considering the limited space or classrooms. This year we have

added several classrooms by adding buildings to the top because the land is limited and all the buildings are covered.”

Data on the number of students can be observed in the following table:

**Tabel 1.** Table Of Increase In The Number Of Students



Every year there is an increase in the number of students even though it is limited to only two rombongan that are accepted, this shows that the interest of parents is very large to enter their children in this school. When viewed from observations and interviews from several teachers and managers, the principal's leadership here has a significant role. The principal's leadership style shows a democratic leadership style. The reason for saying a democratic leadership style is that in giving orders or tasks, the principal first pays attention to what activities are carried out by teachers or staff. He assigns tasks but still assists them in completing them. Likewise, in making a decision, the principal also holds deliberations in advance with his subordinates so that there is no conflict in the end, he is very familiar with the teachers and students whether during the learning process or not (Arba'atun, 2017). This is in accordance with the statement expressed by Mrs. Ranti, 6th grade teacher:

*“Mr. Juli is a very open person, willing to accept input from his subordinates. So every time he makes a rule or anything, it must go through a meeting first, all teachers can have an opinion and decisions are made based on joint deliberation”.*

Mr. Juli himself said that:

*“In making decisions, we still consider the undercurrent, in its implementation it is carried out with a collegial collective. The principal cannot be alone and still involve teachers in every matter. My communication with teachers and school members is also good, so they are not afraid to express their opinions”.*

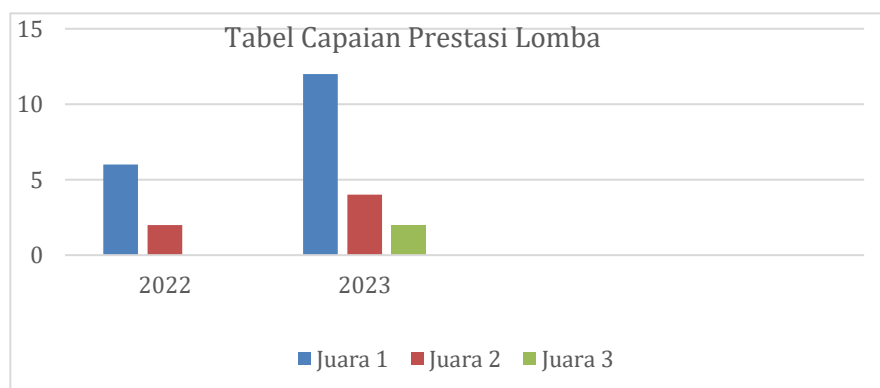
This leadership style creates a conducive work atmosphere that improves performance. The principal also provides rewards at the end of the year to teachers who have played an active role in school activities. This is an encouragement for teachers to work more enthusiastically and be more able to release their creativity. All of this has an impact on teaching enthusiasm and learning outcomes for students so that the results of satisfying graduates.

**Tabel 2.** Activities at Nurul imi Muhammadiyah elementary school include

Activity Name	Activity
Habitation	
1. Teacher Picket	Teachers who get the picket schedule leave early and are in charge of welcoming students at the gate, not forgetting greetings and greetings with teachers and friends.
2. Memorization of Juz Amma	Every time the lesson starts, all students memorize in their respective classes for approximately 15 minutes.
3. Tadarus Al quran	Every time the lesson starts, high school students memorize in their respective classes for approximately 15 minutes.
4. Dhuha Prayer	Dhuha prayer is carried out every morning in turn, some are

	also carried out during the first break. In its implementation, the reading is recited jahr to train children's reading.
5. Dhuhur Prayer in Congregation	Congregational dhuhur prayer is also carried out alternately. It is carried out with teacher supervision to correct the movements and maintain the solemnity of the prayer.
<b>Ekstrakurikuler</b>	
1. Compulsory Extras	1). Tahfidz class, 2). Hisbul Wathan, 3). Tapak suci Followed by high class only.
2. Optional Extra	1). Math, 2). SCIENCE, 3). Music, 4). Painting, 5). Badminton, 6). Futsal, 7). Soccer, 8). ICT
3. Additional classes	May be attended by all students from grade 1 to grade 6. Provided for students who need special guidance in learning.
<b>Relationship With Parents</b>	
1. Organize parent-teacher meetings	This meeting is held regularly between teachers and parents to report on the condition and development of students and as a forum for expressing opinions and suggestions.
2. Form a parent association	A parents' association is formed to foster relationships between parents and teachers and as a forum for parents to express their opinions and suggestions.
3. Parenting	Held periodically with the aim of educating parents so that they are more knowledgeable and understand education and how to educate children..
<b>Relationship With Community</b>	
1. Organizing zakat administration activities	This activity is carried out on Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha with the aim of training children to share with others in need and be able to empathize.
2. Distribution of qurban meat	Another goal is to bring the school closer to the community so that it is better known..

**Tabel 3. Achievements**



Improving the quality of an institution requires a principal who has character, is tough, a communicator and has the ability to organize each person he leads (Yeni W, 2018). The principal's

strategy in improving quality is carried out through maximum planning, analyzing the challenges and obstacles and opportunities that will be faced in the future (Syarnubi, Fauzi, M., Anggara, B., Fahiroh, S., Mulya, A. N., Ramelia, D., Oktarima, Y., & Ulvya, 2023). Principals improve the supervisory function, evaluate activities, hold scheduled and incidental meetings and carry out joint responsibilities with all school stakeholders. No less important is also to establish good cooperation with all educators and teaching staff, because the achievement of goals will not succeed without the involvement of all school parties.

The principal's strategy in an effort to become a superior school can be done by improving the effectiveness of learning carried out by teachers by preparing a draft learning schedule at the beginning of the school year, formulating school regulations, making learning tools, developing teacher professionalism through training and motivating teachers (Syarnubi, S., & Fahiroh, 2024). To overcome obstacles by involving the community more in school programs through the school committee to maximize the use of existing infrastructure to overcome perceived problems.

Researchers describe the strategies carried out by principals in realizing superior schools at SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi, the strategies taken are considered effective so that they can attract parents and students to become part of the school. This is also balanced with the principal's democratic leadership style making school conditions conducive and influencing the performance of educators and education personnel.

The principal's strategy in realizing a superior school is to arrange school planning to the maximum, analyze obstacles, challenges and opportunities in the future that will be faced. In the preparation of *perencanaan* involving stakeholders in the school and establishing cooperation and coordination. Principals make maximum efforts in improving supervision through evaluating activities and holding regular and scheduled meetings (Syarnubi, 2016).

### 1. Principal's Strategy in the Learning Effectiveness Improvement Program

SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi in the learning process uses 2 curricula, curriculum 13 is implemented in grades 3 and 4 and the Merdeka curriculum is implemented in grades 1, 2, 4 and 5. The program is planned to facilitate the process of teaching and learning activities, the preparation of class teacher work programs and subject teachers is adjusted to curriculum 13 and Merdeka curriculum. Teachers at school use learning methods that are varied, easy to accept, and fun learning. Although there are still some teachers who have not used strategies and methods. Teachers carry out remedial for students who have not reached the achievement standards and provide enrichment for other students. The principal conducts periodic supervision in each class to assess the learning carried out by the teacher to conduct reflection and evaluation for improvement.

### 2. Teacher Competency Improvement Program

All teachers who teach at SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi are graduates, although some of them are not linear with elementary school education, but already have experience in teaching. Teachers as the spearhead of education, to support their expertise in carrying out teaching and learning activities, the principal encourages teachers to participate in various activities that can increase the expertise and skills of teachers. The principal of SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi provides opportunities for teachers to participate in Teacher Working Group (KKG) activities, trainings, webinars, training or seminars and there is even a teacher who continues to study at a higher level.

### 3. Improvement Program in the Field of Student Development

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1. Compulsory Extras	1). Tahfidz class, 2). Hisbul Wathan, 3). Tapak suci Followed by high class only.
2. Optional Extras	1). Math, 2). SCIENCE, 3). Music, 4). Painting, 5). Badminton, 6). Futsal, 7). Soccer, 8). ICT May be attended by all students from grade 1 to grade 6.

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3. Additional Classes	Given to students who need special guidance in learning. Additional classes are also given to certain students who will represent the school in competitions.
4. Counseling Guidance	Given to students who need special assistance.

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#### Student Coaching Program

##### Parent-student relationship program and Stakeholder

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1. Holding Parent, Monite and Teacher Meetings	This meeting is held regularly between teachers and parents to report on the condition and development of students and as a forum for expressing opinions and suggestions.
2. Establish a parents'	A parents' association is formed to foster relationships between parents and teachers and as a forum for parents to express their opinions and suggestions.
3. Parenting	Held periodically with the aim of educating parents so that they know and understand more about education and how to educate children.

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##### Community Relations Program

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1. Organizing zakat administration activities	This activity is carried out on Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha with the aim of training children to share with others in need and be able to empathize.
2. Qurbani Meat Distribution	Another goal is to bring the school closer to the community so that it is better known.

School strategy is an important policy of the school to achieve the goal of improving and developing school quality (Nuzuar, 2018). The right strategy can have an impact on the success of the school to achieve its goals. Without a strategy, the school program will not run. Strategy is the first and important step when the leader intends to advance the school. No matter how great a leader is, if he does not have a good strategy, his program will be meaningless. Leadership not only relies on the leader's ability but also the leader's strategy

argues that the principal as a manager, has a function: planning, coordinating activities, supervising, evaluating activities, holding meetings, making decisions, organizing the learning process, organizing administration, and managing administration, students, personnel, facilities, and infrastructure, finance. This is in accordance with what has been implemented by the principal of SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi, namely planning, evaluating and organizing the duties and responsibilities of the principal (Sabirin, 2012).

in explained that principals must carry out five main activities, including: 1) formulating a vision for students' academic progress; 2) creating a school atmosphere that is very like for education and learning; 3) instilling leadership attitudes towards all academic and non-academic staff; 4) improving learning, and 5) managing all academic and non-academic staff to manage the process of academic and non-academic services in order to accelerate progress (Caron & Markusen, 2016).

Effectiveness is an important factor in learning. Effective learning is a match between students as implementers of learning and the learning objectives or goals to be achieved. Learning effectiveness is how someone manages to get and utilize learning methods to get good results, the suitability between students and learning outcomes. Learning effectiveness is absolutely necessary in schools, whether in public schools or in Islamic-based schools. Therefore, the

principal and other teaching staff are very responsible for the effectiveness of students' learning. With the use of media, students' attention to learning materials can be increased. Learning media serves as one of the learning resources for students to obtain messages and information provided by the teacher so that learning materials can increase and form knowledge for students (N., 2018).

Said to streamline the teaching carried out by teachers, principals must take various actions with the aim of developing a productive and satisfying work environment for teachers and learning conditions and results that can be expected by students. The performance or performance of teachers in the classroom is also a special concern for school principals, especially in encouraging and monitoring teachers in carrying out classroom teaching, such as using teaching time efficiently, implementing new approaches, using good curriculum materials, starting and ending classes on time, maintaining a learning process that is free from distractions, giving homework (homework). According to (Abuddin Nata Syaiful Bahri Djamarah, 2018),(Fitria, 2022) learning methods have a very important role and function in the teaching and learning process. The first learning method is able to become an extrinsic tool, meaning that an educator becomes a motivator for students. Placing educators as motivators for students will become active motives and act as stimuli from outside (external). The learning method will play a role and function as a stimulating tool from outside that can arouse students' learning. Learning methods are very important because they become extrinsic tools. The second is as a learning strategy. An educator must recognize the ability of his students to learn, such as the level of intelligence possessed by students, this greatly affects the absorption of students in learning, some are fast, some are moderate, and some are slow in understanding the material presented. For this reason, an educator must need the right learning strategy, and method is one of the solutions (H., 2017).

Principals in recruiting a teacher must pay attention to his competence, teachers with professional competence can teach well. They have many methods and strategies so that students can learn happily and optimally. The principal of SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi provides opportunities for teachers to participate in Teacher Working Group (KKG) activities, trainings, webinars, training or seminars and there is even a teacher who continues to study at a higher level.

The principal of SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi provides opportunities for teachers to participate in Teacher Working Group (KKG) activities, trainings, webinars, training or seminars and there is even a teacher who continues to study at a higher level. This is none other than the school's efforts to improve the competence of its teachers towards superior schools. Principals with a democratic leadership style will open up as much as possible if teachers want to develop their competence. "Teacher quality is an important component of successful education" wrote darling-(Jejen.M., 2011). Competent teachers will carry out learning and teaching tasks in the classroom with enthusiasm, fun and meaningful. Students will get new things so that students are not easily bored, in the end teachers who have competence will give birth to students who are diligent in learning, enjoy the learning process and will understand the importance of learning for the future.

Related to quality improvement: "The main function of leaders in improving quality is to empower teachers and give them broad authority to improve learning to students". Teachers are empowered in advancing the school as carried out by the principal of SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi as the implementer of the extracurricular program. As said by Sunarto (2011) that to carry out its role and function as a manager, the principal must have the right strategy to: (1) empowering education personnel through cooperation, (2) providing opportunities for education personnel to improve their profession, and (3) encouraging the involvement of all education personnel who support school programs. Because if you refer to the view of modern management, cooperation is very basic in an organization. Extracurricular activities have the aim of optimally and integratedly developing student potential which includes talents, interests, and creativity. As well as actualizing the potential of students in achieving superior achievements in accordance with their talents and interests. So it is very important for a madrasa or school to plan



and strive for these activities in an organized manner, in order to achieve its main objectives. The extracurricular program that is most in demand by students is tahfidz alqur'an which targets all students to memorize juz 30 plus (Sallis, 2010).

Plus means added with juz 29 and memorization of selected verses and selected hadiths as a basis for student mastery in the application of daily life. It is hoped that later it can be used as a guide in associating and acting based on the Qur'an and hadith.

In addition to empowering teachers, the principal of SD Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi also involves parents, committees, Foundation administrators, and related agencies in realizing superior schools. Establishing good relations also with the surrounding community, village government and schools around the area. The programs that have been prepared are socialized and communicated together to get support so that the goals can be achieved as desired. According to Coleman, family and society at large have an influence in determining student achievement That their existence can provide positive value in the process of the success of an education. The role of parents or family in this case can refer to a form of support and positive stimulation for students. Thus, it can develop positive behavior and attitudes in everyday life.

The role of the community at large can refer to controlling and observing how the education process runs. Their presence can determine the direction of education. In addition, the biggest influence of the community is related to operational funds. That is very much needed in the fulfillment of infrastructure. Their presence can determine the direction of education. In addition, the biggest influence of the community is related to operational funds

## CONCLUSION

The principal's strategy in realizing a superior school at Muhammadiyah Nurul 'ilmi Elementary School, Karangdowo District, Klaten Regency, among others: Arranging school planning to the maximum, analyzing obstacles, challenges and future opportunities that will be faced. Improving the effectiveness of learning, with the supervision of the principal and applying the right learning strategies and methods. Improving the quality of teachers by attending KKG, seminars and continuing their education to the next level. Improvement program in the field of student development, through extracurricular activities that facilitate students' talents and interests. Establishing relationships with parents, stakeholders and the surrounding community to improve cooperation and foster good relations.

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