

The Chestnut Hill School



Strategic Initiatives 2016

For more than 155 years, The Chestnut Hill School has provided young children with an exceptional educational experience. Continually refining and advancing our mission and programs, CHS has maintained a legacy of preparing intellectually skilled, thoughtful and confident learners and leaders. To propel us forward, the School's Board of Trustees has developed a set of multi-year Strategic Initiatives to expand our capacity to educate children for success in the world. These Initiatives span four fundamental areas—Programming, Financial Sustainability, Community Life and Communications. Each has multiple elements that will be assessed regularly to gauge progress in advancing the School's strategic vision, financial health and market position.



Programming optimizes interdisciplinary and multi-grade curricular enhancements in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) and innovatively expands leadership education. Program advancements will complement and continually refine the School's existing curriculum to enrich education of 21st-century leaders.

The **Financial Sustainability** Initiative doubles our endowment, boosts faculty compensation to fully competitive marketplace levels, optimizes non-tuition revenues and explores income-producing partnerships leveraging common resources.

Community Life embraces a new vision for diversity, equity and inclusion, enhancing financial aid to continue the School's accessibility, critical to the CHS philosophy. Similarly central to our mission, this Initiative features an evaluation of campus utilization to foster a more vibrant community.

Communications maximizes the impact of the School's compelling story, internally and externally. It coheres all CHS constituencies—students, faculty, administration, current and prospective families and alums—by succinctly articulating CHS's mission, vision and value. Its implementation bolsters the School's competitive edge in the independent school marketplace.

Moving forward on a parallel track with the four Strategic Initiatives is the **CHS Capital and**

Endowment Campaign. Now in its quiet phase, the \$7.5M effort will fund the most resource-intensive Initiative components; a variety of funding mechanisms will support other Initiative measures.

ENHANCING PROGRAMMING

Integrating STEAM into the Curriculum

Communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking are pivotal for 21st-century leadership. Targeting these skills, the CHS five-year STEAM project will use robust technology to support high-level curricular integration; reimagine elements of the science, mathematics and arts programs; support professional development in learning styles, innovative teaching methods and robotics programming, and creatively redesign physical space to accommodate multi-disciplinary learning.

Expanding the Leadership Curriculum

Given evidence linking leadership and professional accomplishments later in life, the School's five-year plan embeds leadership skills more deeply into the core curriculum. We will enhance the integration of academics and personal growth, augmenting and innovating the Upper School's leadership activities and class work. Programming possibilities include joint curricular projects across the grades, which nurture older children to educate their junior



partners; combined service projects that nourish mentorship and social service, and pairing 4th-graders with their three-year-old counterparts in music and art programs. Such innovative programming will formalize and reinforce the School's signature emphasis on empathy, responsibility and leadership.

BUILDING LONG-TERM FINANCIAL STABILITY

Doubling our Endowment

Our \$7.5M Capital and Endowment Campaign, now in its quiet phase, ensures the School's future mirrors its legacy of multi-dimensional excellence. Six and a half million dollars of this goal will double our endowment to \$13M. This will allow investment income from endowment to support teacher compensation and financial aid. The Campaign's remaining \$1M will fund initial campus enhancements, such as reconfiguring the underutilized swimming pool area.

Investing in Faculty

Attracting and retaining excellent, experienced teachers—the School's greatest priority—demands a fully competitive compensation package. Increasing tuition is not a feasible business model to fund this ongoing investment. Increasing the endowment by \$5M over five years will provide financial stability to

meet teacher compensation needs and enable endowment income to supplement tuition revenue.

Enhancing Non-tuition Revenue

Like all independent schools, tuition and Annual Giving support the bulk of the School's operating revenue. Summer Camp and the Music School provide additional income. We will evaluate opportunities to increase the revenue generated by our camp and music programs. Additionally, a Board Task Force will explore the rental potential and other revenue-generating options our campus and facilities offer.

Exploring Partnerships

Our area is rich with independent schools, colleges, universities and cultural organizations. Through strategic partnering, we will seek to leverage common resources—transportation, athletic facilities, building and grounds equipment—to achieve cost savings. Sharing talents and expertise—jointly presenting speaker series, professional development opportunities and other community-enhancing activities—will confer similar savings and promote CHS as a cultural resource.

ENRICHING COMMUNITY LIFE

Implementing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Our recent Board work and self-assessment around diversity has led to a number of guiding insights, first among them that the word diversity falls short of conveying the complexity of the educational experience we seek to live. The result is a renewed vision of diversity: Celebrating difference and variety, it also embraces equity and inclusion. Renamed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), our approach fosters children's pride in their unique identities and abilities and puts a premium on honestly exploring the challenges posed by differences in social identity. The School's DEI strategy, now in its initial implementation stage, will evolve over the next five years and span curriculum, community education, family and affinity group support, faculty hires and professional development, and thought leadership.

Augmenting Financial Aid

Enabling children of all socioeconomic backgrounds to take advantage of a CHS education is resolutely core to the School's mission. Living this commitment demands a meaningful level of financial aid. While tuition and Annual Fund monies can and should continue to support financial aid, they alone cannot sustain it. Endowment income will reduce the impact of financial aid on the operating budget and allow us to continue making CHS accessible to families for whom tuition is not economically feasible. Strengthening financial aid now is a critical first step in developing a permanent mechanism of robust scholarship support.

Campus Enhancements

The School's home-like atmosphere is one of its defining characteristics. However, our facility is fully and completely utilized. Our long-term campus planning—including renovating, reconfiguring and expanding space—will mitigate severe space constrictions and enable optimal programming. Our campus utilization review will explore expansion opportunities and other short- and long-term community-enhancing possibilities.

Recapturing the front plaza is the initial step in reconfiguring the art and science wing into indoor/outdoor learning space. This project will create flexible, multi-season space for outdoor STEAM education—a science and engineering laboratory and technology facility—art displays, performances, community and extended day

activities and a community garden. Reorienting the pools, now reserved for summer program use, into an outdoor community and teaching space, is also a high priority. Recovering these sizeable areas will ameliorate traffic congestion during student drop-off and dismissal.

COMMUNICATING OUR STORY

Invigorating our Brand

CHS has a compelling story. Leadership, math, language arts, Spanish, and diverse writing and performing programs are standouts that merit spotlighting. Our multi-year branding effort will competitively position CHS in the marketplace by publicizing these standout efforts; instill pride and cohesion in staff and constituencies; create consistent messaging and design in all CHS collateral; improve CHS efficiencies and effectiveness and bolster fundraising efforts.

Enhancing Marketing & Communications

We are committed to promoting the School's distinctive offerings to both internal and external constituencies. New admission materials, a new website and strategic communications—including fundraising and marketing—are key to disseminating our impressive story and commanding an enhanced marketplace position.

Showcasing our Unique Educational Philosophy

Both the School's mission and educational philosophy are centrally important. Better communicating our educational philosophy to reflect how CHS weaves vision, mission and curriculum will significantly guide the School's educational efforts. Working together to more effectively articulate the uniqueness of our educational philosophy, faculty and administration will explore the concrete actions and processes that foster curiosity, promote risk-taking, build resilience, apply master skills, and achieve myriad educational goals: How, in essence, do all these fundamentals get realized in the classroom? Cogently expressing these thoughts and processes will promote the School's impressive curricular strategies.

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