Dear members of the Blair community,

“All In,” Blair Academy’s strategic plan for 2018 to 2025, charts an exciting course for the important and inspired work we will undertake as we write the next chapter in our great School’s nearly 175-year history. Enthusiastically approved by the Blair Board of Trustees at its spring 2019 meeting, our strategic plan builds upon the growth and success Blair has achieved over the past two decades. Honoring and amplifying our core values of relationship-based learning and superior academic preparation, more than 60 Trustees, parents, alumni and faculty members collaborated over the past year to create this plan, which focuses on four key priorities: **faculty talent and excellence, forward-thinking programs, our historic and state-of-the-art campus, and Blair’s long-term financial strength**.

Our plan focuses first and foremost on **people** and the powerful teacher-student relationships that form the foundation of great learning and make the Blair experience life-changing. These impactful relationships develop because our outstanding teachers are dedicated to knowing our students well and creating a richly diverse, dynamic and inclusive community where they are challenged and supported in every endeavor. This, in turn, enables our students to more authentically and deeply know themselves so they can make a difference in the lives of others on this campus and far beyond.

Thus, we are committed to recruiting, retaining and investing in the most talented teachers and professional staff, and empowering them with the most effective training, the latest research and the resources they need to do their best work. Such hiring is critical to preparing our students to not only navigate the complex 24/7, global society beyond Blair, but to do so as grounded, resilient, joyful and purposeful young people. Moreover, we are committed to providing financial aid to students from all backgrounds, so they, too, can experience the exceptional relationships, robust and cutting-edge programs, and the diverse and supportive community that distinguish Blair.

Of course, any plan for Blair’s future must consider our beautiful campus, and herein we enumerate several initiatives—some of which are already complete or in progress—designed to further amplify our mission and enhance the experience of learning and living at Blair. Finally and importantly, this plan serves as a commitment to offering an exceptional Blair experience for generations to come by raising endowed funds to support our people, programs and campus and secure the School’s financial future.

We would like to thank the members of the Blair community who diligently served on the strategic plan working groups, participated in meetings and calls, and attended site visits at a variety of our peer schools. Their expertise and input were invaluable in crafting this strategic plan, and their care for Blair Academy is inspirational. This is a dynamic and evolving blueprint for Blair’s future, especially as we look to our 175th anniversary in 2023 and beyond. We are excited and gratified to bring it to fruition.

Doug Kimmelman P’12 ’13 ’15 ’22  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Chris Fortunato  
Head of School
“At Blair,

we appreciate our students for who they are, what they stand for and all they can achieve. Our faculty know our students well and use that knowledge to imbue individual experiences with a shared commitment to becoming one’s best self. Strong relationships between teachers and students lead to exceptional learning, and through these meaningful connections, we empower our students to become persons of great accomplishment, character and passion.

Blair is and must continue to be a leader in education. We emphasize innovation, collaboration and key leadership competencies across all disciplines, setting the standard for college preparation and inspiring lifelong learning. In our vibrant, inclusive community, kindness and competition go hand-in-hand, and we prepare our students for success in an always-evolving, globally connected world.”

- Chris Fortunato, Head of School
GOAL:

Recruit, retain and develop diverse and talented faculty who embrace our mission of knowing our students; share our commitment to excellent and innovative teaching and coaching; and have the training, resources, and time to thrive professionally and personally.

Teachers who challenge and connect with students as scholars, mentors, coaches and leaders are Blair’s most powerful asset. We must invest in attracting and supporting gifted faculty who are committed to boarding school teaching careers at Blair and whose multifaceted identities and experiences create a superior learning environment for a diverse student body.

We will continue to foster a rich and rewarding student-centered professional environment that supports the best and brightest teachers from different disciplines and industries as they devote time to their craft; develop skills, pedagogies and partnerships beyond Blair; and model fulfilling personal lives and well-being for our students. This will enable us to best prepare our students to navigate a complex global society as effective communicators, collaborative and imaginative problem-solvers, and discerning thinkers.
INITIATIVES:

Recruiting & retaining top talent

• Enhance faculty compensation and benefits to reward excellence and to reflect the competitive market for talented independent school teachers.

• Ensure that Blair’s faculty more fully reflects the diversity of race/ethnicity, identity, background and experience of Blair’s student body, alumni/ae and families.

• Hire additional teachers to meet the evolving needs of our programs and to create the conditions that best allow faculty to know our students very well, and to nurture their own personal and professional growth.

• Build an instructive and engaging teaching fellowship program to attract and develop energetic and talented young faculty from top colleges.

Promoting professional development & honoring excellence

• Offer a comprehensive array of faculty training opportunities, including in-depth summer teaching institutes, educational travel, professional conferences, and graduate and professional studies.

• Support faculty through a growth-oriented feedback and evaluation process based on the latest research and best practices.

• Establish new endowed faculty chairs that recognize outstanding teachers and provide additional compensation, growth and leadership opportunities.
GOAL:
Prepare students to confidently navigate life in college and beyond through programs that emphasize health and well-being, diversity and inclusion, and meaningful connections between classroom work and real-world issues.

Student health & well-being
Given the ubiquity of technology and the increasingly rapid pace of life and change in society, today’s adolescents face a unique blend of social/emotional pressures and moral challenges. Through programs that emphasize personal wellness, character, values, kindness and moral leadership, we must position our students to navigate the challenges of adolescence and develop a strong sense of self, values and place in the world.

We will support students in becoming resilient, self-aware and confident young adults who possess the social, emotional and leadership tools they need to build successful and fulfilling lives.

INITIATIVES:

• Expand and implement research-based programs, curricula and services that support student physical and emotional health, connection and resilience.

• Develop a comprehensive academic support office to foster critical study and organizational skills and to counsel students of all learning styles.
**Diversity & inclusion**

Belonging, understanding and empathy are hallmarks of Blair’s culture that foster authentic enthusiasm for working with and learning from individuals of diverse backgrounds. In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, it is essential to deepen our students’ abilities and give them opportunities to meaningfully communicate, collaborate and strategically leverage the power of diverse teams.

**We will build upon Blair’s inclusive culture by affording students and faculty enhanced skills, training, experiences and ideas that empower them to build meaningful relationships across lines of difference and more fully understand the ever-changing world around them.**

**INITIATIVES:**

- Enhance training, research and programming that support a positive and inclusive campus climate, faculty efficacy and student learning.
- Devote additional resources to support school-wide committees and programs that further foster a dynamic and diverse environment and train our students to become smart global citizens.

**College counseling**

We are committed to providing a holistic and highly personalized college counseling experience to meet the ever-shifting demands of an increasingly complex and hyper-competitive undergraduate admission process. As we prepare our graduates for excellent college outcomes, we help them discover the schools that fit them best and at which they will thrive.

**We will provide comprehensive guidance and advocacy based on best practices to meet the evolving realities of the college admission process.**

**INITIATIVES:**

- Develop and implement a comprehensive college counseling strategic plan and a flexible annual plan of programs, resources and travel.
- Enhance communication with students and parents, including by providing a regularly updated guidebook that details our college counseling approach. *(first edition completed in 2018)*
- Increase support for Blair counselors to attend professional conferences and travel to colleges to forge relationships with higher-education professionals at a broad range of institutions.

**External partnerships**

By establishing partnerships with alumni and professionals from higher education and various industries, we will create more opportunities for experts and mentors to become meaningfully involved in and inspire our students’ learning and amplify the real-world impact of our project work.

**We will establish partnerships with experts and organizations beyond Blair that enhance learning by connecting classroom work to real-world issues.**

**INITIATIVES:**

- Hire faculty who will continue to build and manage close partnerships with higher-education institutions and professionals across industries to enhance learning.
- Devote additional programmatic resources to support a rich slate of speakers, scholars- and artists-in-residence, travel, research, internships, fellowships and service-learning opportunities.
GOAL:
Create facilities that amplify Blair’s educational mission and enhance the academic, artistic, athletic and residential experience of students and faculty.

With relationship-based learning and superior academic preparation ever at the heart of the Blair experience, Armstrong-Hipkins Center for the Arts (1997), Annie Hall (1999), Hardwick Hall (2008), Blair Commons (2008), and Kathryn and Lakeside Halls (2015) have provided spaces where faculty members know, teach, train and support students across all dimensions of the Blair experience.

In 2017, we celebrated the opening of the Chiang Center for Innovation and Collaboration, an open-architecture, technology-rich learning hub and home to Blair’s fine arts and technology departments, and Weber Hall, re-purposed to optimize the teaching of mathematics. These outstanding academic facilities have already begun to bring the campus aspect of this strategic plan to vibrant life. As we look to the next decade, we will continue this important work through projects that address current and future needs.
INITIATIVES:

• Renovate and enlarge Bogle Hall to enhance and expand the teaching of laboratory science and independent research. (underway; target completion date 2019)

• Renovate the J. Brooks Hoffman ’36 Health Center to create a comprehensive, modern health-and-wellness facility designed to best care for our community.

• Increase and diversify quality housing for Blair teachers, commensurate with their age and family needs, in order to attract superior teaching candidates and retain the best “triple-threat” teachers who also coach, lead activities and work in Blair’s dormitories.

• Construct a seasonal winter sports complex, available during the coldest months of the year, to enhance students’ athletic experience and bring the entire community together for activities and events. (completed 2018)

• Create an indoor golf training center where team members can practice year-round. (J. Li Golf Training Center completed 2018)

• Further enhance the athletic experience through projects, including the construction of a second turf field, construction of a crew boathouse, and improvements to our golf course and Wallace Pool.

• Foster a safe and welcoming local community beyond our campus by supporting improvements to Blairstown.
GOAL:

Secure Blair’s financial foundation to provide the resources that will sustain our School now and in the future.

A strong endowment provides security for the future, a buffer against periodic economic downturns, and the flexibility to create and to respond to opportunities as they arise. We must continue to grow endowed funds so that we may more fully invest in our students, teachers, innovative programs and historic campus.

As we build our endowment for generations to come, we must also strengthen annual giving to the Blair Fund. Blair Fund gifts are critical to the School’s operation and enhance the Blair experience for today’s students and teachers by supporting financial aid, extracurricular activities, service and leadership opportunities, and many more everyday needs.

INITIATIVES:

• Grow endowed scholarship support so that we can continue to bring a diverse, talented student body to Blair by offering generous and necessary financial aid.

• Expand endowed support for programs and activities across the entire spectrum of Blair’s curricular and extracurricular program to ensure that both new and long-standing meaningful experiences are fully supported and available to every student.

• Grow endowed support for facilities to provide for maintenance, technological upgrades, and preservation of our campus and its new and historic buildings.

• Increase support of the Blair Fund to $3 million annually to fund critical needs.

• Embark upon a comprehensive seven-year fundraising campaign.

In order to achieve the vital objectives of our 2018-2025 Strategic Plan, Blair will embark upon a comprehensive fundraising campaign. Together, as alumni, parents and friends of the School, we can ensure that the Blair experience is even more enriching and impactful for generations of students and that our School is stronger than ever as we approach our 175th anniversary.
Faculty Talent & Excellence
Lai Yuen Chiang ’84, P’14 ’16
Anne E. Cramer ’75
Peter G. Curran
Danyelle Doldoorian
Kaye R. Evans
Christopher M. Fortunato
Timothy Goggins
Richard R. Graber P’06 ’09
Donald H. McGree ’54
Joanne Mooney P’19
Lorry Perry
Keith H. Rauschenbach ’76
Jaclyn M. Roecker ’96
Robin J. Scheman P’10 ’14
Leucetia Shaw
Virginia Sigety P’16 ’18 ’19
Andrew D. Sykes

Forward-Thinking Programs
Lisa Acker
Emmanuel Bello ’04
Carolyn M. Conforti-Browse ’79
Douglass Compton
Gwyneth Connell
Singleton A. Cox ’90
David Facciani
Erin Fortunato
Kelly Hadden
Rev. David G. Harvey
Hannah Higgin
Susan R. Kahn Berman P’15 ’19
Marianne Lieberman ’79, P’17 ’19
Nathan Molteni
John P. Mooney Jr. P’19
James Moore
Sarah M. O’Neil
Ryan M. Pagotto ’97
Derek Peachey ’93
Andrea Ryerson

Maria V. Savettiere P’17
Jeanne Sorensen Siegel
Lewis M. Stival
Amelia C. Wolfe ’85, P’18 ’20

Our Campus
Paul S. Clavel ’88
Craig U. Dana Sr. ’60, P’87 ’92
Robert C. Dughi ’66
Christopher M. Fortunato
James A. Frick
Craig C. Hall
David Januszewski P’13 ’18
Douglas W. Kimmelman P’12 ’13 ’15 ’22
G. David MacEwen ’79
Carmelo Mazza
Sharon L. Merrifield
Elise Bates Russell
David Schmitt
Robert G. Sigety ’75, P’16 ’18 ’20 ’21
Tyson Trish
Hobart Van Deusen ’54
Edward T. Wenner ’96

Financial Strength
John E. Alden ’63
Kurt A. Baker P’17 ’19
Jason E. Beck
Peter G. Curran
James A. Frick
Craig C. Hall
James P. Jenkins ’66
Coray S. Kirby ’80, P’12 ’13 ’15
Martin S. Miller
Cara B. Mohlmann
Dominick J. Romano ’74, P’04 ’07 ’10
Cornelius E. Sigety ’76, P’16 ’18 ’19
David D. Wakefield ’48

TOTAL STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUP MEMBERS: 67
33 TRUSTEES | 34 FACULTY & STAFF
STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES: 4
# OF INITIATIVES: 28
Visits to other schools as part of planning process: 8
NEW ANNUAL BLAIR FUND GOAL: 3 MILLION
MINUTES IT TAKES TO INFLATE THE WINTER SPORTS COMPLEX: 60
SQUARE FEET OF THE BOGLE HALL ADDITION: 8,000+
YEAR BLAIR WILL CELEBRATE ITS 175TH ANNIVERSARY: 2023
LENGTH OF CAMPAIGN SUPPORTING STRATEGIC PLAN: 7 YEARS