



Update to 2016-2019 Strategic Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this Strategic Plan was to outline the high-level strategic goals for St. John's Episcopal School for the school years 2016/17 through 2018/19. This plan was established under the auspices of the School Committee with input from key School staff members. Annual School operating plans were developed by the Head of School and reviewed by the School Committee to include tactical priorities to accomplish the long-term strategic goals.

This plan contained a long-term vision and strategic goals for pillars of success: Episcopal Identity, Curriculum, Technology, Co-Curriculum, Admissions, Finance, Advancement, Organizational Development, and Facilities. At the time of this plan's development, these were the areas determined to be most crucial for setting the strategic direction of the School for this time period.

Mission Statement

Grounded in the rich history of diversity and excellence in Episcopal education, St. John's fosters every child's full intellectual, physical, and spiritual development. A nurturing learning environment and programs built on an ideal balance of tradition and innovation encourage our students to pursue lives of service and purpose.

Vision Statement

To provide an extraordinary STEAM education that best prepares our students for a life of leadership, character, and purpose in the 21st century.

Value Proposition

St. John's Episcopal School is an independent school providing a unique learning environment for children ages eight weeks through eighth grade. Remaining true to our Episcopal heritage, every child is known and encouraged through close personal attention to thrive and to lead a life of service and purpose. As an independent school, St. John's is able to make program decisions that best serve its students and community without mandate from the government or any other outside entity. Adopting a STEAM approach to teaching and learning is one such manifestation of this autonomy. STEAM integrates curricula across subject areas and enables students to collaborate on projects to create solutions to real world problems. This approach is hailed by leading educators as the best way to prepare students for high school, college, and the dynamic 21st-century workplace. Our engaging programs, coupled with our inclusive, faith-based culture, enrich each student's mind, body, and spirit, resulting in exceptional academic trajectories and exceptional individuals.

Episcopal Identity

As an Episcopal school, St. John's is dedicated to academic excellence and ethical conduct in an atmosphere that respects the dignity and beliefs of every student regardless of origin, background, ability, or religion. Rooted in Christian tradition and lively Episcopal-Anglican practice, St. John's is a diverse ministry of educational and human formation for children of all faiths. We encourage our students to be grateful for their blessings, understanding that a culture of thankfulness creates a healthy, happy environment in which students are free to learn, strive, question, and explore to their full potential. Understanding that love and mercy are the heart of the Christian gospel, we promote the gospel by our behavior rather than by enforcing doctrine. Ours is a community where all are welcome, wherever they are on their journeys of faith and life.

Strategic Goal:

Continuously align the mission and programs at the School with its Episcopal identity and heritage.

Progress to Plan:

1. Established a Unity Committee with representatives from the St. John's Church Bishop's Committee, the School Committee, and the School's Administration, to expand and enhance partnership and visibility of co-ministries in the St. John's community.
2. Expanded service-based learning opportunities on campus including involvement with the Rancho Santa Margarita Food Pantry, Park Terrace senior living facility, Soles for Souls, Isaiah House, Joy Jar Drives, and the Orangewood Children's Home.

Curriculum

St. John's will stay at the forefront of the STEAM approach to teaching and learning. The School is excited to embrace technology as an increasingly important instructional tool. At the same time, St. John's will remain true to its mission to balance innovation with tradition, embracing technology and any other emerging curriculum, pedagogy, or tool with thoughtful integration, professional development, and support. The School will continue to use a variety of data sources to ensure that St. John's students meet their highest academic potential and that all curricula are effective and aligned with best practices.

Strategic Goal:

Ensure that the School curriculum ideally prepares our students for success in high school, college, and the workplace beyond.

Progress to Plan:

1. Completed full integration of STEAM approach to teaching in learning across all three divisions through continued professional development programs and expanded resources.
2. Created the Cardinal Learner framework that identifies learning goals for students of all grade levels that are magnified through the STEAM approach to learning.

3. Introduced Middle Division Advisory Program to ensure every student receives even more close personal attention through weekly touchpoints between students and advisors, academic and personal guidance, and direct communication from advisor to families.
4. Launched Elementary and Middle Division pilot classrooms with enhanced technology and individualized physical learning spaces to enhance instruction and create a more positive and deeper learning experience for all students.
5. Expanded Reading Wonders in Elementary Division to enhance differentiated instruction and learning, yielding greater student engagement and increased growth on reading sections of ERB testing.
6. Added the Second Step social-emotional learning program and tabbed an outdoor education coordinator for the ECC, each supporting the well-rounded growth of our earliest learners on campus.
7. Completed a state-of-the-art Learning Commons that has increased weekly student usage across all divisions, supported early reading and research techniques, book clubs, study halls, and independent work for a range of students. Currently, the Learning Commons serves as one of the most trafficked spaces on campus, hosting students age two through eighth grade for classes, as well as study groups, meetings, and special events. Hundreds of students, teachers, and volunteers visit this flexible space that will stand as a hub for student life and learning for years to come.

Technology

Consistent with the School's mission, St. John's uses innovative technology in the classroom to enhance learning in ways that are age appropriate. With the continuing implementation of STEAM, technology is increasingly central to teaching and learning at St. John's. The School will continue to invest significantly to improve the technology infrastructure and provide every teacher with a full class set of appropriate learning devices when technology will enhance learning. This conscious and deliberate alternative to the 1:1 technology trend is based on extensive child development and brain research. Our philosophy intentionally minimizes screen time while engaging students in active, innovative learning opportunities that foster creativity and productivity.

Strategic Goal:

Provide technology for optimal impact on learning and operational efficiency.

Progress to Plan:

1. Instituted a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy in the Middle Division to offer students a choice in which device is most appropriate for their personal use. This has resulted in increased flexibility for students, as well as significant cost savings and reduced demands on IT infrastructure resources.
2. Implemented use of OneNote in the Middle Division to allow for greater access to course materials, collaboration, and information organization, both on and away from campus.
3. Provided each Elementary classroom with a full set of iPads to ensure age-appropriate technology leveraged on an as-needed basis for each student during select lessons to further learning objectives.
4. Piloted Room 16 in the Middle School to evaluate and expand flexible learning spaces and adaptable technology for collaborative and individual work to best differentiate for varied

learning abilities or styles, engaging students in the course material, and supporting a student-centered classroom experience.

Co-Curriculum

St. John's Co-Curricular programs play an integral part in fostering the intellectual and physical development of our students. St. John's targets three co-curricular areas – athletics, after school programs, and summer school – to complement its 21st-century curriculum and provide excellent offerings that support the diverse interests of its student body. The School seeks to provide students with viable, high quality, on-campus options for cultivating and developing interests beyond the classroom. In addition, School athletics will be a consistent source of spirit and pride.

Strategic Goal:

Offer co-curricular programs that engage students, their families, and the wider community in the life of the School.

Progress to Plan:

1. Integrated athletics programs and physical education classes for grades 5-8 into the footprint of the school day, increasing participation in School sports to over 75% of students.
2. Implemented Rising Cardinals PE program to engage elementary students in sports offerings at the School, which welcomed nearly 90 students in grades 2-4 in the 2018-19 school year over the course of three athletics seasons.
3. Opened the Konrad A. Reuland Memorial Field, allowing for a safe and sustainable playing field to host sports contests, campus and community events, and enhance the co-curricular program of the school year-round.
4. Strategically invested in audio visual technology, lights, and sound systems for performing arts through parent philanthropy in performing arts spaces to increase production value, student and audience experience, and student participation in co-curricular performing arts programs.
5. Increased diverse number of after school programs that support STEAM and the School's core program.
6. Offered summer programs that support the STEAM framework and academically prepare students before the start of the new school year.

Admissions

With the adoption of a STEAM approach to teaching and learning, St. John's has positioned itself as the leader in innovative education among independent schools in Southern California. Based on the curricular changes, coupled with the addition of a state-of-the-art STEAM-focused facility, the School is poised to see an increased demand for a St. John's education and thereby increase enrollment. Consistent with its mission, St. John's seeks to admit a diverse student population and promote inclusiveness through its enrollment process.

Strategic Goal:

Reach admissions targets and establish long-term strategies to optimize and maximize enrollment with students who are well aligned with the School's mission.

Progress to Plan:

1. Achieved moderate growth in total student enrollment from 2016-19.
2. Automated enrollment process to promote ease-of-use for our parent community.
3. Enhanced the International Student program, with students from multiple international backgrounds, creating a wider diversity of experience and perspective in the student body.

Finance

St. John's has entered a phase of growth and innovation. Employing a highly disciplined budget planning process is necessary to ensure successful funding of strategic initiatives that encourage growth and support high-level academic programs. Planning will be thoughtful and pragmatic to strategically invest resources in support of our objectives. Balancing the growth of the organization while maintaining an appropriate tuition base relative to the value of the education is paramount.

Strategic Goal:

Continuously update the financial model to ensure the School's long-term growth.

Progress to Plan:

1. Executed budgetary goals for enrollment, advancement, and expenditures, resulting in a financial surplus as of June 2019.
2. Facilitated key investments into technology, facilities, and marketing.
3. Enabled consistent investment into our faculty and staff with pay raises and expansion of benefits packages.

Advancement

The School will promote the St. John's brand in a clear, innovative manner to foster school spirit and increase awareness of the unique value of a St. John's education to support the School's admissions and philanthropic goals. Fundraising activities will be refreshed, institutional partnerships will be strengthened and expanded, and community awareness will increase. The visible support of faculty and staff, current families, and the broader community will support the overall success of the School.

Strategic Goal:

Admissions and Advancement will actively promote a consistent brand image, strengthen community awareness, drive new enrollment, and encourage philanthropy.

Progress to Plan:

1. Completed several capital campaigns to enhance the School's program and facilities:
 - a) Konrad A. Reuland Memorial Field

- b) Bishop John Harvey Taylor Learning Commons
 - c) Phase 1 of *Making Space for the Future*—the Michael D. Pratt Enrichment Center and the Middle Division classrooms—completed.
2. Increased participation and dollars raised through major fundraising initiatives: Cardinal Fund, Cardinella, and Golf Tournament.
 3. Increased membership in the PTF and larger parent volunteer base across the School community.
 4. Developed a targeted marketing and communications plan with strong brand focus and consistency.

Organizational Development

In its 30-year history, St. John's has been blessed with able, long-tenured leadership. Over the next several years, the School anticipates the retirement of some key leaders. The School will ensure proactive succession planning in order to ensure seamless transitions. Highly qualified leaders will be identified and developed internally and externally sourced where appropriate. In addition, the School Committee, in accordance with its bylaws, will continue to ensure that its members are spread across the divisions of the School, have diverse professional and personal backgrounds, and are sufficiently active and philanthropic in their service.

Strategic Goal:

Implement a succession plan that optimizes human resources and ensures seamless transition of administrative and governing leadership.

Progress to Plan:

1. Established Head of School succession committee and recruited Patrick McHonett as new Head of School, effective July 1, 2019.
2. Transitioned in new Middle School Principal/Associate Head for Innovation, James Jordan, and new ECC Principal Susie Canchola.
3. Restructured Admissions and Advancement departments under one director to promote a consistent, strategic marketing plan for all constituencies, effectively shepherding prospective families through a pipeline to current students and later alumni engagement and building a culture of philanthropy throughout.

Facilities

The facilities at St. John's will continuously be evaluated and updated to support St. John's mission and 21st-century education. With the addition of a STEAM building, improvements to the gym and outdoor sport courts, and enhancements to the library, the facilities will support the STEAM program, integrate a robust technology infrastructure, and enhance the School's athletic and enrichment offerings. The campus will be safe, welcoming, and aesthetically appealing.

Strategic Goal:

Provide facilities that are safe, attractive, and ideally support the School's mission and its innovative, 21st-century program.

Progress to Plan:

1. Completed Konrad A. Reuland Memorial Field, allowing for a safe and sustainable playing field to host sports contests, campus and community events, and enhance the co-curricular program of the school year-round.
2. Completed Bishop John Harvey Taylor Learning Commons, vaulting our students' research and learning experiences well into the 21st Century by creating adaptive learning and collaboration spaces geared toward students becoming conscientious evaluators of information literacy.
3. Completed Phase 1 of *Making Space for the Future Campaign*, to evaluate and expand flexible learning spaces and adaptable technology for group and individual work to best differentiate for varied learning abilities or styles, engaging students in the course material, and supporting a student-centered experience.