



2013 Strategic Plan

Pine Lake Preparatory
Prepare. Nurture. Lead. Engage.

Strategic Plan





Strategy I: Programs



Strategy I: Programs



Goal 1.1

We will fully utilize the advantages of a K-12 Campus.

A significant amount of effort is placed on fully utilizing our K-12 campus. From a curricular standpoint, teachers across grade levels meet monthly to create a substantial and comprehensive K-12 subject level curriculum that is free from gaps and overlaps. Additionally, Upper School staff and students work to interact with Lower School students as reading buddies and ambassadors. Additional work can be done in this area by engaging our Middle School and Upper School students as tutors and mentors for younger students.



Goal 1.2

We will continually improve curricular programs with emphasis on STEM, Foreign Languages and Fine Arts.

Pine Lake Preparatory has increased course offerings in STEM and Fine Arts. We have adopted the Project Lead the Way program for STEM education in grades 6-12. We have added classes in a systematic sequence to create a dynamic STEM program. We have significantly increased foreign language exposure in grades K-5 by hiring additional teachers. Daily Spanish instruction will produce substantially improved results over a period of time. Fine Arts programs continue to grow, with the greatest growth in orchestra and band. With the addition of the performing arts auditorium, we foresee an increase of interest in the next two years. We need to increase the number of digital arts classes that we offer.



Goal 1.3

We will provide opportunities to explore and delve into various interest areas through electives and extra-curricular offerings.

Elective and extra-curricular opportunities at Pine Lake Preparatory have evolved tremendously over the past three years. More than ever, students have the ability and also flexibility to be a part of a myriad of programs:

Curricular Opportunities:

- The Middle School and Upper School continue to strengthen the existing fine arts electives (Visual Arts, Theatre, Chorus and Instrumental Band), by implementing advanced level courses, in addition to high interest offerings including Musical Theatre, Guitar, Computer Aided Art, Animation I/II, Creative Writing, and 3D Visual Arts. Furthermore, we have added an Orchestra program that has grown by 55% since its introduction in 2013.
- The Middle School and Upper School have also rolled out the Project Lead the Way STEM curriculum that is offered as an elective for students. Although our initial offerings were limited to Design and Modeling (Middle School), Animation and Robotics (Middle School) and Introduction to Engineering (Upper School), we have expanded opportunities to include Green Architecture (Middle School), Flight and Space (Middle School) and Principles of Engineering (Upper School) over the past year. The goal is to continue to expand the program offerings at the Middle School and Upper School, while starting a feeder program at the Lower School. After enrolling 41 students in the initial Middle School pilot in 2014, the STEM program has grown to include over 60% of the students in the middle school (272 students). At the Upper School, enrollment in STEM courses has grown over 50% since 2014.

Strategy I: Programs



Goal 1.3

We will provide opportunities to explore and delve into various interest areas through electives and extra-curricular offerings.

Curricular Opportunities Continued:

- The Dual Enrollment program at the Upper School has afforded students the opportunity to take college courses that have a 100% transfer-guarantee to any public NC university. These courses, taken at local community colleges, are available to junior and senior students and have expanded our curricular/elective offerings tremendously. The North Carolina Virtual Public School has also been made available to students over the past few years, further opening the door for students wishing to take additional high interest courses. Approximately 25 students a year participate in the dual enrollment program, while traditionally about 45 students will enroll in a North Carolina Virtual Public School course each year.

Extra Curricular Opportunities:

- Pine Lake Preparatory has done a tremendous job offering an array of scholastic and student interest extra curricular opportunities. The Upper School offers over 25 student clubs including Art Club, Archery Club, Chess Club, Photography Club, Science Olympiad, Student Council, Excel Club, Spanish Club, Young Republicans Club, Spanish Club, Debate Club, Beta Club, Spirit Club, Outdoor Club and Glee Club. Furthermore, academic honor clubs have been established and expanded, to include National Art Honor Society, Math Honor Society, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, International Thespian Honor Society, and TRI-M Music Honor Society. In order to promote the clubs and also to spark enthusiasm, the Upper School hosts a formal Club Day each fall.
- As a member of the North Carolina Scholastic Activities Association, the Middle School has expanded club offerings to include Math Counts, Science Olympiad, Art Showcase, Show Choir and Chess Club over the past three years. These competitive scholastic opportunities are offered in addition to student interest clubs like yearbook, school newspaper, dance club, running club, robotics club, and recycling club.
- The Lower School continues to offer an expansive selection of Explorations, in addition to their after school program, After3@PLP. The latest session of Explorations included over 6 different opportunities each day (Monday – Thursday), including Show Choir, Piano, Karate, Phys Ed, Chorus, Orchestra, JR Engineers, and S'more Math. New opportunities are made available quarterly to families at the Lower School. In the latest session of Explorations (session 2), 238 students enrolled.



Goal 1.4

We will provide opportunities and encourage participation in athletics throughout K-12 campus.

Pine Lake Preparatory has increased its percentage of student athletes from 2014 to 2015, from 30% to 37% this fall. The number of students involved in athletics, in the Upper School alone, has reached a total of over two hundred, while the Middle School has increased its participation to over 120 student athletes. The excitement and growth of our athletic programs will continue, as we continue to become more successful on the playing fields. Our fall teams all participated in the North Carolina High School playoffs, demonstrating our student athletes' commitment to our athletic program.

With the construction of the new turf multi-use field, the baseball field and the softball field, the athletic program will continue to grow with overall support from the school and community. We will add lacrosse to the Upper School sport choices this year as a club team, with plans to make it a varsity sport in the Spring of 2016.

Strategy I: Programs



Goal 1.5

We will facilitate a collaborative environment where the entire Pine Lake Preparatory community works to provide optimal chance and choice in Post Secondary Education.

The multitude of curricular offerings at Pine Lake Preparatory, and our ability to prepare students for success at the next level, is one of our greatest strengths (3.01). Specific to standards and objectives, the adoption and continuous study of the Common Core State Standards K-12 has forced us to change the face of instructional delivery, by moving towards more inquiry-based learning. Through higher order learning methods, teachers are encouraging students to think critically through the development of analytical skills, and the practice of rationalization and collaboration with peers to achieve a common goal. This is a paradigm shift from the traditional practices of being told what to think and what to regurgitate.

Through diverse course offerings, we are able to provide students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills. Whereas classes at the Upper School are offered at the standard, honors and Advanced Placement levels, the Middle School utilizes performance data to place students in classes that are conducive to their ability level. Scaffolding classes in this way enables teachers to ensure that the instructional delivery of all content is accessible for all learners. Over the past eight years, curriculum at Pine Lake Preparatory has evolved to meet the ever-changing needs of the modern workforce. Through the introduction of courses like Introduction to Engineering, Design and Modeling, Green Architecture, Principles of Engineering, Public Speaking, Ethics of Technology and a Spanish Immersion program, Pine Lake Preparatory produces students who will graduate more competitive in the global marketplace. Specific and updated course offerings are available in the Upper School Curriculum Guide and Middle School Planning Guide.

In addition to our rigorous and extensive class offerings, Pine Lake Preparatory also has a very sound Exceptional Children's program to offer necessary support for students who struggle not only academically, but also with learning the life skills needed to be successful. Pine Lake Preparatory offers both inclusion and resource level courses, taught by highly qualified and licensed EC Teachers.



Goal 1.6

We will leverage communication channels to share current programs and solicit feedback to enhance future offerings.

Each year, conversations take place with students, teachers, and others in our community to develop a better understanding of where our delivered curriculum and additional external offerings can be improved across campus. In some cases, formal surveys are administered. In others, there are conversations within buildings, often between staff, to determine how we might alter our offerings to better deliver a quality education to our students. Based on information gleaned, we are building a state of the art science building, developing athletic, and expanding curriculum (both in the classroom and out) to include more project based opportunities, as well as STEM courses. Furthermore, students still drive many of the club activities they take part in during the school year. In addition, we have upgraded our phone communication system and given our school website a facelift. Social media continues to grow as a tool to help gather, as well as deliver, information within the community.

Growth or change has to be deliberate, however. As we look to the future of Pine Lake Preparatory, we must not succumb to current fads or trends. We must continue to identify needs within our student body and community so we can continue to meet their academic and social needs. Conversations, surveys, and media sources will help us stay current within the processes of education, so we can continue to be an education leader in North Carolina.



Strategy II: Resources



Strategy II: Resources



Goal 2.1

We will continue to expand and refine the campus master plan.

The current campus is nearing its build-out potential. When the STEM building and Auditorium are complete, all buildable land on our main campus will be complete. Further growth would have to come from the acquisition of new property. An ongoing concern is parking. With the completion of the STEM building, 83 spots will be added. This will alleviate some, but not all, of our parking issues. As finances dictate, we should explore opportunities to pave and expand all of our current lots.



Goal 2.2

We will seek opportunities to acquire land to facilitate our growing programs.

In 2014/2015, Pine Lake Preparatory acquired two strategic pieces of property. One piece was located directly South of the Pine Lake Preparatory campus and is currently the construction site for our new STEM building and Auditorium. The other property is located 2.5 miles North of the Pine Lake Campus and is under construction as a full athletic complex. In 2015/2016, Pine Lake Preparatory will continue to build out both properties for full utilization in 2016/2017.



Goal 2.3

We will maintain a plan to recruit, support, and retain top talent.

Quality teacher retention and recruitment improved in 2014/2015. In every case, teachers that voluntarily left Pine Lake Preparatory either moved out of the area or changed careers. In no case did we lose a teacher to a surrounding area school. We are doing a better job casting a wide net in search of teachers in high need areas. As a high achieving school, we are receiving a higher level of candidate than ever before. Another strength of Pine Lake Preparatory is our teacher accountability and support. School leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through classroom walk-throughs, in addition to the state prescribed evaluation tool. As evident in our evaluation tracking tool and annual Teacher Working Condition Survey, it is common for administration to be in the classroom informally, but also that every teacher receives formal observations and written feedback specific to teaching and learning in their classroom. Formal and documented feedback includes a reflection on the lesson observed, in addition to the teacher's leadership capacity, ability to create a safe/respectful classroom environment, knowledge of content, teaching methods and individual efforts to continually develop their craft. Teacher self evaluations and the creation of professional development plans are required and reviewed throughout the year to make sure all teachers are reflective and focused on personal professional growth that ultimately positively impacts students. In addition to aiding beginning teachers, Pine Lake Preparatory also has a history of providing similar supports for beginning administrators - mentors, reflections, etc.

Strategy II: Resources



Goal 2.3

We will maintain a plan to recruit, support, and retain top talent.

A Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) program is in place to support and mentor teachers in their first three years. This induction period mandates that each beginning teacher be paired with a veteran teacher for the entirety of their initial three years. Whereas they often meet informally on a weekly basis, mentor/mentees are required to formally meet once per month and conduct observations with one another. Meetings and observations are all logged and recorded for documentation.

To continue this positive trend, Pine Lake Preparatory needs to be more competitive with teacher salaries, to develop relationships with university teacher training programs, and to attend national recruitment fairs.



Goal 2.4

We will operate with fiscal responsibility.

Much time and effort is spent in preparing our fiscal budget, as the areas of staffing, resources, facilities, technology and support services are all reviewed in great detail for us to adequately meet the needs of our population. We have received 5 consecutive clean audits. In addition, we have a healthy cash reserve on hand for unbudgeted items/resources that are needed. Our policies and procedures are well-defined in the application for these areas as well.

We have a very stringent hiring process, in order to obtain qualified professional and support staff. Each year, we review the number of students projected, along with classes offered, to assess our staffing levels. Instructional time is protected, and material resources are allocated, according to the needs of the staff and students. Our annual budget supports these endeavors. Moving forward, we must work to continue a high level of fiscal discipline. Gradually, building cash reserves will allow us to pay our debt at a faster pace and put Pine Lake Preparatory in a better position moving forward.

Strategy II: Resources



Goal 2.5

We will support an evolving learning environment with appropriate and relevant educational resources.

Our technology infrastructure has vastly improved, as we hired an outside company to oversee it. New servers and switches were put in place for better access. We rolled out new MacBook Air devices to all 6th - 12th grade students this year. In addition, we have placed 5 iPads in each Lower School classroom. Our classrooms are using Smartboards and Apple TV's when instructing. We use a ticketing system to manage our technology needs. We have a Technology Committee that assists in assessing the technology needs of our population. An area for improvement would be to either employ or contract a source for working with our staff and students on the application of software and devices. We are currently in the process of defining this for roll out. Further development of a long-term technology plan is in progress. It is also essential to continue to grow our staff's technical literacy to ensure that we are maximizing the great technology that is now in place.



Goal 2.6

We will provide and maintain effective channels of communication.

We recently moved our school website to a user-friendly platform, allowing staff members without coding experience to make updates. This allows principals and assistant principals, as well as the communications lead, to add content more easily, resulting in a more dynamic and current site.

We are in the process of migrating to a new, more robust content management system called SchoolMessenger, which will be used for everyday email notifications, in addition to recorded phone messages when time is of the essence. In addition, the school emails provided by Pine Lake Preparatory to Middle and Upper School students will be added to the system so campus emails may be sent directly to those students.



Strategy III: Culture/Community



Strategy III: Culture/Community



Goal 3.1

We will develop and promote a culture of academic achievement.

Pine Lake Preparatory seeks to prepare, nurture, lead and engage students. We take pride in our academic success and continually reflect on new ways to improve teaching and learning in the classroom. Beginning with student data: we continually collect and analyze achievement information from numerous assessments, including standardized tests (EOGs and EOCs), formative and summative assessments, MClass, Fountas and Pinnell, SAT, ACT, PSAT, PLAN and AP Scores and Score reports. Additional data sources include Capital Projects Survey, graduation data, End of Year Surveys, and stakeholder feedback. Comparison and trend data are collected and analyzed. Data on percentage of students interested in specific future college majors and future career choices are collected from ACT, PLAN and EXPLORE results. The Beginning Teacher Support Program Survey, BTSP Audit, and the Licensure Audit are used for continual program evaluation to gain insight on areas of strength and improvement needs.

Using this data, leadership and teachers have created supports specific to teaching (PD) and learning (programs). Through the implementation of professional development, we have training in the evaluation, interpretation and use of the data. At the start of each school year, a presentation occurs that is focused on understanding our data sources and results, as well as what they mean. The data helps us identify successful curriculum programs, teaching strategies, and/or the implementation of new programs, as well as helping us identify areas of weakness. We provide our teachers additional professional development by sending them to specific content area classes offered by DPI, NCCTM, Discovery Ed and Scholastic.

An identified area of weakness includes math curriculum and instruction. As a result, Lower School teachers were provided professional development for a new math curriculum, Math in Focus. From a student perspective, we have implemented enrichment and remedial programs, expanded course offerings, created new staffing assignments, and made changes to the bell schedule to help increase math performance. As part of our continuous improvement action plans, we have implemented the Moby Max Math and Reading program. Moby's adaptive curriculum creates a unique education plan for each student, enriching gifted students to progress as quickly as they like, while simultaneously ensuring that remedial students get the extra instruction they need to fill in gaps. We will continue to assess the results this year to determine if these action plans indicate improvement.

Another recognized weakness in the analysis of comparison and trend data associated with AP scores initiated the establishment of a professional learning team (PLC) for Advanced Placement teachers. The team holds regular, consistent monthly meetings and addresses topics such as; the targeting and identification of potential students for AP classes, best practices to improve free response section scores, and completion of a mathematical correlation between test scores and class grades. This PLC will continue to analyze comparison and trend data to improve instructional practices and evaluate their effectiveness.



Goal 3.2

We will develop and promote a culture of community involvement.

We continue to support the PTO, the Gifting/Stewardship Committee (e.g., Development Director) and the Boosters organization to announce opportunities to volunteer and to encourage families to take part in community events, from athletics games to special events including Grandparents Day, the Father Daughter Dance, the Boosters BBQ, NovemberFest and the Annual Golf Tournament and Ladies Luncheon.

Strategy III: Culture/Community



We will develop and promote a culture of community involvement.

We are fortunate to have an engaged community that responds when asked to contribute to teacher appreciation days and classroom needs, both with their time and their financial gifts. More coverage can be given to volunteers and their contributions in the weekly Pride Post newsletter, to show appreciation and to foster more involvement from the wider community. In addition, regular ongoing volunteering opportunities may be posted on the web site for easier reference.

Social media can be a powerful tool in building a sense of community, and also to motivate people to act. We will increase the use of FaceBook to create buzz about upcoming events.

As of October 2014, Pine Lake Preparatory has added a full-time Development Director to our staff to plan and manage capital improvement fundraising events, such as Monthly Non-Uniform Day, the Annual Fund, the Annual Golf Tournament and Ladies Luncheon, as well as the ongoing Capital Campaign: Deeply Rooted. Future Driven.

We have implemented a donor software system, DonorPerfect, to track and manage all donations and pledges made to Pine Lake Preparatory.

We are also adding a "Ways to Give" section to the Pine Lake Preparatory website to provide valuable information to potential donors and to streamline the donation process. The "Ways to Give" section will allow donors to research if their employer provides a matching gift for their donation to Pine Lake Preparatory or for their volunteer time at Pine Lake Preparatory. Additionally, through this link, the donor will be able to access the forms/electronic link needed to complete their matching gift request. We will continue to promote the importance of matching gifts for donations and volunteer time within the Pine Lake Preparatory community.

We will continue with our proven fundraising events each year, while simultaneously researching ways to improve current events and new event implementation. The overall goal is to increase the percentage of families that give to Pine Lake Preparatory. We will continue to recognize sponsors who have given \$500 or more to support a campus event or initiative in a featured article in the Pride Post. We are also implementing the process of asking each new family at the start of a new school year to enter into a three-year pledge commitment to Pine Lake Preparatory. We will seek opportunities to engage our Alumni in giving back to Pine Lake Preparatory through volunteer opportunities or financial gifts.

Strategy III: Culture/Community



Goal 3.3

We will develop and promote a culture of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

Through its four core values, prepare, nurture, lead, engage, Pine Lake strives to promote a culture embodying trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

The school has cultivated trustworthiness through both communication and transparency. Pine Lake seeks to keep its stakeholders informed through various mediums (email, website, Facebook, phone calls, news features, and face-to-face contact) to promote open communication in which parents and other stakeholders can participate within an open culture. Transparency has played a significant role in meeting this objective. The Board of Directors has worked to be transparent in their work through the accessibility of financial documents, policies, and meeting data via the Pine Lake website. Parents and stakeholders are encouraged to attend board meetings, but are also able to access the information electronically. The board's work in updating and developing policies has assisted in meeting this goal as well its commitment to fiscal responsibility.

Pine Lake offers students access to varied experiences and activities, both within and outside the school day. Teachers are held to a high standard and while they have high expectations for students, this is balanced within a nurturing environment. A culture of belonging is created and while it may appear intangible, culture is carefully cultivated, foremost, by upholding our core values.

While we are proud of the culture we have created, it must be continually cultivated through planning and direct action. The board should continue to practice transparency and develop policy that is updated and relevant to the school. Communications may be defined further and should extend into the community at-large, defining Pine Lake as a school of excellence.



Goal 3.4

We will promote and develop a culture of giving of time, talent, and financial resources.

We will continue to host the Annual Meet and Greet for New Families, as this meeting is an important event which educates new families about the charter school model and why financial partnering with families, corporations and members of the broader community is so important for capital improvements. The meeting also sets the tone for parent involvement as part of the Pine Lake Preparatory culture.

At the Meet and Greet, a member of the Gifting/Stewardship Committee (e.g., Development Director) and a member of the PTO will each present opportunities for parents to volunteer their time and talents in their children's classrooms, as well as the larger Pine Lake Preparatory community.

The three main groups needing regular volunteers - the Gifting/Stewardship Committee (e.g., Development Director), the PTO and the Boosters organization - have made great strides to communicate each other's events and promote volunteerism across groups and will continue to do so.

Our Upper School students have the opportunity to meet the needs of the community through service learning. Students are required to participate in 40 hours per year of service learning projects.

Strategy III: Culture/Community



We will use technology appropriately to promote the school culture.

The weekly e-newsletter, the Pride Post, is sent on Fridays and lists events for the upcoming week. About 60% of families are viewing the weekly newsletter on a mobile device; a more mobile-friendly format was adopted this year. Each week, the newsletter gets 825+ unique opens.

FaceBook is often used to promote school events, student achievements and involvement in athletics and clubs. Efforts will be made to better utilize Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, which are more commonly used by students, according to data.

Teachers are encouraged to use a multi-media approach to learning and will sometimes let the communications lead know when something they are doing in the class is “newsworthy.” More efforts will be made in this area to give parents and the external community a glimpse into classroom activities.
