

2024  
— to —  
2029



30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
YEAR 1 PROGRESS REPORT



International School of Indiana

# ABOUT OUR PLAN

In preparation for the milestone of the International School of Indiana's 30th year, the school launched a five-year strategic plan in 2024, intended to be a catalyst for progress as well as an opportunity to imagine what our school can be in the next 30 years.

A year-long strategic planning process engaged a broad range of ISI stakeholders and helped shape the priorities the school will focus on over the next five years. The plan pushes ISI beyond its comfort zone but is also grounded in reality, considering available resources and recognizing how complex and multidimensional the school's work is. ISI hopes the plan's broader vision and purpose provide a unified meaning for our work and will energize the ISI community to collaborate in the relentless pursuit of our goals.

Over the past year, the school's Board of Directors and Senior Leadership have defined the metrics ISI will utilize to measure success. These, along with detailed objectives and action items, are guiding the school's leaders. Implementation has been taking place across schools and departments, and in alignment with the vision and goals articulated herein. The Senior Leadership team is responsible for the implementation of the strategic plan, deploying resources to ensure that their teams develop a strong commitment to the strategic plan. The following is a summary of the progress in year one.



International School of Indiana

# PILLARS OF THE PLAN

The pillars of our Strategic Plan are integral to our future, helping to prioritize our ambitions and guide our improvement efforts and financial investments.

Each pillar has shared characteristics:

- Aligning with the school's mission,
- Reflecting important commitments to our families, employees, and community as a whole,
- Recognizing our responsibility to carefully steward all of the school's assets and resources,
- Representing current areas of strength or desired areas of strength.

You can access a full copy of the Strategic Plan, which includes the vision and goals, on our website



**1** COMMUNITY CULTURE



**2** DISTINCT ACADEMICS



**3** SUSTAINABILITY



**4** ENGAGEMENT



**5** GROWTH



International School of Indiana

**In year one of the strategic plan, our focus was dedicated to laying a strong foundation to support our ambitious five-year goals by building the systems, structures, and strategies needed to achieve our vision for community, culture, distinct academics, sustainability, engagement, and growth.**

### 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The 2024-2025 school year marked the 30th Anniversary of the International School of Indiana! Celebrating this milestone well, particularly to support community building, alumni engagement efforts, and fund development, was a strategic strategy supporting many goals in the plan.

Since its founding, ISI has grown from a visionary idea into a vibrant, diverse community that champions academic excellence, intercultural understanding, and holistic development. Our commitment to the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum and our diverse environment has empowered hundreds of students from all over the world to achieve their fullest potential, both academically and personally.

The year-long 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration engaged current students, families, faculty, staff, alumni and their families, founders and former board members, former faculty and staff, and community partners. The celebration culminated on a special anniversary weekend, hosted March 21 through 23.

The weekend was filled with opportunities to reconnect, reflect on our institution's journey, and celebrate our collective achievements.

All of the school's former Head of Schools and building namesakes were in attendance. In total, over 80 alumni engaged in events and activities throughout the weekend, including many of the school's founding families. Sidney Taurel was presented with The Order of the Gryphon at the Founders Dinner.

Two record-breaking fundraising events were hosted during the weekend. The Timmy Game raised over \$4,000 for Timmy Global Health (an outside philanthropic priority of the Upper School). The International Gala, chaired by founding and current family Susan Thomas and Monica Morrissey ('04), had over 360 attendees and raised \$341,479 for the ISI Annual Fund.

We sincerely thank every member of the ISI community who joined us for this milestone celebration!

## ENHANCING ACADEMICS

### LEGO Education

To enhance STEAM, ISI introduced LEGO education in the Lower School during the 2024-2025 school year. LEGO Education has built a robust program of scaffolded lessons that will enhance learning, and ISI is thrilled to add this to the Lower School curriculum. LEGO Education focuses on hands-on learning, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity, which aligns closely with the Primary Years Programme and the approach of ISI. LEGO materials were in place for the school year, and a review is underway of the Programme of Inquiry to integrate authentic opportunities for students to explore and learn using LEGO BricQ Motion and LEGO Spike Essential, with the latter having a robotics component for the older students in the Lower School.

### SAT Prep

ISI is adding SAT prep for grades 10 and 11 students as a part of the curriculum. ISI is uniquely positioned to help students learn key strategies based on their learning style that boost scores and achieve results colleges notice.

### Academic Competitions

Throughout the year, students participate in academic competitions locally, nationally, and globally that showcase ISI students' abilities.

The Lower School doubled the number of participants competing in international mathematics competitions.

The Upper School added new competitions this year in Biology, Chemistry, Math, English, Spanish, French, and Keyboard Typing.

The ISI Upper School is also expanding the X Block options, so there will be more external academic competitions that showcase the academic abilities of ISI students while developing skills and gaining experience.

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

### Cross Collaboration

To vertically articulate the ISI curriculum by subject to ensure consistency and coherence, meetings began between Lower School and Upper School faculty in English, Math, and World Language each semester for programme coordinators, specialists, and language teachers to meet and review learning data. Programme Coordinators also met quarterly to discuss curriculum and review student learning data.

### Action/Service Learning

School leadership worked to strengthen the ISI action/service learning program through developing committed partnerships with local community groups and organizations.

We are growing partnerships with Coats for Kids, Indy Book Project, and Changing Footprints in addition to Timmy Global Health, with a focus on sustainable projects that incorporate reuse and recycling activities. The Lower School introduced a Indy Humane Society donation drive which may expand to the Upper School in the 2025-26 school year.

### Community Partnerships

To strengthen partnerships with higher education institutions that connect with our school mission, Upper School has created links to the Purdue EPICs program, Grade 10 students going to Butler science labs, Grade 11 TOK lessons with Ball State University philosophy outreach program, and student feedback on the Butler international degree model.

To utilize ISI community connections to develop distinct incursions and excursions for ISI students and families, the Lower School has increased the number of guest speakers and specialists linked to units of inquiry and participated in unique outside learning opportunities that enrich the student experience.



## IMPROVING SUSTAINABILITY AND AIDING GROWTH

### Choice Participating School

After careful consideration, the International School of Indiana's participation in Indiana's Choice Scholarship Program (Voucher Program), which began in 2017, was expanded to all eligible grade levels in year one of the strategic plan. The expansion made it possible for eligible families with Kindergarten through Grade 12 students to participate in the program for the 2024-2025 academic year.

The Indiana Choice Scholarship (Voucher) Program provides a partial tuition payment of approximately \$6,000 to \$7,300 per eligible student for the school year. Currently, participation in the Choice program provides a partial but important funding source for the school's financial aid program, as Choice dollars are allocated to a family's financial aid package. In 2024-2025, Choice Vouchers covered approximately 35% of financial aid packages.

Creating a sustainable funding source for financial aid has been a top strategic priority of school leaders, aiding both recruitment and retention efforts, and also financial sustainability. In total, ISI families received more than \$3.6 million in financial aid for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Prior to participation in the Choice Scholarship Program, the majority of financial aid offered by ISI reflected an unfunded tuition discount, meaning financial aid came almost exclusively from the institution's gross revenue rather than financial aid backed by endowed scholarships or grants. In the first year of the plan, critical steps were taken to address immediate funding needs for financial aid, as well as long-term needs.

### Endowment Planning

A task force, made up of current and former board and finance committee members, completed its work in the fall, recommending the establishment of an endowment with the Central Indiana Community Foundation. Two funds have been established, one focused on financial aid and the other focused on helping to care for our campus, facilities, and urgent needs.

### Reserve

Building a reserve, with a goal of \$2 million, is a priority during this strategic plan period. Initial steps were taken in year one to ensure that ISI will have a reserve in place at the conclusion of the plan that will help sustain the school's operations during a crisis, provide flexibility to invest in strategic opportunities, and demonstrate financial prudence and long-term sustainability.

### Campaign Planning

The next capital campaign is expected to include fundraising priorities for endowment building, maintenance of existing campus and facility assets, and new construction. The school did important work in planning and preparing for what it anticipates to be its next campaign. The silent or quiet phase of a capital campaign is an essential stage for a successful campaign, as it ensures the priorities are realistic and attainable and that enough support can be generated to ensure the projects are viable. Silent phases of a campaign also allow the school to make necessary changes before a campaign is publicly launched.

### Lilly Grant

In August, the Lilly Endowment announced a Marion County K-12 Private Schools Initiative that aims to help private schools initiate, enhance, or expand compelling programs and projects that show promise to improve their students' academic achievement and the prospects for post-secondary success. During year one of the strategic plan, ISI successfully received the Phase 1 Planning Grant and submitted grant requests for Phases 2 and 3 in alignment with the school's strategic priorities. ISI hopes to be able to announce updates about Phases 2 and 3, and how they have advanced strategic priorities during year two.

## NEW WAYS FOR FAMILIES TO FEEL CONNECTED AND INVOLVED IN THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION

### Head of School Led Events

Creating opportunities to build community-related programming was a priority in year one. The Heritage Panels continued, but with a modified approach that included recordings that are more accessible to the community. New this school year, ISI parents and caretakers were invited to participate in a Book Club led by Head of School Elizabeth Head. The Book Club read two books: The Anxious Generation by Jonathan Haidt and Never Enough by Jennifer Breheny Wallace. A Couch to 5K Parent and Staff Running Club, also led by the Head of School, created additional opportunities to build community.

### Finalsite Integration

ISI further utilized and integrated with Finalsite so that the Enrollment and Billing solutions are on a single platform. Additionally, ISI began development of the Finalsite app. The mobile app was tested throughout the second semester by a group of families and employees. The app will be formally launched for the 2025-2026 school year, providing a streamlined and consolidated hub for parents and caretakers to receive important information from the school and reducing the number of emails sent to families.

### Homeroom

ISI migrated all child care, enrichment, and camp registration and notifications to Homeroom, helping ISI improve the administration of the programs. The all-in-one platform simplified registration for parents and caretakers, allowed ISI to process refunds with one click, provide tax information to families, and automatically manage waitlists for popular enrichment programs. The program is also being utilized for summer programming.

### SeeSaw

In year one, SeeSaw was launched for Lower School families. The transformative online learning platform provided a digital portfolio and learning tool for students, teachers, and families. Families received an authentic window into the classroom where they were able to share in their student's learning through pictures, videos, and regular work that documented their growth and development.

## MARKETING, BRANDING, AND ENROLLMENT

### Enrollment Growth

Investing in marketing initiatives that generate high-quality leads for growth priorities has resulted in increased inquiries (up 30% this enrollment cycle).

The ambassador programs (both parent and student) have been effective tools for enrollment growth. Student Ambassadors are a regular part of Information Sessions, highlighting not only their language but experiences as ISI students.

Parent and student ambassadors support both on-campus and external community events, which the school's admissions team hosts and participates in. The combined efforts have supported enrollment growth goals, with applicants up 22% and new student enrollment up 30% thus far in the enrollment cycle.

### Athletics

In year one, ISI began developing a revised plan for athletics branding that allows for visual identity, professionalism, and overall image, influencing how fans, sponsors, and the broader public perceive and connect with the school. Project priorities have included athletic signage, equipment, and apparel that contribute to the perception of Gryphon Athletics.



## IMPROVED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### Increasing Understanding of the IB

As part of an effort to increase an understanding of the IB, focus was placed on adding visual representations related to the IB curriculum across our campuses. New displays in both Taurel and Blackwell were added to strategically link the IB curriculum and student life at ISI, providing a visual representation of our educational offerings. Additionally, we began developing resources aimed at improving parental knowledge and understanding of an ISI education. New IB materials are to be prominently featured on the Family Portal, offering insights into the Primary Years Program (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), and Diploma Programme (DP), which are being created to support current and prospective families.

### Food Service

ISI has prioritized improving cafeteria services and maintaining food costs within budget in an unpredictable environment. Meal Time, a new management tool, was added in year one of the plan to aid the school in overseeing the food service program, reducing waste, improving quality, and better managing expenses.

### Summer Programming

Summer camp has expanded to include programming for 3- and 4-year-olds attending ISI. In addition, partnerships have been made with a local athletics organization to provide a six-week sports-focused camp.

### Human Capital

The human resources team was expanded to better support the school's Human Capital. Changes have been made to procedures, with a focus on implementing better systems to support employees.

## CAMPUS PLANNING

### Safety and Security

Preparedness for safety and security is ongoing work. In year one, ISI improved safety policies and procedures, added additional security cameras, and invested in a more robust walkie-talkie system.

Safety requires attention to physical structures, but also to IT infrastructure. Refreshed schedules and project lists for IT infrastructure and buildings have been prioritized for the strategic plan period.

### Maintenance

Facilities audits are underway, and an extensive project list is in development, allowing ISI to establish a CAPEX budget for current and future renovation projects.

Research of the latest IT trends for adequate connectivity, work productivity, and defense against cyberattacks will inform additional projects and priorities in subsequent years of the plan.

### Future Building Projects

A significant gift in 2025 was the Indiana Sports Corp's gift of a replica Eiffel Tower. The tower will become a centerpiece on campus, and a task force worked throughout the year on campus planning. With priorities approved by the Board of Directors, preparations are underway to share a master plan for the continued growth of the campus. Project plans are anticipated to be announced in year two, along with other future building projects.

## ACCREDITATION

ISI spent year one participating in the self-study processes for the IB and ISACS, which require school-led evaluations to assess the school's strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement. All ISI employees served on committees and prepared self-study reports, a key component of the accreditation cycle. The accreditation cycle continues for both IB and ISACS in year two, with accreditation teams visiting the campus in the fall.





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**Learn more at [www.isind.org/about/plan](http://www.isind.org/about/plan)**