POMFRET SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

PROGRESS REPORT

SCHOOL YEAR 2025–2026

YEAR FOUR



Dear Members of the Pomfret Community,

Four years ago, Pomfret launched *Change Makers and Problem Solvers*, a bold strategic plan designed to guide the School into the future. Since then, we have made meaningful progress across all three strategic initiatives: Integrated Educational Model, Community and Belonging, and Stewardship and Sustainability.

Now in Year Four of a five-year plan, much of our work has moved from launch to integration. New ideas are becoming established practices. Pilot programs are becoming durable systems. Investments made over several years are beginning to take root in the daily life of the School.

This year's progress reflects the shared effort of faculty, staff, students, trustees, families, alumni, and friends. Together, we continued to strengthen the academic and co-curricular experience, deepen our commitment to belonging and wellbeing, and steward Pomfret's resources with care and purpose.

This Year Four report outlines some of the most meaningful steps taken over the past twelve months. As we look toward the final year of the plan, we do so with gratitude for the work already accomplished and with a clear sense of momentum for the work still ahead.

Together, we are building a stronger Pomfret.

Sincerely,



Heather Willis Daly

HEATHER WILLIS DALY
Head of School



Daryle T. Bost

DARYLE BOST '89
Chair, Board of Trustees

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IN JANUARY 2022, POMFRET RELEASED a new mission, vision, and strategic plan — closing one important chapter in the life of the School and opening another. As a decade-long period of growth and experimentation continues to give way to a new era of alignment and integration, we are pleased to present this Year Four progress report.

THESE ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS.



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INITIATIVE ONE

Integrated Educational Model

A school powered by students.

GOAL 1 PROGRAMMATIC ALIGNMENT
Increase coherence across academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs.

GOAL 2 CURRICULAR DEVELOPMENT
Forge new pathways to connect student learning with real world experiences and challenges.

GOAL 3 STUDENT AGENCY
Amplify student voice and choice in and beyond the classroom.

GOAL 4 MASTERY TRANSCRIPT
Launch a mastery-based approach to assessment, reporting, and transcript design.

Bringing a visionary program into even sharper focus.

- Departments began incorporating **AI literacy** outcomes into the curriculum, while the Director of Technological Innovation continued to lead the School's thoughtful use of artificial intelligence in support of teaching and learning.
- Students also launched a **Civic AI club** to explore the ethical use of artificial intelligence and its applications in a school setting.
- **College Counseling** continued to evolve, with a new mission and philosophy statement, clearer programming expectations for each form, and expanded support for future staffing and program growth.
- Pomfret strengthened its athletic program through increased support for **head varsity coaches**, additional recruiting resources, enhanced expectations for postgraduates, and new tools to assess the student experience in athletics and afternoon programming.

Primary Highlight

This year, Pomfret fully adopted competency-based learning (CBL). CBL is rooted in learning outcomes based on skills and behaviors established by the teacher for a specific course. Courses typically have between five and ten unique outcomes. After several years of careful planning, piloting, feedback, and refinement, all classes are now being assessed through a CBL model.

Pomfret also expanded the Pomfret Learning Record for all third and fourth formers, building time and adult support into the schedule to help students reflect on their learning, curate evidence, and tell a fuller story of who they are becoming.

This work represents one of the most significant academic shifts in Pomfret's recent history by giving students clearer expectations, more meaningful feedback, and a stronger understanding of their own growth over time.

Additional Actions

- Pomfret prioritized weekly student life programming time in the academic schedule, including **Leadership Academy**, form meetings, college counseling, and other community-building experiences. In particular, the School created a dedicated Leadership Academy curriculum and meeting calendar for student leaders.
- Pomfret reimagined the **Student Life Committee** of the Board of Trustees to include student participation, giving current students the opportunity to share their experience directly with trustees.
- Three program leaders attended the **ISEEN Catalyst Institute**, focused on bringing experiential pedagogy into the core of the student experience.
- Opening-of-school orientation was redesigned to include student leader-designed experiential elements, including an **off-campus overnight** for the freshman class led by senior leaders.
- More than half of the senior class completed more than one hundred **independent studies**, giving students meaningful opportunities to pursue self-directed academic work.
- The Director of Experiential Learning began mapping a multi-year plan for Pomfret's **experiential travel programs**.
- Pomfret continues to develop a more **cohesive approach to co-curricular learning** by bringing several important areas of student development under one overarching framework. By reducing fragmentation and aligning these efforts around shared goals and outcomes, this work is designed to better connect social-emotional learning, health and wellbeing, and student life programming.



INITIATIVE TWO

Community and Belonging

Be together, not the same.

GOAL 1 DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION
Build a diverse campus community that reflects the world in which we live.

GOAL 2 EQUITY AND INCLUSION
Give all students equitable access to the opportunities we offer and the resources they need to thrive.

GOAL 3 FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Reduce barriers that limit financial aid recipients' participation in the Pomfret Experience.

GOAL 4 FACILITIES AND RESOURCES
Update our physical plant, technology, and infrastructure to better serve people with disabilities.

Creating a place where everyone truly belongs.

- The School increased the **Incidental Fund** to better support non-tuition expenses and improve equity within the student experience.
- Pomfret continued to add **accessible doors and bathrooms** across campus, strengthening the School's commitment to accessibility and inclusion.
- A group was formed to partner with **Dining Services** to explore ways to elevate the Pomfret dining experience, and to help "fuel" student athletes on game days.
- Pomfret organized **a faculty cohort** for teachers in their second through fourth years, building on the success of an established cohort of teacher development for Year One teachers, adding a coaching element to help them feel more connected and supported.
- The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Office collaborated with various departments to collect, review, and analyze data related to **faculty retention and hiring**.

Primary Highlight

This year, Pomfret took a more systemic approach to belonging by examining the structures, supports, and experiences that shape daily student life. In particular, the School continued to invest in identity affirmation, student voice, faculty support, and inclusive programming.

The School also engaged the American College Health Association to audit Student Health services, including infirmary operations, counseling, and athletic training.

This work is designed to help Pomfret better understand how students access care, where systems can be strengthened, and how wellbeing can be more fully integrated into the student experience.

Additional Actions

- In response to identified program and departmental needs, the School successfully recruited a new DEI staffer to fill **a half-time position in the diversity office**.
- Pomfret strengthened support for **student unity groups**, providing additional resources to foster identity affirmation and community building. The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Office also encouraged **greater collaboration with academic departments** and other offices on programming that supports student belonging.
- The School created opportunities for current students to **hear and share powerful stories from alumni**, especially BIPOC alumni, to build confidence, connection, and a sense of possibility.
- Pomfret brought the **James Baldwin Project** to campus. The James Baldwin Project is a nonprofit arts-and-education initiative that uses the life and writing of James Baldwin as a catalyst for human growth and dignity.
- Students in government and history classes attended **Connecticut Legislative Day**, where they explored governmental structures and the legislative process while witnessing a real local case unfold.
- Pomfret announced a new name for its Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The new name, **Office of Community and Belonging**, reflects an evolution in how we think about this important work. The new name more fully captures the broader goal: creating a school community where every student and employee feels known, valued, respected, and connected. P



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INITIATIVE THREE

Stewardship and Sustainability

It's about putting more in than you are taking out.

GOAL 1 ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT
Capitalize on emerging and research-informed practices in admissions and retention.

GOAL 2 PHILANTHROPIC ACHIEVEMENT
Launch the School's most ambitious campaign, honor giving, and strengthen our community's culture of philanthropy.

GOAL 3 FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
Model excellence in matters of fiscal management, asset preservation, and investment.

GOAL 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
Reduce the environmental impact of campus operations through behavior change, conservation, and sustainable practices.

Ensuring Pomfret stands the test of time.

- The School continued its **NEASC accreditation** work. Over the course of the year, faculty and staff worked in standard-specific task forces to gather evidence in support of the School's forthcoming self study. The process this year invited Pomfret to reflect honestly on its strengths, identify areas for growth, and ensure that its programs and priorities remain aligned with its mission.

- Pomfret partnered with the Stone House Group on both **a facilities assessment and an energy assessment**, strengthening the School's long-term understanding of campus needs, deferred maintenance, and sustainability opportunities.

- The School explored summer and **auxiliary revenue** opportunities through SPARC, a national membership organization and consulting resource focused on helping independent schools strengthen auxiliary programs and grow non-tuition revenue through summer camps, enrichment programs, facility rentals, partnerships, and other mission-aligned enterprises.

- With the goal of improving the reunion experience, Pomfret researched alternative reunion models, explored peer school practices, and proposed **a new reunion model** for trustee and alumni leadership endorsement. Moving forward, all Pomfret alumni will be invited for a bigger, better Reunion every five years, starting in 2029, to coincide with the School's 135th anniversary.

Primary Highlight

This year, Pomfret deepened its use of research-informed strategies in admissions, enrollment, and institutional planning. In a highly competitive independent school market, Pomfret is working to understand not only who applies and enrolls, but why.

Specifically, the School created an Early Decision application option and revamped major campus visit programs, including Open Houses and Accepted Students Days, to better meet the needs and expectations of prospective families.

These and other efforts reflect a more disciplined and data-informed approach to enrollment management.

Additional Actions

- A broad **psychographic research** initiative helped the School better understand the emotional triggers of families who are aligned (and in some cases misaligned) with Pomfret's mission, program, and values.
- The Marketing and Communications Office developed a new AI-powered **digital marketing dashboard** to better track performance, measure engagement, and guide decision-making across multiple channels simultaneously.
- The School began **testing an AI chatbot** as a tool to improve access to information for website visitors.
- The School advanced **solar and utility planning**, continued work on a solar array project, and began implementing a forestry plan for the west end of campus.
- Pomfret purchased two **electric vehicles** and installed an additional electric car charger.
- The Board of Trustees engaged in a **NEASC Governance Workshop** and related data collection process to examine core aspects of governance and identify opportunities for growth.
- Pomfret continued to analyze the results of its recently **completed comprehensive campaign** to inform future fundraising strategies, needs, and priorities.
- **Advancement hosted events**, dinners, and meetings to build relationships between the new head of school and Pomfret's community of alumni, parents, and friends.
- Advancement began partnering with the Director of Technological Innovation to explore ways **AI tools can elevate the donor experience**, increase donor impact, and improve office efficiency.
- Pomfret **replaced a drawdown account with a line of credit** to reduce interest expense. P

Strategic Plan Task Force

Integrated Educational Model



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Head of School



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Director of the Grauer Family Institute

Community and Belonging



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Stewardship and Sustainability



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POMFRET

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This report represents an honest accounting of our progress in Year Four of our strategic plan. It is meant to inform and inspire our community, while reaffirming our shared purpose. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of accomplishments.