



LEADING WITH PURPOSE

— CÆS —

STRATEGIC PLAN 2030

Progress Report: Year One

August 2026



Oregon Episcopal School

Leading with Purpose: A Message from the Head of School and Board President

Dear OES Community,

As we mark the completion of the first year of OES 2030: Leading with Purpose, we find ourselves reflecting not only on the progress we have made, but on the profound collaborative effort required to bring this vision to life. We are deeply grateful for the dedicated school employees—18 people who already have significant responsibilities at the school—who stepped up to lead the school's strategic initiatives over a five-year span of time with remarkable energy and creativity.

When we launched this work in June 2025, we knew that in many ways, it was an evolution—a chance to build on the extraordinary work already happening at OES while allowing ourselves to dream, and to build the distinctive approach to whole-child education in a comprehensive Pre-K–12 independent school. At our core, we are educators who believe in the potential of every student, while also meeting them exactly where they are, and challenging them to grow further than they thought possible. This strategic plan is the compass that directs that commitment in support of our foundational mission and our vision for the future.

Year one was defined by progress on each of our strategic pathways through research, discovery, and laying a strong, sustainable foundation. Highlights include:

- A school-wide definition of inquiry guiding pedagogy across all divisions
- Launch of comprehensive faculty growth cycle and professional expectations for administrators, faculty, and staff
- Expansion of scholarships and financial aid
- Completion of track and turf facility and expanded athletic opportunities
- New courses in history and religious studies, along with the launch of the Civil Discourse Lab, deepening our commitment to informed perspective and constructive dialogue
- Development of AI guidelines and professional development
- Full campus energy monitoring, additional solar arrays, and student-led environmental stewardship initiatives

While our public-facing initiatives fall within the three pathways of Excellence, Character, and Community, we are also building an infrastructure of planning, oversight, and reporting so we can track our progress, fund our plans, and remain accountable to our community.

Through quarterly progress reviews, rigorous goal setting, and careful financial stewardship, we are actively shaping the future of OES to better serve our students to realize their power for good. This strategic plan belongs to all of us. Thank you for your partnership and belief in this vision, and for your commitment to the journey ahead.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Michael Spencer
Head of School

Paul Ehrlich
President, OES Board of Trustees



OUR MISSION

Oregon Episcopal School educates students to realize their power for good as engaged citizens of the world.

OUR VISION

In a dynamic, inclusive, joyful community of scholars, OES ignites a passion for lifelong learning and empowers students to become the architects of their education. OES students navigate complexity, collaborate in partnership, and lead with purpose as the innovative, compassionate, ethical citizens the world urgently needs.

OUR COMMITMENT

- As a **rigorous academic school**, *we develop a community of scholars* shaped by a unique approach to inquiry-based education; students strive for independence and excellence, developing agency as the architects of their education.
- As a **21st century Episcopal school**, *we value a pluralistic approach*. We cultivate community, develop character, and engage with people, perspectives, and traditions that honor the enduring wisdom of humanity.
- As an **open and inclusive school**, *we strive to build a beloved community* where all people are seen, known, and affirmed. We strive for justice and peace and respect the dignity of every human being.

THE FOUNDATION OF OUR RECOGNIZED STRENGTHS:

Excellence

- **Dynamic student community of learners** developing their compassion, character, and agency as engaged citizens of the world.
- **Comprehensive inquiry-based Pre-K–12 curriculum** delivering a holistic approach to learning with opportunities for research and design.
- **Rigorous academic preparation in all disciplines**, fostering independence and excellence while preparing students for higher education in college and beyond.
- **Exceptional community of highly skilled, dedicated educators** providing personal attention to cultivate student development.

Character

- **Impactful experiential learning and outdoor education** fostering student agency and curiosity through programs on our campus and throughout Portland, the nation, and the world.
- **Signature academic, arts, and athletic programs** nurturing creativity, innovation, and teamwork among scholars, artists, and athletes.
- **Sustained approach to inquiry-based teaching and learning** encouraging critical thinking, discernment of perspectives and ideas, and development of creativity, curiosity and innovation.
- **Social-Emotional learning program** developing self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making to navigate challenges and build healthy relationships.

Community

- **Episcopal identity and chapel program** uplifting the perspectives, traditions, and diversity of the school; educating for character in a community of learners.
- **Distinctive boarding school program** celebrating the traditions and perspectives of students from around the world and enriching the experience of the school community.
- **Meaningful opportunities for community engagement** emphasizing the interconnectedness of people, service and social justice, and commitment beyond ourselves.
- **Strong partnerships with families and alumni** who support students' education and the school.

OUR STRATEGIC PATHWAYS



STRATEGIC PATHWAY ONE

FOSTERING EXCELLENCE THROUGH INQUIRY

Develop Excellence and Scholarship Through Active Learning and Meaningful Contribution

OES will advance its position as a recognized leader in academic excellence and scholarship through inquiry-based learning and experiential education, elevating a model that fosters student agency, independence, and excellence, while integrating existing Pre-K through Grade 12 programs across the school. At OES, inquiry meets action and learning is transformational. Our educational approach turns questions into real-world impact as students connect head, heart, and hand to realize their power for good.

1

Fully define
commitment
to inquiry

Throughout the last school year, a cross-divisional team of teachers and staff created a **shared definition of inquiry** across all grade levels and divisions, highlighting the uniqueness of the pedagogy guiding OES teaching and learning. The **skills of an inquirer** identify the characteristics and competencies that all OES students will develop by the time they graduate. As part of this process, the group identified the **Characteristics of Effective Teaching** (featured at oes.edu/careers) by articulating the teacher practices, necessary conditions, and classroom spaces that define this work and build student knowledge, understanding, and habits of mind.

The committee also identified that faculty will continue to track the integration of inquiry in individual classrooms and provide ample opportunities for feedback in approaching this work.

2

Amplify
Signature
Programs

We reviewed and classified the **Core, Hallmark, and Signature Programs of OES**. We then created benchmarks, shared language, and structures that more clearly connect mission, pedagogy, and student experience. This framework helps to align programs across divisions, while laying the groundwork for deeper development of these focus areas in the coming year. In the next 10 months, we will further explore partnerships and pathways across divisions that unite our school-wide approach to cultivating inquiry, agency, and compassion.

3

Expand
Real-World
Learning

In this endeavor, we took time to review the school's signature program in **Science Inquiry Research** and the opportunities to expand this by offering internships and off campus experiences for Upper School students. We also reviewed programs at three peer schools and then proposed three concepts for research-informed potential pathways to explore over the next school year.

4

**Build
Inspiring
Facilities in
Inquiry, Arts
& Design**

Leaders in the Visual, Performing, and Musical Arts Department completed a design sprint to test a cross-divisional learning experience between Upper and Lower School students focusing on inquiry in the wetlands.

In addition, the OES website will feature a new section dedicated to showcasing the **extraordinary Arts program offerings** across all divisions. In the coming year, program leaders will do a thorough review of the school's arts and design programming to better assess next steps as we consider building the facilities which will support the thriving OES Arts program into the future.

5

**Nurture a
Thriving
Faculty and
Staff**

This year's progress included launching a **new faculty growth cycle** prioritizing accountability for continuous instructional growth. Progress for each faculty member is being documented in a centralized digital space where educators can collect, organize, and reflect on their professional work and set goals. Over the next year, the school's Center for Learning and Teaching will refine this approach based on the first year of feedback. We also explored various models for **teaching fellowships and opportunities** to recruit and support the next generation of educators.

O U R S T R A T E G I C P A T H W A Y S



S T R A T E G I C P A T H W A Y T W O

CULTIVATING CHARACTER THROUGH CONNECTION

Strengthen Leadership Opportunities That Nurture Character, Compassion, and Connection

OES will prepare students to be agile thinkers and empathetic leaders who apply their learning to the challenges of a complex, interconnected, and changing world. At OES, cultivating our humanity directs and grounds our intellectual pursuits. We prioritize the human to human connections grounded in applied authentic intelligence. Therefore, OES will prioritize the responsible integration of technology and artificial intelligence while strengthening human-centered skills. These include community building, active listening, and ethical decision-making.

1

Promote
Student-Led
Ventures in
Leadership,
Social
Entrepreneurship
& Innovation

This team ***mapped current programming centered around community engagement*** in each division in order to understand current strengths and opportunities. In addition, from October through January, the team engaged in a “design sprint” through a school leadership strategy firm called Leadership + Design, which utilized the design thinking methodology to prototype and test new strategic programming connected to this initiative. One key component to the sprint was conducting extensive interviews with students and faculty across all three divisions.

Based on what the team heard, they prototyped the concept for a **“Certificate of Community-Engaged Leadership”** that would codify a learning pathway to support the growth of students’ engaged leadership skills at OES. As a result of their work on the sprint, the team was selected as one of the top five national finalists, and presented at the National Association of Independent Schools Annual Conference in Feb. 2026. In the next year, the team will continue to prototype the Certificate with a view toward implementation, while also developing a second prototype for a Justice and Leadership Summit.

2

Advance
Environmental
Stewardship

Building on our long-standing commitment to protecting our environment and teaching our students to do the same, we **added solar arrays around campus** (this year at the Athletic Center, and previously at SPARC, the Middle School, and the Track/Turf covered bleachers). We now have achieved full campus electrical submetering by integrating all our energy savings data into a trackable Building Automation System (BAS). We also conducted an internal LED audit, producing a clear visual of progress and next steps.

Through a partnership with a Global Initiatives class in the Upper School, we piloted the **Green Schools Alliance and START program** to better visualize sustainability initiatives and share with the broader community. This class also inspired the school's first student sustainability internship position to support green initiatives by collaborating with the school's Campus Operations Director.

A new Upper School position—**Applied STEM and Environmental Stewardship Coordinator**—was created to help guide our commitment to environmental stewardship.

In the coming year, we will create more tools to help students visualize energy data across the OES campus, **develop internships in environmental stewardship** as well as offer a special focus on encouraging the practice of student composting after school lunches and snacks.

3

Emphasize Ethical
Technology Use

A group of educators and administrators worked together to create ***Artificial Intelligence Use Guidelines*** to help both teachers and students harness the best of new advances in artificial intelligence in a responsible manner that prioritizes process over product in the development of student learning. In community—learning together—we teach the skills of synthesis, evaluation, and judgment while also prioritizing human-human connections. As we move forward, we affirm the amazing potential while highlighting its ethical and responsible use. As generative artificial intelligence becomes ubiquitous, we work with this technology while continually emphasizing the creativity, innovation, and necessity of authentic human intelligence.

The committee also developed a system for ongoing evaluation of AI teaching tools, while also creating opportunities for ongoing professional development for school employees. This work will continue into the coming school year as we prepare students to responsibly use these tools in the service of learning and in preparation for the complex world of the future.

4

Amplify Athletic
and Wellness
Programs

Through the generosity of committed donors, we **transformed our track and turf** to a best-in-class facility. OES is the first school in the nation that features both a full-field system and a track composed of USDA Bio-preferred materials. That distinction, plus our solar panels on the newly installed covered bleacher, signals our commitment to environmental sustainability. Our teams achieved outstanding performances this year on these products, including a track and field state championship. OES athletes train and compete on the best surfaces possible.

In addition to offering competitive and inclusive opportunities throughout the school year, the Athletic department **launched athletics camps** to encourage skill building throughout the summer months, conducted constituent surveys, and built out new handbooks for coaches and volunteers.

In order to raise visibility of the program in the public, **expanded athletics social media reach** highlights the accomplishments of our student athletes and teams. In the same spirit, OES hired an **Upper School Admissions and Athletics Liaison Associate** in the Admissions office to support Upper School Admissions, and help aspiring high school athletes see themselves as future Aardvarks.

In the coming school year, the Athletics department will partner with the Admissions office to recruit parent ambassadors, create new recruitment videos, and build out a **Student-Athlete Leadership Program**.

O U R S T R A T E G I C P A T H W A Y S



S T R A T E G I C P A T H W A Y T H R E E

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH BELONGING

Create a Diverse and Dynamic Learning Community Cultivating Civil Discourse and Respect for the Dignity of Every Human Being

To celebrate the diversity of people and perspectives, we will broaden access to the OES experience to support a dynamic learning community. At OES, our signature boarding program is unique. All of our students benefit from global perspectives in a locally grounded context for inquiry and engagement. Similarly, our Episcopal identity affirms a foundational commitment to inclusion, pluralism, and building a beloved community. We create a culture of belonging to honor individuals, broaden our perspectives, and affirm our shared humanity. Therefore, we will leverage and strengthen these unique markers of our identity as we create a transformational educational experience.

1

Elevate the
Boarding
Program

In an effort to build a culture of continuous improvement, the school launched a formal review of its boarding program, including internal and external committees, and site visits to peer boarding schools, culminating in a report synthesizing the findings by an independent consultant. This process resulted in prioritization of five key opportunity areas for growth, as well as a clear path for how to strengthen resources for residential life staff.

Over the summer months, our Campus Operations team completed **necessary renovations to both dorm buildings** beautifying indoor and outdoor common spaces. Upgraded lounges with new couches, and expanded decks and patios will warmly welcome our dorm students when they arrive in late August.

2

Expand
Financial
Aid and
Scholarships

In an effort to increase affordability and access to an OES education, the Admissions office created a new net price calculation tool to support transparency in the application process and help prospective families understand the resources available to support financing an OES education. This tool is being refined and will be made available for the 2027-28 application cycle.

Through the generosity of donors—including a \$500,000 gift to the endowment—the School created **new need-based scholarships awarded to selected students**. The number of recipients is planned to increase each year through a formal application and review process.

Building our international reach to attract qualified students from around the globe, the Admissions office formed new partnerships with agents and consultants.

3

Promote
Diversity and
Inclusion
Throughout
School
Community

The Human Resources office **conducted thorough pay equity comp-ratio analyses** for staff while also building out new performance review templates to support equitable evaluations and employee growth.

Employee recruiting efforts saw **expansion of outreach to faculty applicants** in new environments as well as new strategies to make faculty hiring practices more inclusive. The school's Office for Equity and Inclusion increased meetings with prospective families of color in the admissions process.

In the coming year, the Admissions team will continue to **strengthen its anti-bias training and policies** while expanding outreach to families of color in new ways.

4

Promote
Chapel
Program
and Civil
Discourse
Initiatives

Recent Chapel programming expanded to include more diverse observances and voices across all three divisions while also **strengthening a shared understanding of the school's Episcopal identity** and mission through collaboration with the school's Community Engagement program.

School representatives met to create common language around the topic of cultivating civil discourse across all three divisions and school community life. This work also included reviewing desired outcomes and **developing a community profile to gather longitudinal data**. Strengthening the school's commitment to civil discourse and the depth of Humanities offerings, the Upper School launched a new **civil discourse lab** and developed **new courses in history and religious studies** that begin this fall and promote the institutional commitment to broaden perspectives and enhance understanding.

LEADING WITH PURPOSE



STRATEGIC PLAN 2030

Grounded in our enduring mission, advancing our vision, and guided by
the pathways of Excellence, Character, and Community,
Leading with Purpose 2030 **guides everything we do.**
This strategic plan belongs to all of us.

For questions about the school's strategic direction, contact
Head of School The Rev. Michael Spencer at hos@oes.edu

To learn more about how you can support specific initiatives listed here, contact
Chief Advancement Officer Scott Shlaes at shlaess@oes.edu



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