



**An Innovative Vision for an
Innovative School Community**

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE
March 2024



Strategic Plan

In Summer 2023, we embarked on an important journey by launching a strategic planning process aimed at shaping the future of Poughkeepsie Day School. This initiative, vital for our growth and success, began with a comprehensive assessment and the gathering of insights from our vibrant community. Through collaborative efforts, we have identified priority areas and are crafting a strategic vision for the next 3-5 years. Our plan, "PDS GROW," symbolizes our commitment to Growth, Relationships, Opportunities, and Wisdom.

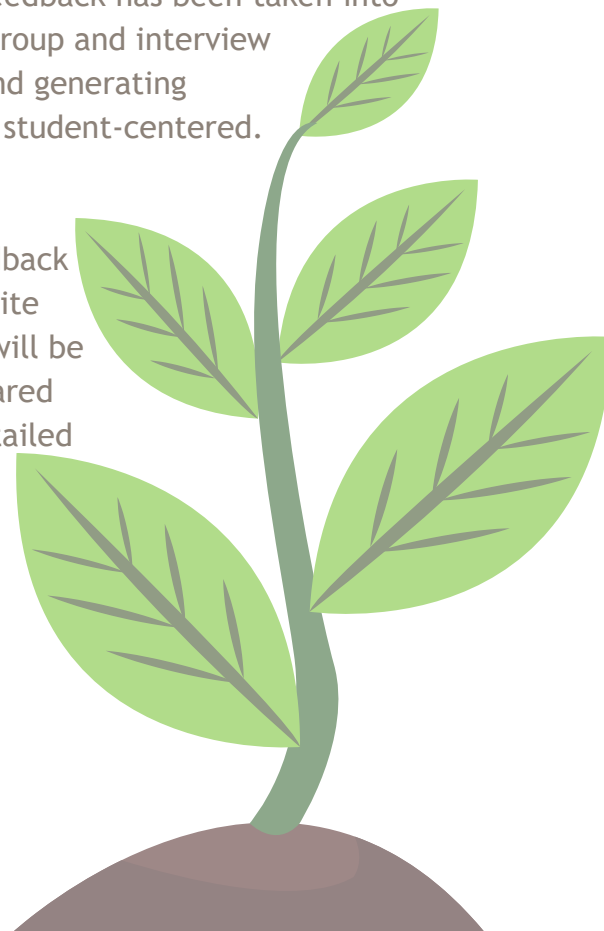
Winter 2024 Feedback

Following, you will find an outline of our strategic priorities, as well as a summary of each area. We have concluded our recent round of feedback, which included over a dozen interviews, surveys, and four focus groups of faculty, staff and parents. All feedback has been taken into consideration to give each area additional direction. Each focus group and interview consisted of a set of questions geared towards gauging interest and generating questions around key initiatives. Conversations were focused and student-centered.

Your [Continued] Engagement and Feedback

As we refine "PDS GROW," your perspectives are crucial. The feedback cycle is not complete with the publication of this booklet. We invite continued thoughtful engagement and questions. Your feedback will be instrumental in shaping a strategic plan that truly reflects our shared values and aspirations. In the next stage, we will be releasing detailed action plans ensuring that all stakeholders understand the timeline and how they can continue to be involved.

"PDS GROW" is a testament to our collective commitment to the future of Poughkeepsie Day School. Together, we will navigate this transformative journey, ensuring that PDS remains a beacon of excellence in education.



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Global Citizenship

- **Goal & Impact:** Embed global perspectives, critical thinking, creativity, and inquiry across our curriculum.
- **Key Initiatives:** Pursue International Baccalaureate accreditation; enhance future-ready teaching practices.
- **Critical Questions:** *How can our curriculum better incorporate global perspectives and critical skills? What strategies can enhance future-ready teaching and learning?*

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Nearly all stakeholders are enthusiastic about integrating global perspectives into the curriculum and support the pursuit of **International Baccalaureate (IB)** accreditation. They suggest more authentic resources, **inquiry-based learning**, and **cross-cultural collaboration** to cultivate **global citizenship skills**.

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Global Citizenship and Educating for International Mindedness: Feedback underscores a shared desire to prepare students as knowledgeable, **compassionate citizens** and **effective leaders** in a rapidly transforming world. This is directly in line with National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) principles that advocate for an understanding of one's own culture while extending beyond national boundaries.

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See the final page for more information on the International Baccalaureate program.

Further exploration: Partnerships with local and global entities: Explore new collaborations that provide mutual benefits, focusing on experiential learning and community service.



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Relationships

- **Goal & Impact:** Build deeper community connections, enriching educational experiences through diverse partnerships.
- **Key Initiatives:** Develop meaningful partnerships; enhance alumni engagement.
- **Critical Questions:** *What new partnerships should PDS prioritize? How can these partnerships provide meaningful experiences for our students?*

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International Baccalaureate programmes encourage students to learn about and engage with both **global** and **local** contexts, understanding their roles in the world. This connects seamlessly with the **Relationships** area of GROW, emphasizing the importance of building **meaningful connections within and beyond the school community**. The IB's emphasis on global citizenship complements PDS's initiatives to strengthen community ties and cultivate **partnerships that enhance learning experiences**.

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The community values building deeper connections with **local and global partners**. Suggestions include **engaging with local non-profits, cultural centers, and alumni** to offer students hands-on learning opportunities, **inspiration, and guidance**. Families and faculty value the importance of **socio-emotional learning and community building** within the curriculum.



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There's strong support for making PDS more **accessible** and **inclusive**. Ideas include innovative financial models like additional rentals for external events and **strengthening bonds** with preschools as a funnel to PDS. Stakeholders are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's efforts to bring **mission-consistent** tenants to our campus who both help the school's financial sustainability and provide **offerings** to PDS students.



The International Baccalaureate frameworks provide structures that PDS can **adapt** to enhance its **financial aid policies, scholarship programs,** and efforts to create a more inclusive community.

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Opportunity

- **Goal & Impact:** Ensure PDS's sustainability and accessibility.
- **Key Initiatives:** Explore innovative revenue streams; expand scholarship programs.
- **Critical Questions:** *What innovative financial models can enhance our sustainability? How can we make PDS more accessible?*

Stakeholders' suggestions for deeper community relationships and innovative financial models to support **accessibility** and **inclusivity** reflect the NAIS principles advocating for collaborative interactions among school professionals, parents, and the broader community.

Further exploration:
Consider a modified tuition model to make PDS accessible to more families. Build partnerships and apply for grants as a means to offering additional financial assistance.

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PDS parents are happy with the school's curriculum and underscore the importance of **continuous professional development** for teachers in **culturally relevant pedagogies**. They advocate for a curriculum that fosters **critical thinking, diversity, and interdisciplinary learning**.

Commitment to Equity and Justice: The feedback and discussions around the GROW vision at PDS strongly resonate with NAI's emphasis on **equity and justice**. Highlighting the school's ongoing efforts to respect, affirm, and protect the dignity and worth of each community member aligns with NAI's call for schools to create **diverse, inclusive, equitable, and just communities**. This includes ongoing, reflective training, including culturally relevant practices like **Intergroup Dialogue**.

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Incorporating **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** into the PDS GROW vision ensures educational accessibility and success for all students. UDL supports the Wisdom area by advocating for instructional strategies that emphasize critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. This pedagogical approach empowers students to become **active and engaged learners**, prepared to **navigate complex challenges** both in and outside the classroom. Integrating UDL principles into the curriculum reinforces PDS's commitment to preparing students for a rapidly changing world through innovative and **flexible teaching methods**.



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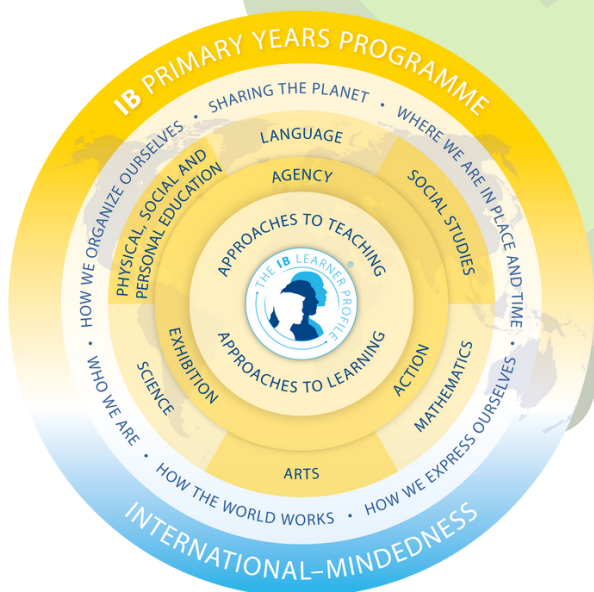
Wisdom

- **Goal & Impact:** Empower educators and students with progressive pedagogies.
- **Key Initiatives:** Professional development in culturally relevant practices; integrate Universal Design Learning in planning; whole school Intergroup Dialogue training.
- **Critical Questions:** *How can we support educators in adopting culturally relevant pedagogies? In what ways should our curriculum evolve?*



About the International Baccalaureate

In planning for the journey we will take with PDS Grow, we are exploring candidacy as an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. The IB and its global-centered teaching approaches is a mission-consistent philosophy that would only amplify the high quality inquiry-based education we already deliver at Poughkeepsie Day School. IB world schools are among the top institutions in the world. We would begin with an application to candidate status for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Middle School Programme (MYP). Our project-centered and inquiry-based practices fit seamlessly into the PYP and MYP capstone projects.



Primary Years Programme (PYP), PreK-Grade 5

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a reflective approach that revolves around childhood curiosity. At Poughkeepsie Day School, where inquiry-based practices already meet the standards of the PYP, the main effect for our school will be a boon to programming through global-centered professional development and resources. Our current units of study, as well as those in development, will be aligned with the PYP's transdisciplinary themes of: Who we are, Where we are in place and time, How we express ourselves, How the world works, How we organize ourselves, and Sharing the planet. For more information on the PYP, [click here](#).



Middle Years Programme (MYP), Grades 6-10

The Middle Years Programme (MYP) is designed to meet the needs of the young adolescent. Its balanced approaches linking student engagement with accountability as well as the expectation of service and community engagement connect with our current Life Skills curriculum. One of the requirements of the MYP, a deep study of an additional language, is in line with our school's goals to continue to build on our world language offerings. The MYP ends with an individual capstone project in a student's area of expertise through essay, artistic production, or other form of expression. Our current Middle School inquiry-based projects already meet many of these criteria. For more information on the MYP, [click here](#).





Together we GROW

 www.poughkeepsieday.org