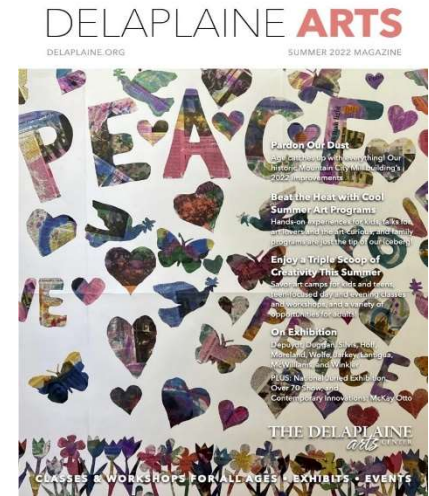


# Strategic Plan

2022-2023 through 2024-2025



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## INTENTIONALLY AMAZING LEARNING

Friends Meeting School's strategic plan was crafted in response to the school community's universal call for growth. There were caveats: Keep the "small school" feel. Remain student centered. Ensure students' academic success alongside their development as well-rounded global citizens. Celebrate the school's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and also forge a path for future sustainability.

Three goals frame interconnected mechanisms for building the strong school that will achieve growth on those terms:

- **ALIGNMENT**  
The school's identity and values are evident in every message, the curricular strategy, and financial decision making
- **INTENTIONAL PRACTICE**  
Purposefulness of teaching and stewardship matches people's passion for the school and is supported by the customized application of best practices
- **CONNECTEDNESS**  
Every member of the school community – students, parents/guardians, alumni, trustees, and others – feels that they belong, are part of shaping a healthy community, and holds a sense of responsibility for ensuring the school's ongoing sustainability



### OUR ACCOUNTABILITIES

Authenticity, acknowledgment and amazement are threads that run through each goal.

Authenticity strips away pretenses and external pressures. It holds that which rings true to the school's inner voice and inner truth. It embraces the place-based and human-centered assets of the school.

Acknowledgement recognizes that change is a certainty, that the school's ambitions for the next several years must meet the school's capacity, and that the ability to leverage disruptions and setbacks as well as opportunities and triumphs is a key to growth.

Amazement is the reward for leaning in, for moving toward each other with the expectation that every member of the school community will not only learn from, but also be awed by each other's discoveries and growing wisdom.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### OUR MISSION

To build a place where students are supported to take risks in the spirit of learning, discovering, and letting their lives speak.

### OUR VISION

“Intentionally Amazing Learning” frames a vision for a new era of Friends Meeting School with a future that has...

- A student body that is large enough to facilitate greater socialization, more choice, and a robust infrastructure; small enough to sustain individualized attention and a strong sense of belonging
- A mindset that imagines, prepares for and has faith in a longer time horizon
- The capacity to prioritize student learning that transcends classroom walls
- Current and alumni families, Board members, and others fiercely united around advocating for the school’s continued vibrancy

### OUR VALUES

- INTEGRITY** We believe in honesty when no one is looking; accountability within ourselves and to one another.
- COMMUNITY** We acknowledge our interdependence, eager for all to engage in inspiring a greater good. We are passionate stewards of the earth and of a peaceful world.
- INDIVIDUALITY** We honor each person’s “inner light” and their right to self-confidence. We seek meaningful and equitable relationships where every person feels listened to and valued.
- PERSISTENCE** We are determined to keep trying and growing. We challenge ourselves to view different perspectives, to avoid defaulting to the easy path, and to embrace complexity.
- PLAY** We believe play is fundamental to holistic learning, is integral to humanity and that it sparks joy at any age.

## OUR IDENTITY

The current generation of students is coming of age at a time when the world is unpredictable and overwhelming. They are inheriting irreversible damage to Earth while their confidence and sense of worth is undermined by the false perfection of social-media images. Today's students are sorting out their ideological beliefs amid political extremism and civil rights protests. Their generation is experiencing unprecedented isolation and loneliness. It's not enough for school to build their bank of knowledge; they must learn to discern the truth.

Authenticity is at the core of Friends Meeting School's academic experience. We lift up what's real. In true Quaker fashion, our community's energy is warm, welcoming and sensitive to impacts on others and the world around us. During the critical stages of kindergarten through 12th grade, FMS students engage in healthy risk taking and work through [constructive discomfort](#). We know that when you're "seen" you feel the support necessary to turn these moments into impactful learning. Along the way, our students develop into curious and engaged scholars aware of their place in the world and poised to make a difference as they prepare for college and beyond.

# STRATEGIES

## GOAL 1: ALIGNMENT

ALIGNMENT – unity and consistency in both informal and structured ways – is critical to fueling growth in enrollment as well as deepening the remarkable learning that is appreciated by families across all divisions.

Embracing Alignment starts with making explicit the intentions and planning behind the Who, What, Why, Where, and How of FMS teaching. It will be reinforced through the school’s messaging and communications to match expectations with reality. Longer-term fiscal planning and resource allocations will be made in sync with curricular strategies and core values.

While strategic planning was future focused, it also was informed by the school’s strengths that have been in place since its founding. Quaker principles and practices are the bedrock of the school’s program. They will be carried out through activities that also center Creativity & Creative Expression alongside Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity & Belonging, Peace & Social Justice, and Environmental Sustainability. These essential themes will be instilled within FMS students as they mature and learn to navigate the dynamic world.

OBJECTIVES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	MAJOR INITIATIVES	
<b>1.1</b> <b>To surface and present the school’s authentic identity, both internally and externally</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Size and composition of student body</li> <li>▪ Needs of individual students in balance with the needs of the community</li> <li>▪ Vibrancy of Quaker practices and relationships</li> <li>▪ Website visitation</li> <li>▪ Social media engagement</li> </ul>	<b>1.1.1</b>	Sharpening communications messages to accurately and clearly convey the intended student and community outcomes
		<b>1.1.2</b>	Coordinating systems for admission and teaching so there is consistency between the expectations of potential families and the experiences of current families
		<b>1.1.3</b>	Utilizing data to inform outreach methods and the strategic allocation of time and other resources for admissions
		<b>1.1.4</b>	Elevating the Quaker dimension of the school experience: deepening relationships with area meetings and organizations and developing a systematic program of Quakerism education
		<b>1.1.5</b>	Enlisting the full spectrum of constituents as ambassadors to and from those seeking an education rooted in purpose
		<b>1.1.6</b>	Building the school’s profile in the community through service-learning partnerships

OBJECTIVES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	MAJOR INITIATIVES	
<b>1.2</b> <b>To deliver on an overarching curricular strategy that is purposeful and clearly articulated for current and prospective families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accessible and evident portrayal of the curriculum</li> <li>▪ % of student course time spent outside the classroom</li> <li>▪ Visible learning, including evidence of student work, that connects to Quaker principles and practices and Creativity &amp; Creative Expression</li> <li>▪ Students are prepared for college upon graduation and attend post-secondary institutions that speak to their interests and talents</li> </ul>	<b>1.2.1</b>	Identifying core learning components and curricular progression by subject area and across divisions
		<b>1.2.2</b>	Increasing faculty capacity to create experiences that transcend traditional classroom walls and propel student learning
		<b>1.2.3</b>	Embedding monthly themes into an annual curricular calendar informed by an understanding of the history and contemporary ramifications of systemic oppression, prejudice, and power hierarchies
		<b>1.2.4</b>	Refining student evaluation to provide meaningful feedback that addresses student skill development (critical thinking, communication, time management, executive functioning, and metacognition) as well as mastery of subject matter
<b>1.3</b> <b>To enact a robust financial structure that enables the school to live out its expressed values while fueling growth in operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ \$ of operating budget</li> <li>▪ # of days of cash on hand</li> <li>▪ % of operating budget allocated for financial aid</li> <li>▪ Diversity of student body</li> <li>▪ \$ in PRRSM Fund</li> <li>▪ Environmental impact of the school</li> <li>▪ Teachers' salaries are competitive with peer schools</li> </ul>	<b>1.3.1</b>	Developing multi-year operating and capital budgets that plan for increases in resources to advance strategic priorities and include contingency planning
		<b>1.3.2</b>	Determining feasible scenarios for alternative earned income
		<b>1.3.3</b>	Granting financial aid specifically to attract and sustain a student body that is diverse across multiple dimensions
		<b>1.3.4</b>	Investing in teachers' salaries to make them competitive
		<b>1.3.5</b>	Codifying policies for cash reserves and invested assets to maximize growth and interest generated for current use
		<b>1.3.6</b>	Designating and funding a Provision for Plant Replacement, Renewal & Special Maintenance fund to accelerate stewardship of facilities and property and to reduce the school's carbon footprint

## GOAL 2: INTENTIONAL PRACTICE

One of the hallmarks of Friends Meeting School is its culture of responsiveness, meeting people where they are with enthusiasm and warmth. INTENTIONAL PRACTICE – continuous reflection and refinement with a growth mindset – ensures the connection of purpose to that passion.

Embracing Intentional Practice will encourage an eagerness to learn what educators, administrators and trustees at other schools have found to be effective. Many aspects of FMS will advance as these best practices and tools are dissected, translated, and customized to suit what is authentic for this school.

To support one of the school’s greatest assets, teachers will have more time and space to think deeply and collaboratively. Through Intentional Practice FMS will lean into purposefulness while still encouraging, in fact expecting, the spontaneity that brings many teachers joy.

The Board is called to attend to its growth as stewards of a strong school. Seeking the most strategic paths, in partnership with the head of school, will become a collective habit. This will inform the work of the full Board and committees as trustees consider their generative role as well as assess the impact of their engagement and leadership.

OBJECTIVES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	MAJOR INITIATIVES	
<b>2.1</b> <b>To foster a collaborative professional community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Culture of Curiosity and Inquiry characterized by faculty and staff</li> </ul>	<b>2.1.1</b>	Developing shared language, skills, and a structure that promotes faculty collaboration in service of ongoing professional growth
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reflective practice is regularly employed in service to “<a href="#">continuing revelation</a>”</li> </ul>	<b>2.1.2</b>	Equipping teachers to meet students where they are in light of a variety of student backgrounds and learning styles
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Faculty measure success by the impact of their teaching relative to their curricular goals</li> <li>▪ Teachers create space to be vulnerable</li> <li>▪ Teachers are drawn to and remain at the school because of the professional culture</li> </ul>	<b>2.1.3</b>	Seeking out best practices, new research, and colleagues to remain current, connected to the field of education, and continuously sharpen teaching methods

OBJECTIVES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	MAJOR INITIATIVES	
<b>2.2</b> <b>To position the Board for a purposeful partnership with the Head of School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ % participation in group learning opportunities</li> <li>▪ % of trustees meeting Board-identified expectations for engagement</li> <li>▪ Committee functioning</li> <li>▪ Board functioning</li> <li>▪ Quality of Board-Head partnership</li> <li>▪ Board diversity across multiple dimensions</li> <li>▪ Board awareness of the school’s Quaker dimension</li> <li>▪ Board practices recognize and are aligned with Quaker principles</li> </ul>	2.2.1	Codifying a multi-year plan for trustee recruitment, leadership development, committee head, and officer succession
		2.2.2	Partnering with the Head of School to direct Board energies toward areas where it can make the most strategic impact
		2.2.3	Seeking out best practices, new research, and other school trustees to remain current, understand educational trends, and continuously sharpen governance practices
		2.2.4	Identifying and achieving clear, relevant, annual goals for each Board committee and for the full Board
		2.2.5	Solidifying mechanisms for interpreting for the full Board how Quaker principles and practices are evident in the school
		2.2.6	Equipping trustees with tools and opportunities to be internal and external ambassadors by activating their passion, talents, and networks
		2.2.7	Conducting annual assessments of trustee engagement, Quaker-based decision making, and impact on advancing strategic priorities



## GOAL 3: CONNECTEDNESS

Clearly, the pandemic exposed the essential nature of personal connection; that it is fundamental to human development and thriving. CONNECTEDNESS – a deep sense of interdependence and commitment to community care – builds on the school’s founding strengths in the context of current realities.

Embracing Connectedness encourages the school community to emphasize empathy, curiosity and openness to learning from one another. It strives to deepen a lifelong sense of collective ownership in the school and its future sustainability.

Imagine if FMS was to build a college prep school from the ground up. What structures, habits and relationships would be put in place and fostered? This question will drive activities to ensure that every member of the school community feels seen *and* feels responsible for ensuring that others belong. This question will clarify the role of [collection in silence](#) – surfacing that which is important to balance the volatility within and outside one’s self. Shedding the traditional, the safe, and the expected in favor of the authentic, relevant, and courageous will create a solid platform for a healthy and connected community.

OBJECTIVES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	MAJOR INITIATIVES	
<b>3.1</b> <b>To deepen the school’s ethos of belonging for students, parents/guardians, faculty, and staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student retention</li> <li>▪ Faculty retention</li> <li>▪ Parent engagement</li> <li>▪ Culture of Inclusivity</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Cultural Humility</a></li> </ul>	3.1.1	Encouraging student-led learning opportunities and student kinship groups
		3.1.2	Enhancing onboarding and ongoing outreach activities with parents/guardians across all divisions
		3.1.3	Increasing the awareness of and sensitivity to the diversity that exists within and outside the FMS community and seeking ways to increase the school’s diversity
		3.1.4	Strengthening the school community’s investment in restorative practices
		3.1.5	Deepening student understanding of Quakerism and of the role of <a href="#">Meeting for Worship</a> , while engaging students around the practice in new ways

OBJECTIVES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	MAJOR INITIATIVES	
<b>3.2</b> <b>To challenge the structures that support the curriculum in order to stimulate self-acceptance, mental health, and wellness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visible displays of student learning, performance, or exhibition</li> <li>▪ Students’ increased awareness of what promotes their mental and emotional health</li> <li>▪ High levels of first-time athletic participation</li> </ul>	<b>3.2.1</b>	Creating explicit venues for building self-confidence and celebrating self-expression
		<b>3.2.2</b>	Providing more opportunities for divisions to interact with and learn from one another
		<b>3.2.3</b>	Clarifying the athletics program as an extension of the classroom that enhances facets of learning in unique ways
		<b>3.2.4</b>	Exploring how the hours and length of the school day might better acknowledge the rhythms of children and adolescents
		<b>3.2.5</b>	Stewarding the environment in recognition of the critical relationship between the health of people and the health of the environment
<b>3.3</b> <b>To energize a culture of community-wide engagement and investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alumni engagement</li> <li>▪ Volunteer participation in cultivation, solicitation and stewardship</li> <li>▪ # and affiliation of donors</li> <li>▪ Contributed income growth rate</li> <li>▪ # of <a href="#">planned giving</a> circle members</li> </ul>	<b>3.3.1</b>	Raising expectations of collective responsibility, among all constituent groups, for asking and giving in support of the operating budget and capital projects
		<b>3.3.2</b>	Utilizing 25th anniversary activities to launch opportunities for students, parents/guardians, alumni, and faculty/staff to connect with the school’s past and understand their place in the school’s history
		<b>3.3.3</b>	Establishing a structure and recruiting leaders to design and host mutually-meaningful alumni-school interactions
		<b>3.3.4</b>	Establishing a proactive planned giving program to enlist alumni and friends in attending to the school’s future sustainability

## STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

This strategic plan will not simply be an agenda item at Board and Committee meetings. In practice, it will drive the agenda of those meetings and other governance activities. It also is essential that the plan inform administration and faculty as they develop their annual work plans over the next several years.

### INVITATIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT

This strategic plan is made public in order to invite the engagement of the broader school community in advancing the goals and objectives. Current parents/guardians and grandparents, alumni, parents of alumni, and other supporters are welcomed and encouraged to join the Board, faculty, and staff in this journey for the good of Friends Meeting School's current and future vitality.

To reflect on the strategic plan's progress and inform refreshed priorities on an annual basis, the school will design opportunities for the community to make input and provide feedback on the plan's continued impact and relevance.

### TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Qualitative and quantitative measures have been identified for each strategic objective. The Head of School will lead the periodic development and maintenance of a "Implementation Dashboard" to present annual milestones for measuring progress toward reaching key objectives. The dashboard furthers the utility of the strategic plan as both an important anchor and a flexible compass for directing and re-directing energies as warranted.

Central to this strategic plan is an expectation of growth. Moreover, some of the identified initiatives rely on having the capacity – people and financial resources – for planning and implementation. To that end, multi-year operating and capital budget projections will be put in place to facilitate longer-term fiscal planning in service to advancing the strategic plan.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Collection in Silence** | See Meeting for Worship

**Constructive Discomfort** | The space slightly beyond a learner's current knowledge base and skill level, but a place where learning is still within that person's reach. It is aspirational without being discouraging. It is challenging without setting someone up for failure.

**Continuing Revelation** | Quakers believe that truth (some might say, "Truth") is revealed incrementally through experience and reflection.

**Cultural Humility** | involves self-reflection and personal critique, acknowledging one's own biases. It encourages ongoing curiosity and understanding of the complexity of identities, and recognizes that even in sameness there is difference.

**Meeting for Worship** | A group gathers in silence. Participants center themselves (i.e., seek their "Inner Light"), which may prompt them to share a message (i.e., "vocal ministry") with the group.

**Planned Giving** | Charitable giving made in one's lifetime or upon death as part of a donor's overall financial or estate planning. Forms of planned gifts include bequests, annuities, and a host of other giving vehicles.