



URBAN THRIVES 2023

URBAN SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

Welcome to *Urban Thrives 2023*, Urban School's new strategic plan, approved by our Board of Trustees in December 2017. The culmination of many months of analysis and discussion about the challenges and opportunities facing Urban, this plan will serve as a blueprint for the school's priorities and growth over the next five years. Now in our 52nd year, Urban School is committed to strengthening the distinctive and highly regarded education we provide our 420 students. Accomplishing the goals outlined in *Urban Thrives* will deepen our impact on the students, teachers and staff who make up our school community, while extending our reach as educational leaders and innovators.



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URBAN INCLUDES

STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

We believe the best education occurs in a school made up of students, teachers and families drawn from many different backgrounds and perspectives, including those who have been historically under-represented in independent schools. We work to build a truly inclusive and equitable community – one where students and adults are welcomed and supported, and where their faces, voices, and experiences are reflected and valued.

Diverse and Inclusive Learning Environments

Create diverse and inclusive learning environments that foster empathy and belonging among all students

INITIATIVES:

- Further intensify recruitment of students of color from student support organizations.
- Work to increase the number of faculty of color.
- Develop social and emotional learning metrics to assess the effectiveness of co-curricular programming.
- Improve support for the diverse groups within the school.
- Train faculty and staff in bystander intervention and conflict resolution as it pertains to moments of exclusion, cultural awareness and appropriate language in academic and co-curricular settings.

Ensure Access

Ensure access across the socioeconomic spectrum by providing financial aid to at least 30% of Urban students

INITIATIVES:

- Ensure the school has a sufficient allocation of financial aid budget to accommodate at least 30% of students from across the socioeconomic spectrum.
- Ensure equity by supporting financial aid families in affording school-related costs not included in tuition (e.g., laptop, trips, food service).

Leader in Multicultural Education

Lead the field in multicultural education and in teaching inclusion and communication skills

INITIATIVES:

- Within each academic department, integrate teaching practices and curriculum that promote all students' success.
- Assess effectiveness of the Service Learning curriculum through student and alumni surveys.
- Encourage faculty and staff to present at conferences and publish in journals.
- Support all students in developing self-advocacy and self-efficacy skills
- Teach faculty and students skills that foster inclusivity and bystander accountability and provide multiple opportunities to practice these skills.



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URBAN INSPIRES

STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

The ability to learn how to learn is the most valuable skill Urban students bring to college and to their lives. Urban's approach to teaching as well as our curriculum cultivate creative and flexible problem-solving, independent thinking, effective collaboration and metacognitive understanding. Our students apply what they have learned to answer powerful questions, innovate through design and creation, and solve challenging, real-world problems.

Project Based Learning Integration

Increase integration of Project Based Learning across all subject areas

INITIATIVES:

- Embrace Project Based Learning as a principal teaching method.
- Encourage teachers to pursue professional development in Project Based Learning.
- Create showcase opportunities.

UrbanX Labs Programming

Continue to build upon UrbanX Labs (STEAM) programming

INITIATIVES:

- Develop new UrbanX Labs electives.
- Integrate UrbanX Labs projects into some core courses.
- Further expand UrbanX classes into U period classes.
- Explore expansion of physical space to better support UrbanX Labs.

Social-Emotional Skills and Practices

Build and refine practices that develop emotional intelligence and social skills

INITIATIVES:

- Refine and implement Equity Plan encompassing emotional intelligence and social skills.
- Develop, evaluate and refine Being@Urban and Health 11 curricula to support development of social and emotional skills.
- Strengthen ways in which the co-curricular program supports our core values in the area of social and emotional learning.
- Integrate metacognitive skill-building into Advising and end-of-term self evaluations

Data-Informed Curricular Development

Make data-informed refinements to curriculum, teaching and academic support so that all students thrive

INITIATIVES:

- Continue integrating Inquiry for Equity as a tool for data analysis and reflection designed to impact current practice.
- Provide equity-focused professional development to faculty, including Inquiry for Equity practices.
- Improve faculty and administration fluency with data.
- Use data to identify gaps and make systemic program refinements.



URBAN INVESTS

STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

As a premier independent school and recognized educational leader, Urban will continue to attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff, invest in first-class facilities, enroll a diverse student body, remain accessible across the socioeconomic spectrum, and advance our leading edge programs.

Complete Urban's Campus

Complete the campus with the Performing Arts Center

INITIATIVES:

- Complete a design that meets the school's needs and supports our robust performing arts programs.
- Secure capital campaign contributions of \$7.5 million during 2017-18 and \$12 million by 2019-20.
- Complete construction by 2021-22.

Outstanding Faculty and Staff

Identify forward-looking approaches to attract, retain and support outstanding faculty and staff, and invest in ways to better address the cost of living in the Bay Area and housing affordability

INITIATIVES:

- Develop a total compensation plan that advances Urban's competitive position in the Bay Area independent school market.
- Analyze faculty turnover and hiring challenges.
- Increase salaries for junior faculty members disproportionately impacted by the rental housing market.
- Identify alternative strategies to address the high cost of living in the Bay Area.

Keep Urban Accessible

Balance the need to keep Urban accessible with the costs of delivering an education that fulfills our mission

INITIATIVES:

- Examine strategies to optimize net revenue and cost containment.
- Model the impact of endowment growth on school operations.
- Plan for economic contingencies by balancing tuition and contributed income.

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