STRATEGIC PLAN AND 2021-22 AREAS OF FOCUS
THIS PLAN REPRESENTS THE FUTURE OF OUR SCHOOL, WHICH WE ALL HOLD DEAR. MORE IMPORTANT, IT REPRESENTS THE FUTURE OF OUR STUDENTS, WHO WILL GO ON TO SHAPE THE WORLD WITH WINDWARD AS THEIR FOUNDATION.

_ Tom Gilder
Head of School_
Beginning in the Winter of 2015, the Windward School Strategic Planning Committee, along with members of the School community, began the process of looking forward to the next six years during which we will celebrate our 50th anniversary. The 24-member committee included members of the Board of Trustees, parents, faculty, administration, students, and alumni.

The Committee began its process by engaging with leaders from previous Windward strategic planning efforts and hearing a presentation by Jim McManus, the Executive Director of the California Association of Independent Schools, about the landscape of private education. The Committee then gathered feedback from faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and students and met multiple times during the school year to review all aspects of the School and its program. As themes emerged during this process, we went back to the different constituencies in the community to solicit additional feedback.

This Strategic Plan represents the culmination of the Committee’s many hours of work evaluating the best ways to improve Windward’s program and community. Following the model of Stanford University’s Design School, the Committee framed its plan using a series of guiding questions that will focus the School’s work during the next six years. Each year, using this plan, the Head of School and the administrative team will work in partnership with the Board of Trustees to identify the areas of focus for the year ahead in seeking to address these questions and to help Windward achieve its mission. Throughout the year, the Board and the community will be updated on the School’s progress.

Community and collaboration are at the core of the School’s philosophy and reflected every day in the warm, welcoming atmosphere on campus. Students are motivated to excel and to explore new learning opportunities both within and outside of the classroom. The faculty, administration, and staff support the students in their academic and personal growth. Upper School students, trained as Peer Counselors, offer a sounding board for their classmates and Middle School students. Windward’s commitment to a diverse and inclusive community is an integral part of its educational fabric and inextricably linked to the mission of the School. Windward’s inviting 9.5 acre campus and purpose-built facilities provide an idyllic setting for students to learn, work, and socialize.

DYNAMIC, ENGAGING EDUCATION IN A NURTURING, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY
A dynamic, engaging education in a nurturing, inclusive community is the heart of Windward’s mission statement and the Strategic Plan we use to advance our objectives. While this plan includes nine goals, during 2021-22, three goals from the plan, goals 1, 2, and goal 6, will be at the center of our work. We wanted to remind our community of these goals and share with you the action steps we are taking in advancement of them.

GUIDING QUESTION

How do we further instill and develop in students the communication skills, work habits, habits of mind, knowledge, and resilience needed for their success and personal fulfillment in college and beyond?
Students are the central focus of all of the work taking place at Windward. Windward’s mission statement calls on the School to inspire our students to be well-informed and prepared young adults. As education and the world evolve rapidly, we must examine the impact of these changes on the skills and habits our students need to develop in order to be prepared for college and beyond. As we gathered feedback from our community, many people—especially our alumni—expressed the importance of helping students develop essential skills and habits, including writing and presentation skills, creativity, collaboration, and grit.

As we move forward, we need to make sure that we enable students to develop the character traits and to become proficient in the areas they will need for their long-term success. To support research into best practices at the collegiate level, Windward has joined the Educational Advisory Board (EAB). The EAB research forums provide member schools with proven, peer-tested ideas from colleges and universities around the world. This research will directly support the work of the CTL and the Windward Institute by helping to identify best practices and adapting them to fit Windward’s needs.

How do we ensure what we value is evident across the Windward campus and school experience? Based on the newly adopted Windward Core Competencies, we will ask faculty and staff to explore the role they each play in making these competencies part of the everyday Windward experience.

By the end of the year, all faculty and staff will know what each Core Competency is and will understand that:
• they represent the values and dispositions we want to cultivate in students;
• it is everyone’s responsibility to nurture these competencies in their interactions with students; and that
• we foster the Core Competencies through the school culture we create both inside and outside the classroom, in both what we do and how we do it.

Additionally, by the end of the year faculty and staff will be able to:
• identify which Competencies feel most comfortable and present in their existing practice and which will be more of a stretch for them;
• begin to shift their existing practice and language to resonate with the Core Competencies; and
• use the Competencies to discuss priorities at the departmental and divisional level.

In short, every faculty and staff member will be able to answer the question, What is my role in helping each student leave Windward embodying these Core Competencies?

Collegiate Division: Capstone faculty and students will be asked this Fall to complete a survey in which they evaluate which of the Core Competencies they feel most/least resonate with their Capstone work. This data will help to further develop the Capstone course curricula.

Prep Division: Prep Seminar is developed in alignment with Core Competencies using Project Wayfinder curricula and weekly opt-in support for Seminar Faculty.

Middle School Division: 7th Grade students who are collecting evidence of their growth as part of the Capstone arm of Seminar will consider which Core Competency(ies) they are developing through each chosen artifact.
GUIDING QUESTION

How can Windward support all members of its community in being healthy, engaged, and balanced people who are comfortable taking healthy risks, take joy in learning, and have a sense of purpose larger than themselves?
One of the core elements of the Windward experience is our nurturing, supportive community. We seek to help all members of our community lead healthy and balanced lives. Through our work with Stanford University Professor Denise Pope and her Challenge Success program, we have examined ways to make a Windward education more engaging without making it more stressful.

Our construction of the Peak Performance Center, our renovation of the food service area, and our late start to school on Wednesdays have yielded significant benefits to the health of our community. The New York Times recognized Windward's nutrition program as leading the way in developing “the new performance enhancer.” As we build on these successes, we need to support the engagement of all Windwardians by helping them see the joy in taking healthy educational risks, in learning from successes and setbacks, and in striving to make the world a better place.

2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS

Community Connection and best practices for learning: highlight and emphasize the ways in which connection and relationship are essential to the well-being of adults and students in the Windward community.

Maintaining on-campus instruction and interaction is the most important tool to supporting this goal. Therefore, our top priority is to establish and revise campus protocols on an ongoing basis in response to the latest recommendations of our medical experts and the guidelines of the CDC, State of California and the Los Angeles County Health Department. Given both the excitement and natural adjustments of returning to campus as the pandemic continues, we will seek effective on-campus practices that foster our nurturing, inclusive community while incorporating successful new practices from our remote learning experience.

• Academic Division Orientations and Retreats
  ◦ Additional time with students in person during orientation week in advance of the beginning of classes, and our 7th, 8th and 9th Grade students will engage in Fall Retreats which will build stronger bonds within each grade.
  ◦ The faculty did an excellent job of providing effective academic instruction to our students last year. Our Division Teams will focus this Fall on the social emotional needs of students that were more challenging to fully support during remote instruction.

• Opening In-service theme for faculty and staff: rebuilding community connection in person

• A Windward student/faculty/administrative team will attend the Stanford Challenge Success annual conference and implement recommended student engagement strategies throughout the year.

• Faculty training this Summer underscored the connection between practices of equity and inclusion, well-being, and learning. Follow up work this year will include:
  ◦ Schoolwide—Liza Talusan: Identity Conscious Facilitation
  ◦ Upper School—Project Wayfinder: Curriculum and Pedagogy for Seminar

• Partnership for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
  ◦ Ground our work with adults and students in the research on human development as dependent on practices of equity and inclusion.

• Supporting Parent Connections
  ◦ Counselor Conversations on Zoom
  ◦ Foster transparent, open, and respectful communication among faculty, staff and parents.
GUIDING QUESTION

How can all members of the Windward community advance the School’s commitment to diversity and inclusivity, creating a sense of belonging for everyone and an environment where difference is celebrated?
Windward’s commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive community is a vital component of both its dynamic education and its nurturing community. At the core of this commitment is the understanding that all community members have a role in creating a nurturing, inclusive, and welcoming school community. Recognizing that all members of the community benefit from the opportunity to interact with and to learn from people with different backgrounds and experiences, the School has dedicated approximately $2.5 million to Financial Aid each year. The process of creating an embracing community requires ongoing dialogue and reflection among all members of the community.

**2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS**

Our goal this year is to support and strengthen our commitment to creating and enhancing “A nurturing, inclusive community” that welcomes new community members and fosters a true sense of belonging.

- Make the case for the importance of DEI work
  - What is DEI? Why does it matter?
- Provide a framework for the pedagogy of DEI (why do we do what we do?)
- Ensure that all Windward constituent groups (faculty/staff, students, administration, parents, board members) understand our DEI plan for the year and subsequent years.
- Ensure that all constituent groups understand their “on-ramp” to engage in DEI work.

The DEI Team will prioritize the following focus areas this year:

- **Student Experience/Campus Culture** - The DEI Team will engage the community in efforts to create a campus culture and climate that provide all of our students opportunities to feel seen, heard, valued and possess a sense of belonging.
  - Affinity Groups
  - Curriculum development
  - Responsive Teaching pedagogy
- **Faculty/Staff Professional Development, Parent Education**
  - *Make the case to the entire community that this work benefits everyone!*
  - The DEI Team will provide the appropriate data and related resource materials. Provide Windward constituent groups with opportunities for education and professional development related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) work.
- **Admissions & Outreach** - Our student body can and should reflect the racial and cultural diversity of the Greater Los Angeles area (direct correlation between connection and academic outcomes). The DEI and Admissions’ Teams will work together towards the goal of increasing the number of applicants of families of color.
While the previous three goals will be at the center of our work this year, we will also be continuing to look at the other goals in our Strategic Plan through the prism of those goals. Specifically, here are the other goals and some of the work we will be doing on them that connects with the three goals upon which we are most focused this year.

**GUIDING QUESTION**

How can Windward support faculty, administration, and staff in being effective and innovative in their roles and in modeling lifelong learning through ongoing professional growth?
BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The driving force behind Windward’s dynamic education is the strength of its faculty, administration, and staff. Windward teachers are experts in their subject areas and in current pedagogy, and they respond to the individual needs of their students. All faculty, administration, and staff work to make Windward an optimal learning environment for our students.

In order for all of Windward’s employees to provide the best support possible for the development of our students, they need to engage in ongoing research, learning, and growth. Therefore, Windward needs to provide all employees with the feedback, support, and resources that will promote their ongoing professional growth in a manner that reflects the mission and strategic goals of the School.

2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS

STUDENT ACTION ITEM
Weekly check-ins and monthly open houses for Seminar leaders. Incorporation of Project Wayfinder curricula as Seminar SEL touchstone for faculty and students.

ALL FACULTY ACTION ITEM
All faculty will categorize professional goals in our Folio system as relating to one of the Core Competencies or to our work in DEI.
GUIDING QUESTION

In what ways should Windward School evolve and enhance its innovative programs and pedagogy to meet the needs of students entering college and society in a rapidly changing world?
BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Windward has been and continues to be at the forefront of educational innovation. Its Global, STEAM, and Entrepreneurship programs are examples of areas in which Windward is increasingly recognized as having cutting-edge models for the rest of the nation. At the core of this success has been the School’s ongoing deep research of best practices and the educational partnerships that have been a natural outgrowth of this research.

Because Windward students will enter a world in which the pace of change is becoming faster and faster, the School’s educational programs cannot simply replicate what has been done in the past. As the present and future needs of its students change, it is essential for Windward’s faculty to adapt both the curriculum they teach and the instructional methods they use to prepare students for future success.

2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS

COLLEGIATE DIVISION
Scaffolding collegiate-level research and writing skills across Capstone courses; incorporating life skills into Seminar.

PREP DIVISION
Course selection, including 8th periods and visual and performing art offerings, are framed for students as opportunities to both deepen existing interests and explore new interests while taking developmentally appropriate academic and co-curricular risks.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION
Capstone arm of Seminar program—8th grade Capstone projects will include reflections of student growth in a chosen Core Competency.
GUIDING QUESTION

How do we best define and communicate the ways in which Windward’s dynamic, engaging education and nurturing, inclusive community make a Windward education compelling and unique?
BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Windward’s programs, facilities, and community have grown and developed tremendously during recent years. Windward’s position in the marketplace of independent schools continues to improve. As we continue to evolve, it is essential that we identify and articulate the qualities that make a Windward education unique to the members of our community, to feeder schools, to colleges and universities, and to the local and global community. We must make our identity known to the wider community in order to attract families to Windward who believe in and support the School’s mission and philosophy. In this way, we can ensure that the School’s founding vision and core values and the legacy of our founder, Shirley Windward, are preserved.

2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS

• Implement best communication practices by providing clear and concise messaging to our community as we navigate the ever-evolving pandemic crisis. Responsibly deliver accurate and up-to-date information via our digital communication platforms (email, website, social media); maintain open lines of communications by soliciting feedback from our community; and provide signage throughout Windward’s campus that clearly articulates our health and safety guidelines.

• Further shape Windward’s identity by working directly with the School’s Prefects, Student Diversity Leadership Board and other students committed to Windward’s mission and values to amplify student voices in the community.

• Utilize strategic marketing and branding efforts to continue to elevate Windward School as one of the nation’s premier educational institutions by effectively communicating to internal and external stakeholders, ensuring our mission and values are clearly identified, highlighted, and well articulated.
GUIDING QUESTIONS

What can Windward do to preserve and enhance the strong connections between adults and students at the School?

How can Windward further strengthen its alumni network and its relationships with its neighbors, feeder schools, colleges and universities, and the local and global community?
BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Windward believes that positive and constructive relationships among adults and students are vital to the success of its educational mission. The accessibility of its faculty and the strength of its counseling programs have long been hallmarks of a Windward education. In the research performed for the development of this Strategic Plan, students, parents, faculty, and alumni all responded that these relationships were among the most important aspects of Windward to preserve and enhance.

The creation of the Windward Network provides the opportunity for Windward graduates to benefit from a lifelong connection with the School. In addition, Windward’s increasing efforts to partner with schools of all levels, from neighborhood schools, such as Grandview Boulevard Elementary, to universities, such as Stanford and MIT, will continue to benefit our community in countless ways.

2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT
Utilize a blend of virtual and in-person (when permitted) engagement models to facilitate alumni events, panels, and mentorship opportunities. Promote virtual opportunities to alumni based outside of Los Angeles to engage alumni throughout the United States and around the world. Increase alumni involvement and attendance at Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity events to share personal experiences and celebrate the diversity of our community.

WINDWARD NETWORK
Create virtual and interactive networking experiences based on industry (i.e. Entertainment, Entrepreneurship, and Finance) that will maximize opportunities for students, alumni and community members to interact, explore, and receive career and professional guidance. Incorporate our values and mission into the continuing growth of our Windward Network opportunities.

SERVICE LEARNING
Continue to strengthen and expand our partnerships with neighborhood public schools through virtual and in person (when permitted) afterschool programming and community related endeavors, including one on one tutoring, physical education opportunities, and more. Continuing to expand the Middle School service learning program through creating age-appropriate opportunities for students that parents can also participate in, and partner with outside community organizations (like PATH) to help provide much-needed resources and beneficial experiences. Expand our neighborhood outreach by identifying programming opportunities that provide value and are of interest (i.e. technology tutoring for seniors).
GUIDING QUESTION

How can Windward best refine and execute its Master Plan in support of our programmatic goals and our aspirations for our students?
Windward has engaged in ongoing programmatic research and development during the past six years. As our innovative programs develop, it has become apparent that our facilities will no longer be able to meet the needs of our students. The development of our STEAM, Visual and Media Arts, and Entrepreneurship programs require new kinds of spaces for the programs to be fully realized. Visits to the Stanford d.school, the Haas School of Business, Menlo School, and many other institutions have helped us both to develop innovative programs and to see the possibilities that exist for our students given the right facilities.

In addition, our Performing Arts programs have outgrown their spaces and are in dire need of facilities that can support the excellent instruction and showcase the incredible talents of our students. As part of our research process, we have taken many of our performances off-campus to collegiate and professional venues. Seeing the ways in which performing in these spaces inspired the students to raise the quality of their work left no doubt that we need to provide them with the opportunity to have the proper facilities to showcase their work.

2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS

• Ensure the Academic & Student Support Hub (Part I of the Master Plan) meets our programmatic objectives as we begin utilizing the spaces in Fall 2021. Continue to communicate to the community and external stakeholders the benefits of designing and building facilities that support our departmental curriculum goals and objectives.

• Ensure the Innovation and Arts Center (Part II of the Master Plan) final design meets our programmatic objectives, falls within the budgetary guidelines approved by the Board of Trustees and begins construction early 2023. Continue to communicate to the community and external stakeholders the progress and benefits of the next phase of the Master Plan.

• Continue our research and partnership with collegiate and professional institutions as we refine the interior design of the Innovation and Arts Center (Part II) facilities to best meet our programmatic goals and enhance learning experiences.
GUIDING QUESTION

How can Windward enhance its culture of philanthropy in order to raise the funds necessary to achieve the goals of our Strategic Plan and to ensure the long-term financial health of the School?
BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Achieving the ambitious goals and aspirations articulated in this Strategic Plan is essential in order to meet the academic and extracurricular needs of our students. Success will only be possible, however, with the financial support of all members of the community. Support for the Windward Fund provides the funds necessary on an annual basis to enhance our programs, to provide opportunities for deserving students whose families do not have the financial means to pay full tuition to attend Windward, and to support our teachers in their ongoing professional growth. In addition, construction of the Master Plan will require members of the community to stretch in order to make significant gifts. Finally, the School needs to increase the size of its endowment in order to ensure its financial well-being for years to come.

2021-22 ACTIONS STEPS

- Continue to grow the annual support of the Windward Fund, while expanding the public phase of the Innovation Campus to reach the Board-mandated benchmark to commence construction of Innovation & Arts Center (Part II of the Master Plan) and Plaza (Part III of the Master Plan).

- Utilize the Windward Fund Co-Chairs and Innovation Campaign Steering Committee to clearly communicate to all stakeholders the importance and distinguishable differences of both philanthropic endeavors.

- Utilize the expertise and knowledge of the Innovation Campaign Steering Committee Members, to educate all stakeholders on the importance and benefits of the philanthropic giving earmarked for new facilities designed to elevate our programmatic objectives.
OUR MISSION

WINDWARD SCHOOL IS A DYNAMIC COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL THAT CHALLENGES EACH STUDENT TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN A NURTURING, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY.

WINDWARD TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND ADMINISTRATORS WORK TOGETHER TO INSPIRE OUR STUDENTS TO BE RESPONSIBLE, CARING, WELL-INFORMED, ETHICAL, PREPARED, AND WELL-BALANCED YOUNG ADULTS.