



June 2024

A Letter from Dr. Ami Vaidya '91 on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Dear D-E Community,

Independent school boards have fiduciary duties and an obligation to lead the organization they oversee toward the fulfillment of its mission and purpose. Dwight-Englewood's Trustees are focusing on strategic planning as a process to ensure the present and future well being of our school.

Led by Trustee and parent, Candace Rabinowitz P '25, '27, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, together with our consultant, Gary Daynes from Ian Symmonds and Associates, reviewed community wide survey feedback along with research about D-E's competitive landscape. Based on that data, the Committee selected five strategic areas of focus - or pillars - around which we will create initiatives to strengthen the school: Purpose, Program, People, Place, and Philanthropy.

More than 60 people from a cross-section of the D-E community volunteered to be part of design teams for each pillar including faculty from all three divisions, parents, students, administrators, staff, trustees, and alumni. Together, these team members leveraged and shared their unique perspectives to create several draft strategic initiatives - a wishlist of sorts, both short and long-term - for each of their pillars.

The design team co-chairs and Strategic Planning Steering Committee met to share the initiatives with the ultimate goal of strengthening D-E where we need immediate attention, building unity, and strategically preparing the school to move forward expeditiously with our next Head of School. We will work over the summer to refine those initiatives into a coherent draft strategic plan, with a special focus on our Purpose pillar to ensure that all of the initiatives reflect the cherished values and identity of our school.

These efforts are running in parallel as we begin our search for a new Head of School with the assistance from our consultants from Spencer Stuart.

There are many reasons why the Board decided to persist with the strategic planning during this time of transition. We did not want to lose our momentum or the insights that so many of you have helped us generate. For many on our teams, participating in the vital work of shaping the school's future has been an opportunity to connect, to be heard, to make a difference and, yes, to "make it better." But most important, the plan is the school's plan, transcending any one individual, drawn from every corner of our community. With this strategic plan in place, both our Interim and permanent Heads of School will be equipped with a robust and thoughtful roadmap that reflects the values, the creativity and the lived experience of this community.

We will keep you updated as the initiatives are refined and the plan comes into shape. In the meantime, if you have questions or insights, please scan the QR code below \*\*\* or contact us by email at: [strategy@d-e.org](mailto:strategy@d-e.org).

Thanks to the hundreds of you who gave input, to the over 60 design team volunteers, and to the entire D-E community for your support as we work to ensure that our beloved school thrives well into the future. We truly appreciate all of your support of the strategic planning process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ami Vaidya '91, P '24, '26

**Dwight-Englewood School**

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