



Rooting Down 
BRANCHING OUT
FRIENDS SCHOOL OF PORTLAND

Dear Friends,

For our first eighteen years, Friends School of Portland has been guided by the Quaker values of integrity, truth, equality, peace, community, stewardship, and simplicity as it has grown from a 31-person class on Mackworth Island to 141 students in our forest-circled campus off of Route 1. In 2023, we are **rooting down** into our home to further settle in and organize around our deepest values with love, while also **branching out** to strengthen our interdependence with our larger community beyond the campus and reach for a future we believe is possible.

The path ahead means thinking intentionally about our continued use of space, land, and resources. It means staying in close contact with each other, supporting individual and group needs, and further embodying equity. It means deepening our understanding and practice of our core academic approach as well as partnerships and exchanges beyond our campus. This growth and future will be possible with a plan that ensures we use our resources with care. In order to provide for the members of this community – both its students and adults, and all those we look to welcome – we will need to focus on building strength, solidity, and security.

During our ten-month strategic planning process, supported by Courtney Bourns Consulting, we received input from students, past and current families, faculty and staff, board members, advisory committee members, graduates, friends, and Friends to envision our next chapter. In conjunction with our New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) reaccreditation feedback in 2022 and our Friends Council on Education self-study in 2019, the strategic priorities that have emerged are ***Belonging and Community, Program and Partnership, and Financial Stewardship.***

We thank you for lending your visions and hopes to Friends School throughout this process, and we now call on this strong community to help continue to move this plan forward.

With gratitude,



Sara Primo, **Head of School**



Lise Wagner, **Board Clerk**





When we last came together for a Strategic Plan (2016-2021), we had graduated 44 students and just opened up our passive house school building, the first in Maine. Now eight school years later, we have engaged a wide cross-section of people in conversation about Friends School of Portland's next five years.

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in this strategic planning process: Board Members, Strategic Planning Design Committee Members, Courtney Bourns Consulting, Advisory Committee members, Faculty and Staff, Students, Graduates, Parents, and Grandparents. We especially want to thank members of our community who shared their ideas, reflections, and questions during the Strategic State of the School, Visioning Session, and Strategy Team Sessions.

BOARD MEMBERS

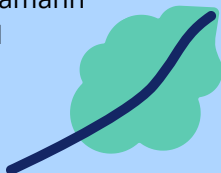
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BELONGING AND COMMUNITY

Community is the heart and soul of Friends School of Portland, a school where each student is seen, known, and loved, and where we tend to the fabric of our community each day with purpose and with passion.

The past few years have brought many challenges for educators, students, and families. A pandemic, systemic inequity, growing impacts of climate change, and young people's increasing mental health needs have led us to recommit to supporting not just our students, but nurturing the community of parents, teachers, and staff around them as well.

Our community continues to grow as we graduate an ever-increasing number of young people. Building strong relationships with students does not end at eighth grade. We seek to foster a community that is enriched by Friends school graduates letting their lives speak.

Though our community has been engaged in conversation, and our faculty has for many years been strengthening their work toward teaching and leading for justice and belonging, we know we need to continue to do better. For FSP, doing better over the next five years will include an equity audit that will help us to understand and address our gaps in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

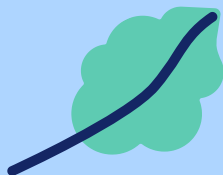


WE WILL

**NURTURE AND INVEST
IN A DIVERSE
COMMUNITY WHERE
EVERYONE IS VALUED,
CARED FOR, AND
BELONGS.**

OUR STRATEGIES:

- Deepen our commitment to what is essential, including our rootedness in Quaker values, our rituals and traditions, our connection to the Spirit, and our culture of joyful learning.
- Design and implement policies and practices to center a shared vision of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for the Friends School of Portland community.
- Increase our capacity to support student, staff, and family social-emotional well-being.
- Formalize and deepen our connections with alumnx.



PROGRAM AND PARTNERSHIP

In the spirit of Quaker practice, we strive to be seeking: committed to the continuing revelation of truths, pathways, and openings that emerge in our beloved community. Friends School of Portland's inquiry-based approach deepens students' capacity to ask authentic questions and in doing so, it cultivates curiosity and communication. Students come to trust their own voices, listen more deeply to others, and become more comfortable with the discomfort of always seeking and reaching toward the light of truth.

As Inquiry-Reflection-Action is our core academic approach, we work hard to keep this meaningful and alive in our work. This extends well beyond the end of the school day, into our After School programming as well as our Summer Camp – critical parts of programming that help students engage with the world, find their passions, and share their light.

As a school, we are defining what we aspire to in terms of our relationships with the broader community around us: the networks of connection we want to maintain and strengthen. We need to cultivate what it looks like to be interdependent with our surrounding community.

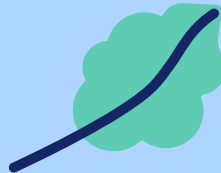


WE WILL

**STRENGTHEN OUR
INQUIRY-BASED,
COMMUNITY-ENGAGED
PROGRAM SO THAT
OUR STUDENTS ARE
PREPARED TO ENTER
THE WORLD WITH
CONFIDENCE,
COMPETENCE, JOY, AND
A SENSE OF PURPOSE.**

OUR STRATEGIES:

- Review, revise, and renew our curriculum, pedagogy, and practice to more fully align with our Inquiry-Reflection-Action approach to teaching and learning as a community of seekers.
- Clarify and align the vision and goals of programming beyond the school day to match the needs of families and students.
- Cultivate and deepen mutually beneficial partnerships with educational and nonprofit organizations in our local community and beyond to more fully live our mission and values.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Our Passive House school building is a statement of faith, a promise for future students and for the future environment. With its reduced ecological footprint, our building holds us to a high standard, keeping our use of resources wedded to our values and mission.

Having grown into the middle school wing completed in 2020, we need to continue to be intentional with our resources while further enhancing our facility in meaningful ways. Careful long-range planning around technology, expansion, and stewardship will allow us to further realize our current site's enormous potential.

Our teachers and staff are the backbone of the education that we are so proud to offer, and therefore we must strive to retain diverse, highly qualified teachers with fair compensation. We are also committed to continuing to serve families from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, and therefore we must reevaluate our tuition-based model with an eye toward keeping an FSP education accessible, pursuing non-tuition revenue, and cultivating a culture of giving back to the school.

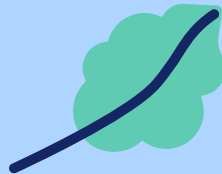


WE WILL

**PREPARE FOR THE
FUTURE WITH A
SUSTAINABLE
FINANCIAL MODEL,
CONSISTENT WITH OUR
QUAKER VALUES OF
INTEGRITY, TRUTH,
EQUALITY, PEACE,
COMMUNITY, AND
SIMPLICITY.**

OUR STRATEGIES:

- Formalize a facilities plan (including grounds, buildings, transportation, and technology), which will enhance our student and community experience.
- Augment our current financial model by increasing non-tuition revenue and enhancing our culture of philanthropy to connect our community and mission thoughtfully and effectively.
- Strengthen our ability to offer fair and attractive compensation that enables a diverse, highly qualified faculty and staff to thrive. Simultaneously, develop a tuition and financial aid structure that best supports our community.





National Association
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