

Boston Collegiate Charter School

Strategic Plan:

July 2020 – June 2023

For Board Approval 2.10.20

Looking Back

Our 2015-2020 Strategic Plan was rooted in five core elements: Excellence, Equity, Diversity, A Vibrant Teaching Culture, and Collaboration, with a strong focus on the “supporting conditions” that would make these elements a reality.

By the 2019-2020 school year, much has been accomplished: a new facility has been launched with new classrooms and the first-ever Upper School Commons, student technology is 1:1 across both campuses, staff diversity has increased, and student achievement as measured by the state accountability system in spring 2019 was the best in recent history. More electives, clubs, and sports were accessible across all parts of the school. Our mission of preparing each student for college is alive and well: alums consistently report that they feel prepared or over-prepared for college. We have articulated core values that emphasize the best of Boston Collegiate.

This is a strong foundation on which to build further towards a diverse, inclusive, rigorous, exemplary public school that is a national model.

Mission and Vision

- Our **Mission** will remain the same: To prepare each student for college.

In this plan, we introduce an aspirational **Vision** that will anchor this mission:

- *All BCCS students will...* graduate empowered to choose their own directions, with options aligned with their passions and interests. They will be equipped not only to go to college, but to thrive there, and they will possess the leadership skills and mindsets necessary to make an impact in their communities and the world.
- *To achieve this vision of our graduates, BCCS will...* be academically rigorous, equitable, and inclusive. BCCS will create opportunities for each student to thrive and will cultivate curiosity, empathy, and the unique talents that each student brings. BCCS will be a beacon of the twin pillars of scholarship and belonging, and thus a national model for what integrated education can look like at its best.

Core Values

Scholarship

- We think with confidence across different fields of thought.
- We solve novel challenges and take on real problems.
- We challenge each other out of our deep regard for one another.
- We strive for excellence.

Belonging

- We listen deeply and take the time to know each other.
- We celebrate diversity and work to ensure that our community belongs to each of us.
- We take pride in and ownership over our community and how it is experienced by each of us.
- We willingly confront bias in ourselves and in others.
- We strive for an equitable community, knowing that we don't all start from the same place.
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Passion

- We learn, teach, and work with joy whenever possible.
- We are curious and we encourage curiosity in others.
- We work hard and bring our full effort to bear on our work and the changes we want to see in our community and in the world.

Responsibility

- We own our mistakes and use them as opportunities to learn.
- We are accountable for our actions and we hold others accountable.
- We enthusiastically help those around us and willingly accept help ourselves.
- We reflect in order to learn and grow.
- We demonstrate good judgment.
- We view ourselves as agents of change and step up to make the world better.

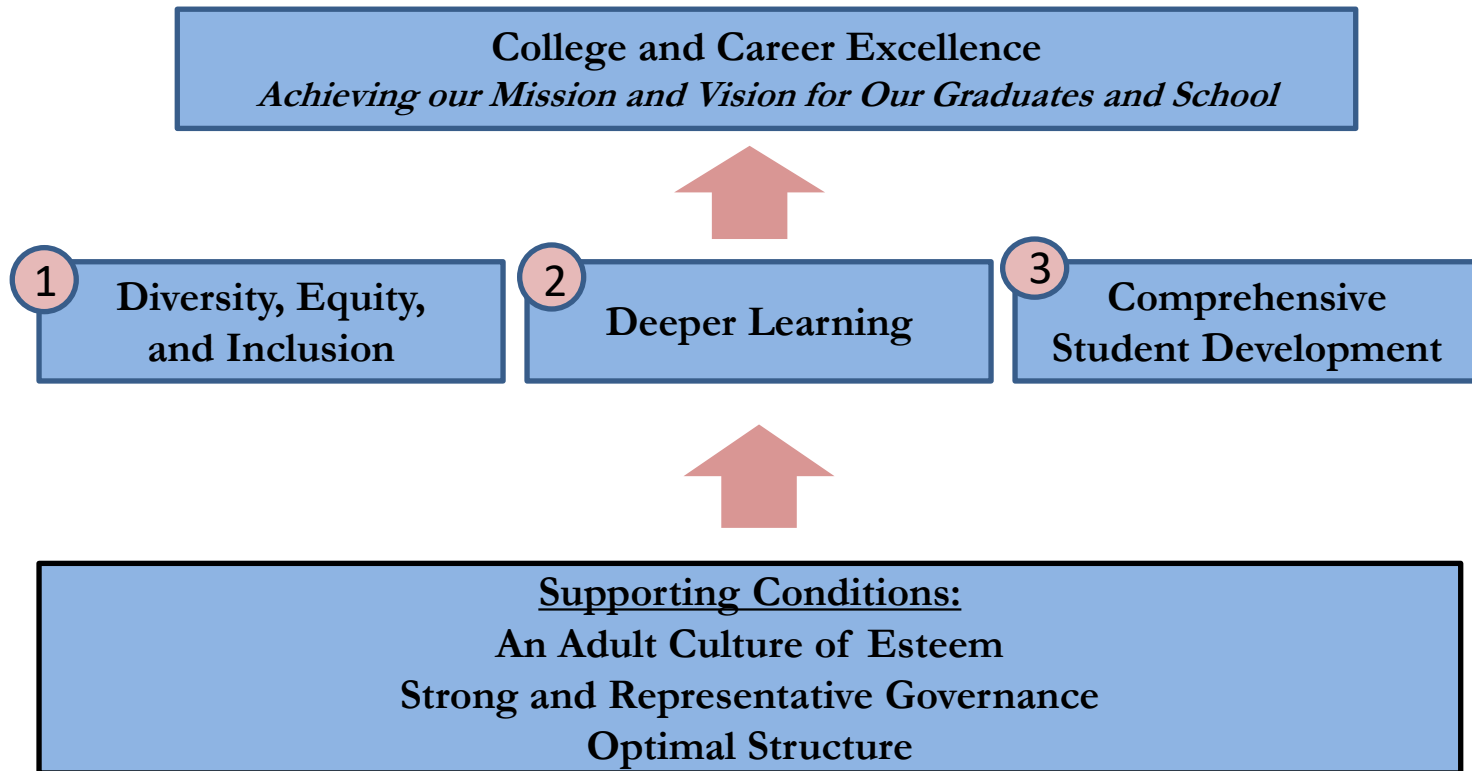
Integrity

- We communicate with honesty, authenticity, warmth, and kindness.
- We tell the truth and we strive to make truth-telling safe for others.
- We express gratitude for the work of others.

Plan Highlights

- This is an internally focused plan.
- We will **stay the course** with strong **college counseling, alumni support, and career exposure work**, as well as **rigorous academics**.
- In addition, three commitments will drive our work with students: to **diversity equity and inclusion**, to **deeper learning**, and to **comprehensive student development**.
- To facilitate these, we strive for three supporting conditions: an adult culture of esteem, strong and representative governance, and an optimal organizational structure.
- *Things we will see by 2023 will include:*
 - More robust work on identity and with families, more staff/teachers of color, and more voice in and accountability for data and decisions
 - More engaging and relevant learning and more electives and extracurriculars
 - More support for students' mental and physical health needs, including hopefully, a playground at the Lower School and a plan for an athletic space for the Upper School
- We intend to collaborate with peer schools in the focus areas of the plan, both to share and to learn

Organizing Framework



1 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Belonging

All BCCS students, families, and staff feel a sense of connectedness and cohesion in the school community. School culture emphasizes relationships over transactional interactions.

- **Extracurriculars:** Develop, in each part of the school, enough extracurriculars to ensure that every student has a “thing they do” at BCCS to build a thriving school community and relationships with others; other interventions don’t preclude participation.
- **Events:** Develop, in each part of the school, an events calendar that celebrates heritages and interests.
- **Family:** Create, in each part of the school, a deeper approach to family connection.
- **Structures:** Implement strategies for fostering relationships (e.g. advisory looping, supporting transitions 6th → 7th, 8th → 9th).
- **Discipline Reboot:** Articulate a new approach to discipline with clear rules and guidelines, consistent implementation, and with responses to violations rooted in a restorative/relationship frame.

Agency

All BCCS students have agency and are responsible for using it, engaging in decisions and having voice.

- **Communication:** Develop proactive and reactive tools for communicating with students and families, particularly around challenging moments related to diversity.
- **Voice:** Develop, in each part of the school, an elected body for student voice.
- **Activism:** Develop, in each part of the school, a plan for teaching students about leadership and activism.

Representation

BCCS staff, teachers, leadership team, Board, and student leadership increasingly reflect BCCS students.

- **Hiring Plan:** Establish an annual plan for increasing staff, teacher, and leadership diversity, while maintaining the focus on quality.
- **Student Leadership:** Monitor and report on demographics of student leadership.
- **Board:** Ensure board composition is increasingly reflective of the BCCS community.

Accountability

All members of the school are held accountable for their words and actions, particularly around bias.

- **Policy:** Audit current policy with civil rights counsel and make recommended adjustments.
- **Practice:** Articulate a concrete set of practices around responding to bias-based incidents and ensure that all members of the community know what these practices are and what follow up can be expected.
- **Training:** Ensure students, families, staff, and leadership are trained on the policy and practice of how to respond to bias-based incidents.

Learning Culture

BCCS staff development culture, classroom culture, and curriculum are models of culturally relevant pedagogy.

- **Inventory & Plan:** Take inventory of which staff have been trained in anti-racism and develop a learning plan for each staff member which includes feedback on self-work.
- **Coaching:** Train instructional coaches on culturally relevant pedagogy and ensure explicit coaching.
- **Student Input:** Create a Committee on Student Learning and ask students for feedback on curriculum.

We will know we are successful if...

- % of staff, leaders, and board members of color is increased by June 2023; with a focus on African-American staff (esp. men); % of staff of color retained is increased.
- Student survey results are: At BCCS, I feel that I belong (90%), There is something I do that I enjoy at BCCS (90%); no difference by race on the question “At BCCS, there is an adult that I could go to with a problem.” Family survey shows no gap by race on DEI questions.
- 100% of staff have been trained in anti-racism; 85% of students believe the curriculum in their classes meets basic indicators for culturally relevant curriculum.
- A decrease in the gap between students of color and white students in suspensions from 18-19 baseline.

2 – Deeper Learning

Excellence & Equity

All BCCS students are achieving at high levels and there is no variation by the identity markers that often predict achievement.

- **Instructional Vision**: articulate a clear instructional vision each year and carry this through professional development and coaching.
- **Assessment**: Refine robust and rigorous assessment program and pilot alternative assessments rooted in deeper learning concepts where possible.
- **Intervention**: Ensure teachers are trained, coached, and supported in intervention implementation.
- **Resources**: Create campus-based family/community liaisons who can connect families of students struggling the most with resources, camps, etc.

Relevance

All BCCS classes are centered around critical, real world issues and questions and take into account student interest and passion.

- **Curriculum**: Create an inventory of each curriculum and rate the relevance of how we teach the state standards and beyond, ensuring the curriculum is knowledge-rich and content-rich; prioritize new curriculum and courses in areas where growth is needed.
- **Choice**: Introduce more choice into students' academic day, including through electives.
- **Interdisciplinary**: Introduce at least 1 interdisciplinary project in grades 5-8 and where possible in 9 and 10.
- **Financial Literacy**: Develop a comprehensive, 5-12th grade approach to financial literacy.

Student Expression

All BCCS classes require students to speak and write at high levels. All classes require students to disagree and explain their positions, expect uncertainty, and understand the value of listening to others.

- **Dialogic**: Create more space for dialogue and student voice within classrooms.
- **Rubric**: Formalize 5th-12th grade vertically aligned rubrics to be used across all content areas for: debates, spoken presentations, and writing in all genres to ensure we are holding a high bar.
- **Capstone**: Create more capstone experiences (e.g. science fair, 8th grade talk) where students can get feedback on these skills.
- **Arts**: Expand arts offerings, including music strand.

We will know we are successful if...

- Increased AP pass rates overall and by identity markers; Increased MCAS SGP's overall and by identity markers; MCAS "Meets and Exceeds Expectations" goes to 95% in 10th grade, with students gaining ground each year; Increased course passing rates overall and by identity markers.
- On average, student feedback on individual courses shows that 80% of student believe that their coursework is relevant.
- Graduating seniors demonstrate mastery on vertically aligned student expression rubric.
- *Observational/rubric feedback metrics TBD*

3 – Comprehensive Student Development

Identity

All BCCS students understand their personal backgrounds and identity markers and how these manifest relative to others.

- **Explicit Instruction:** Explicitly teach identity, i.e., through the ID Lead course in the Lower School. Expand ID Lead course (or similar) to MS and HS students.
- **Affinity Spaces:** Develop student affinity spaces in each part of the school.
- **Projects & Performances:** Ensure there are identity-based projects and/or performances in each grade.

Mental Health

All BCCS students are receiving the mental health supports they need to thrive.

- **Trauma Inclusive:** Implement training in trauma inclusive practices and include in observational feedback. Train instructional coaches ensure explicit coaching.
- **Media:** Implement training in digital citizenship in all parts of the school.
- **Instructional Model:** Consider a new model for educating students with very high emotional and behavioral needs, including the possibility of creating a strand at BCCS or joining a collaborative with other schools.

Physical Health & Wellness

All BCCS students are receiving adequate physical activity.

- **Health Curriculum:** Take an inventory of our approach to health curriculum in grades 5-12 and determine appropriate staffing.
- **Space & Furniture:** Create regular access to space for exercise and movement (build a Lower School playground, do foundational work for a high school athletic space/gym, replace furniture).
- **Schedule:** Create a schedule and staffing model that will allow for a physical break (recess) daily.
- **Access to Play:** Expand the BCCS athletics program to include a JV program for most sports; consider MIAA competition for some sports.

We will know we are successful if...

- We have developed a 5-12 model curriculum for teaching identity development.
- The amount of time teachers, principals, and Deans spend on managing mental health flare-ups is reduced.
- The Lower School has a play space and we have a plan for an Upper School athletics area.
- We have launched affinity spaces for students of all backgrounds in each part of the school.

Supporting Conditions

An Adult Culture of Esteem

- **Voice**: Ensure continued presence of the Leadership Advisory Committee; codify in Board bylaws; and access to leaders' ears.
- **Autonomy**: As much as possible, grant proficient & skillful teachers curriculum & classroom autonomy. Through the Fund for Teaching Excellence, invest in ideas and passions. Support and grow teacher leadership.
- **Differentiated Support**: Support teachers who are still developing with coherent/streamlined curriculum and coaching.
- **Collegiality**: Support teacher teams and co-teaching pairs in having healthy, mutually-accountable relationships.
- **Time & Trust**: Hold a high bar when we ask for teacher time (meetings). Consider staggered schedules.
- **Psychological Safety**: Ensure candid whole-staff communication from BCCS leadership about dilemmas of the school. Honor mistake-making. Consider multi-year letters of agreement.
- **Compensation**: Strive for competitive compensation for all roles, and particularly for teachers.

Strong and Representative Governance

- **Role Clarity**: Ensure that the School Board and the Foundation Board understand their obligations as individuals and of their respective entities (codify the School Board/Foundation Board relationship; determine approach to fundraising for both Boards).
- **Succession Planning**: Ensure that the School Board has a clear line of sight into staff leadership bench strength and succession planning and that this is codified.
- **Voice**: Develop participatory practices and codify them in bylaws (student board seats, parent board seats, teacher board seat, and roles of: LAC, DEI Task Force, CASA).
- **Diversity**: Ensure board composition is increasingly reflective of the BCCS community.
- **Goal Setting**: Ensure that School Board and Foundation Board are prepared for and are more engaged in generative, long-term goal-setting. Recruit board members can bring relevant context (e.g., are deeply engaged in BCCS and/or work in the field of education). Set a target mix of trustees to include skills, experience, donor potential, and engagement in education and use vacancies to rebalance the Board.

An Optimal Organizational Structure

- **Zooming Out**: Engage a consultant to help us do a deep-dive on how we are structured, particularly in the realms of: special education, family and community support, operations, and instruction, and we will work towards a multi-year implementation of the recommendations as appropriate.

We will know we are successful if...

- **Respecting and Elevating Teachers and Staff**: Staff retention exceeds 85% and does not vary by identity markers; Annually, 75% or more of BCCS teachers agree on the TNTP Insight survey that "My school is a good place to teach and learn."
- **Strong and Representative Governance**: Board diversity has increased; there is a student on the board; board has successfully managed an ED transition and/or knows how it would handle one; board has a practice of establishing short and long-term goals for the school.
- **Optimal Organizational Structure**: in 2023, multiple departments are structured differently from in 2020.