

2021-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN



SPRUCE
STREET
SCHOOL

MISSION

We are a nurturing educational community that instills in a broad range of children the social, emotional, and intellectual skills for lifelong participation in a diverse society.

CORE VALUES

COMMUNITY

Children learn and grow best in vibrant, safe, nurturing communities. Every Spruce Street School student is known, valued, and respected. Through active engagement in both their school community and the broader community, students develop the skills and attitudes to be contributing citizens and inclusive leaders.

DIVERSITY

Spruce Street School is a diverse environment of students, families, and staff. Every day, we strive to intentionally create a culture that fosters strong character, positive self-image, and a life-long excitement for learning. We honor and value each and every student: who an individual student is, where that student is from, and what that student brings to both the classroom and the community. We model and teach respect for all types of diversity, including cultural, ethnic, racial, economic, family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity, learning differences, beliefs, and abilities.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A child's social and emotional development is as important as their academic progress. Our community actively promotes the development of positive, respectful relationships among students and staff. We teach children (through curriculum and modeling) to recognize and respect their own feelings and the feelings of others. We emphasize collaboration in work and play. We teach and make use of conflict resolution skills in daily school life.

DIFFERENTIATED, INTEGRATED INSTRUCTION

All children have strengths, challenges, and different ways of learning. Our teachers recognize and celebrate these differences, creating an integrated curriculum and a rich educational experience that is meaningful for each individual student. A true understanding of each child and high expectations help ensure that every child is able to achieve their own potential.

2035 VISION

By 2035, Spruce Street School will be the highest quality, most financially accessible K-5 independent school of its kind in the Seattle area – able to admit children who would thrive in our educational program and community, regardless of their families' ability to pay. In addition, we will continue to be distinguished for our unique program and excellent teachers.



2021-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN BACKGROUND

In 2019 the board of trustees began the work of strategic planning for Spruce Street School. This process included several critical components:

- Discussions with board and staff about the school's foundations—its mission and values
- Exercises to understand and articulate our unique offering or "special sauce"
- Board and committee work to identify and prioritize strategic initiatives, goals, and activities for the school

This important work was put on hold while the school navigated the Covid-19 pandemic and the country's

ongoing racial reckoning, and was completed in spring of 2021. The timing of the work allowed the board to incorporate learnings from these challenging times into the process and commit to continuous learning whatever the difficulty. For while the 2021-2024 plan honors and reflects the school's longstanding commitments and identity, it also expresses an openness to change and adaptability, to examine the school's foundations and even move the school to best serve the mission and values. The board is excited to continue this work with the community, enabling Spruce Street School to thrive as an institution as it serves students and families.

2021-2024 PLAN

Institutional Identity
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Forever Home

2017-2021 PLAN

Seeding our Future
Diversity
Urban Identity

2014-2017 PLAN

Seeding our Future
NWAIS Re-Accreditation
Urban Identity

2011-2014

North Star Fund
Financial Sustainability
Teacher Excellence

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY INITIATIVE

RATIONALE
2021-2024 GOALS
ACTIVITIES

Spruce Street School is undertaking foundational work to ensure alignment on its long-term institutional identity. Clearly articulating our community's uniqueness will allow the school to chart its ideal future. Between now and when we begin planning for our next location, we will leverage the time to cement our mission, vision, and values and to align on how to enact them with children, families, and the Seattle community. The school will move to its Forever Home in the First Hill neighborhood of Seattle in 2030. We aspire to distill the qualities that make Spruce Street School special, so we can communicate effectively to our ever-changing community.

- Affirm the school's institutional identity with a comprehensive review of existing—and the potential creation of new—foundational documents.
- Explicitly articulate the culture and differentiators that gave us resilience to weather the challenges of 2020.
- Engage with and learn from the community, both inside and outside of the school, to understand how to carry out our mission to serve a broad range of children.
- Incorporate learnings from changing demographic, educational, and sociopolitical landscapes to enhance our policies, practices, and culture.

- Review mission, values, and North Star.
- Evaluate the need for new foundational documents (such as a blueprint, core principles, or learner outcomes).
- Analyze stakeholder input to understand community perspectives. Stakeholders may include: alumni, teachers and staff, current families, alumni families, preschools, middle schools, and broader community members.
- Gather external market perception data both to understand what our school and students are known for and also to enhance initiatives, such as community collaborations, marketing, and admissions.



STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVE

Spruce Street School is committed to differentiated and integrated learning, multi-age classes, social and emotional development, and a thriving community. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are central to carrying out these values. The school knows that a community where children feel they belong is the foundation for learning and growth and enables the school to serve all students well. Spruce Street School wants to continue to intentionally build a diverse community by ensuring that each member feels that they are valued and by teaching care and modeling for all members of the community.

- Continue to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community of learning and belonging.
- Further integrate DEI values into the life of the school.
- Increase the representation of historically underrepresented groups in the student body as well as in the staff and the board.
- Grow the school community's cultural competency and understanding of racial equity.
- Articulate the school's goals with respect to diversity and belonging.
- Revise the school's diversity value to better reflect the identity, values, and goals of the school.
- Examine policies and practices to ensure consistency with the school's DEI values and goals.
- Support the work of teachers and staff in serving all students and families and fostering connection.
- Enhance the learning of families and students around issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Evaluate our hiring and admissions processes to strengthen the hiring, admission, retention, and support of those who have been historically underrepresented.
- Ensure that the curriculum and program continue to reflect and reinforce our commitment to DEI.
- Explore possible tools to measure whether the school is meeting its DEI goals and is creating a culture of inclusivity.
- Assess progress towards meeting these goals.

FOREVER HOME INITIATIVE

After 37 years of renting its facilities, Spruce Street School made a historic decision in December 2019 and purchased a building to be its Forever Home. The purchase was made possible through careful financial planning, the generosity of family members offering short-term loans, and a friendly seller providing advantageous financing terms, and yet also depends on additional fundraising. The Forever Home capital campaign secures the school's future by ensuring its permanent location and honors our commitments to financial accessibility, affordable tuition for all families, and staff compensation.

- Raise \$1.5 million in pledges and gifts to support the purchase of the school's permanent home at 1300 Madison Street.
- Design and participate in activities that welcome, nurture, and support all families in the school community.
- Support the Forever Home campaign committee by engaging in outreach and recruitment activities that align with the campaign.
- Meet with all current families, board, and staff, as well as members of the extended community, including alumni, to raise funds for the purchase of the school's new home.

APPROVED BY THE 2020-21 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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