



# AIMS K-12

## Board of Directors Presentation

September 21, 2021

# Background & Objectives

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D&A Communications has created a strategy based on the strengths of AIMS, with the goal of showcasing the District's academic excellence, highlighting achievements, and showcasing the people who form the AIMS community. D&A began this work in early April, 2021.

D&A has been working towards 3 objectives for AIMS: (1) Raising awareness, (2) Strengthening positive reputation and, (3) Drive support for AIMS' priorities amongst targeted stakeholder groups, including:

- Alumni
- Parents-current and prospective
- Community Business leaders and owners

D&A has maximized AIMS parent and community engagement by highlighting educational accomplishments and student successes through a variety of platforms, including:

- Website optimization
- Creation of a CBO database
- Alumni Outreach
- Blog/Thought Leadership

# Methodology

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The following was conducted by D&A for the purpose of creating a Key Findings Report and Strategy and Messaging Framework.

## **1. Research**

- Website audit
- Social media audit

## **2. Listening Sessions**

- Head of High School (90-minutes)
- Co-Leads of Middle School (60-minutes)
- Head of Elementary School (30-minutes)
- External Stakeholders (60-minutes)
  - Kimi Kean, Aron Michalski, Jumoke Hinton (3)
- Board President (30-minutes)
- Parent Engagement Coordinator (60-minutes)

Kitt Grant and Ariella Flatt (D&A) facilitated each listening session on behalf of AIMS.

## **3. Written Surveys**

- Teachers (31)
- Board members (3)

# Key Learnings

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Through the research conducted, we have identified insights, recurring themes, and trends that will help inform the communications strategy moving forward. The Key Findings Report identifies gaps, summarizes opportunities, and uncovers leverageable stakeholder insights to inform this Messaging Framework, and to help clearly define what needs to shift in order to support more positive perceptions of AIMS. The 2020-2021 school year was a unique and challenging time for the AIMS community as Heads of School, teachers, parents, and students adapted to the changes that COVID-19 brought. During this time, more than ever before, frequent and transparent communication was key.

Based on the research, the key learnings include:

- **Equity** should be prioritized.
- **Transparency** and **consistency** are key.
- Emphasize the **community** aspect of AIMS.
- Emphasize the **facts**, including test scores, achievements, and evidence of academic excellence.
- **Trust** is everything. The reputation of AIMS still carries some of the weight of past leadership.
- It's about the **people**- the students, staff, and parents.

# Mission and Vision

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## Current Mission Statement

Our mission at AIMS is to cultivate a community of diverse learners who achieve academic excellence. Our commitment to high expectations is attendance, academic achievement, and character development results in our students being prepared for lifelong success.

## Recommended Updated Mission Statement

Our mission at AIMS is to create a community of diverse learners who achieve academic excellence. Our commitment to equity, academics and character development prepares our students for lifelong success. We are committed to providing a comprehensive learning experience by educating our students about socio-economic & racial justice issues to cultivate intellectually ethical citizens.

**We recommend adding a Vision statement, which incorporates key priorities identified throughout the research process.**

## Vision

A school community that is committed to academic excellence and equity, fosters character development, and cultivates the leaders of tomorrow.

# Values

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## Current Values

**Excellence** - Commitment to excellence in all that we do.

**Wisdom and Knowledge** - Pursuit of wisdom and knowledge as intrinsically valuable.

**Empathy** - Recognition of dignity and worth of every human being.

**Family and Community** - Building of family and community.

**Equity** - Social awareness and justice that leads to action.

**Legacy** - The continued preservation and development of AIMS methodologies for 21st century learners and educators.

## Recommended Updates

- **Equity** - Social awareness and justice that leads to action.
- **Excellence** - Commitment to excellence in all that we do.
- **Legacy** - The continued preservation and development of AIMS methodologies for 21st century learners and educators.
- **Wisdom and Knowledge** - Pursuit of wisdom and knowledge as intrinsically valuable.
- **Respect, Integrity, and Empathy** - Recognition of dignity and worth of every human being. We treat one another with respect and integrity.
- **Community** - Building a community of students and families and instilling AIMS pride.
- **Diversity** - The AIMS community takes pride in our community's inclusiveness and instill this pride in our students.

# Messaging Overview

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Our tone should be informative and inviting, and aim to engage our target audiences, including students, teachers, alumni, CBO's, board members, and parents of current and prospective students.

## **Tone**

- Informative
- Encouraging and inviting

## **Audience**

- Students, (current and alumni) Teachers, Parents, and Parents of prospective students, CBO's and corporate businesses

## **Community Engagement**

- Inform our audience of programs, events, news, and academic and athletic achievements.
- Engage the community and encourage them to take action
- Foster continued community engagement (through ParentSquare for parents, newsletter for alumni, etc.)

# AIMS Promise

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What we can promise our community:

- **We're here for *all* students.**
- **We are here to provide students with a academic excellence, strong values, and a pathway to college.**
- **We are committed to keeping promises made to students and parents.**
- **We offer our students and staff a family-like, safe, diverse environment**
- **We prioritize equity for all students and are committed to continued learning and growth**
- **We are committed to educating our students about socio-economic & racial justice to cultivate Intellectually ethical citizens.**
- **We offer ELD support within classrooms**
- **We are here to support you and provide the resources that your family needs.**
- **We're dedicated to fostering connections between the AIMS District and the Oakland community at large.**



# Target Audience Segments

## Students



### AIMS Role:

Provide a high level of education, support the pathway of students from elementary to high school graduation, support high school seniors as they apply for college, provide resources to meet the needs of all students.

## Teachers



### AIMS Role:

Provide a safe, supportive, and enriching work environment that will, in turn, provide students with the best education possible.

## Parents of Prospective Students



### AIMS Role:

Build awareness of AIMS, inform parents of prospective students of the unique programming & high level of education provided to encourage them to enroll their children.

## Parents of Current Students



### AIMS Role:

Engage parents and provide opportunities for them to get involved in school activities, encourage continued enrollment.

## Community



### AIMS Role:

Keep the community informed by sharing news of achievements. Encourage community participation and engagement.

# Audience Messaging Foundations

Board of Directors	Teachers	Head of Elementary School	Head of Middle School	Head of High School
<p><b>What Matters Most:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial health of the school/ fundraising</li> <li>Building a pipeline from school to college to career - Creating pathways to success</li> <li>“Integrity, Commitment to socio-economic &amp; racial justice and its high level commitment to students and their families.”</li> <li>“Creating a sustainable, well-run educational institution. Continuing to prepare children for the richest, highest educational experience possible.”</li> <li>“Creating transparency, trust, and integrity, and building the best team possible.”</li> </ul>	<p><b>What Matters Most:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing professional development opportunities</li> <li>Ensuring that all teachers and students have the tools and resources they need</li> <li>Hard work and accountability</li> <li>“Training children to care about their future and build self-esteem in their children.”</li> <li>Balance between school work and life for students</li> <li>High expectations</li> <li>Safe, diverse environment</li> <li>Family-like environment</li> <li>Mental health support for students</li> <li>Equity for all students</li> </ul>	<p><b>What Matters Most:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic excellence, starting from elementary school</li> <li>Capacity for after school program</li> <li>High test scores</li> <li>ELD support within classrooms</li> <li>“Private school education for free”</li> <li>Maintaining a high ranking on <a href="https://www.greatschools.org">greatschools.org</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>What Matters Most:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Intellectually ethical citizens” who are conscious of values</li> <li>Equity</li> <li>Building confidence</li> <li>“Character building through academics”</li> </ul>	<p><b>What Matters Most:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing pipeline from Middle to High school</li> <li>“We have a diverse staff.”</li> <li>Outperforming other schools</li> <li>Students “can work hard and have fun at the same time.”</li> <li>Credibility and accountability - committed to keeping promises made to students and parents</li> <li>Keeping the lines of communication with parents open</li> </ul>

# Audience Messaging Foundations

**We provide academic excellence. We are here for *all* students.**

## **STUDENTS**

We're #AIMSTRONG.

We're a community.

You are welcome here.

We are here to help you succeed.

We're here to help you get into college.

## **PARENTS OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

Everyone is welcome here.

We're here to give your children the best education.

We are here to support you and your children.

Your children are safe here.

We will help your children reach their academic goals.

## **PARENTS**

Everyone is welcome here.

We're here to give your children the best education.

We are here to support you and your children.

Your children are safe here.

We will help your children reach their goals.

## **TEACHERS**

You are changing the lives of your students by providing the best education possible, from elementary to high school.

You are helping your students get into college.

We're here to help you with your professional development as an educator.

# Keywords & Phrases

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Academic excellence

“Private school education for free”

Rigorous curriculum

High test scores

Innovative

High level of parent involvement

“Intellectually Ethical Citizens”

“Character building through academics”

Building student confidence

Value driven

Focus on student success related data

Serving all students

Focus on teachers

Cultivating student leaders

“Place where families feel welcome, supported, and heard.”

“Building strong partnerships and relationships” within the community

Diverse staff and student body

Controversy of past leadership vs. success of current administration

Creating pathways to success

Outperforming other schools

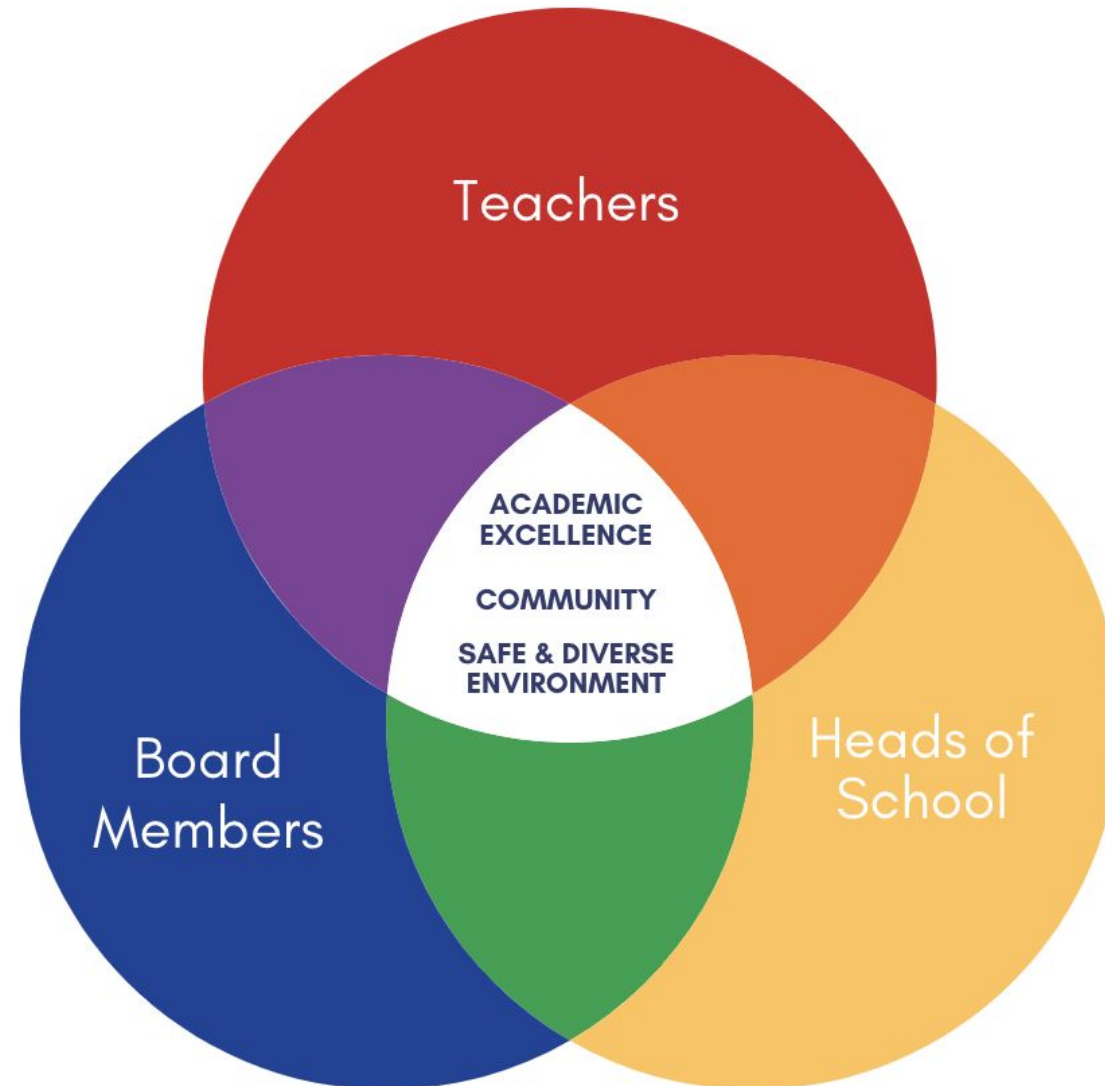
“We’re the school of choice.”

Commitment to equity with a focus on socioeconomic & racial justice

Building a pipeline from school to college to career

# Key Audiences

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# Reputation Management

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## **FAQs and Responses**

### **Does AIMS accept all students?**

AIMS is a tuition-free public school and open to all California students, including English language learners and students who are differently abled.

### **Is AIMS a private school?**

No. AIMS is a tuition-free public school.

### **Does AIMS offer ESL/ELD programs?**

AIMS offers a variety of enriching ELD and special education programs to give all students the support they need. Our on-site specialists are available to work with teachers, families, and students in small groups. We offer ESL classes for parents and families on Saturdays, as well as need-based daily one hour after-school tutoring.

# Reputation Management

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## **FAQs and Responses**

### **How do you prepare students for college?**

We're proud to offer AIMS College Pathways, an opportunity for our students to earn college credits while in high school. We go one step further by covering the college application and AP exam fees for all students. We strongly believe that finances shouldn't be a barrier for our students. AIMS is celebrating another year of 100% 4-year college and university acceptance.

### **How does AIMS support the mental wellbeing of students?**

We are dedicated to the well-being of our AIMS community. One Friday each month, our High School teachers lead mental health discussions for the entire one hour class period. Our Social-Emotional Counselor is available to support the mental health needs of our K-12 students.

### **How does AIMS support and connect families?**

We are committed to removing barriers that keep students from reaching their full potential, and are proud to provide a free and reduced lunch program to the 71% of our students who qualify. We plan regular events, both virtual and in-person, to unite our community, including pep rallies, family cooking demonstrations, and more. Our dedicated Parent Coordinator is available to support families with any questions or concerns they may have, or to provide suggestions for getting involved.

# Reputation Management

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## FAQs and Responses

### **How does AIMS celebrate diversity and counter racial injustice?**

We are proud to serve a diverse student body that reflects Oakland's communities. On March 16, 2021, the AIMS Board of Directors took the necessary steps to counter Anti-Asian Hate and racial injustice in the classroom by voting on a new Board Resolution, which has been implemented into the AIMS K-12 curriculum. We're dedicated to providing our students with the support and resources to celebrate diversity and counter racial injustice, through education, events, and rallies.

### **What safety measures are in place to protect staff and students from COVID-19 exposure?**

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and are committed to keeping our school community safe and informed. We have welcomed our students back into the classroom hybrid model, following strict State, City, and Country measures, including masks, social distancing, and deep cleansing of school facilities.



# Reputation Management

## Thought leadership articles

### Critical Race Theory Education-Why It Matters

Maya Woods-Cadiz · Aug 24 · 4 min read



Maya Woods-Cadiz · 3rd+  
Superintendent / CEO AIMS K12 Colleg Prep Charter District  
3w · 🌐

Critical Race Theory Education-Why It Matters  
link.medium.com

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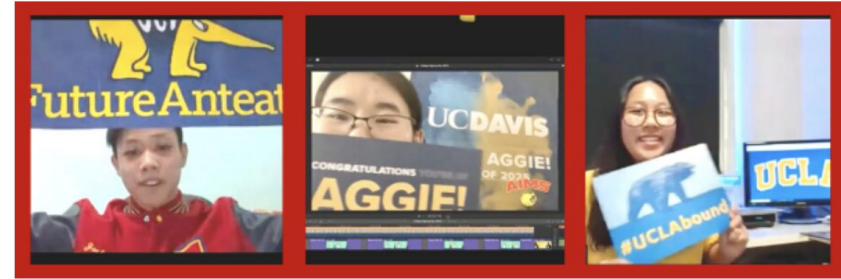
# End of Year CBO Letter



Dear <<First Name>> <<Last Name>>,

As our 2021-2022 school year is about to begin, we have never been more proud of, not only our AIMS K-12 community, but our Oakland community as a whole. Together, we have faced the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the social unrest experienced nationwide. We remained united, helping each other and providing much-needed support while staying true to our mission of cultivating a community of diverse learners who achieve academic excellence.

AIMS is a tuition-free public charter school, and is open to all California students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. We're committed to high academic achievement, attendance, and character development. This commitment results in our students being prepared for lifelong success and becoming the leaders of tomorrow. We offer a variety of enriching ELD and special education programs to give all students the support and resources they need. We are committed to removing barriers that keep students from reaching their full potential, and are proud to provide a free and reduced lunch program to the 71% of our students who qualify.



## Paving the Pathway to College

We're proud to offer AIMS College Pathway, an opportunity for our students to earn college credits while in high school. We go one step further by covering the college application and AP exam fees for all students. We strongly believe that finances shouldn't be a barrier for our students when they apply for college. AIMS is celebrating another year of 100% 4-year college and university acceptance.



## Navigating Through COVID-19

Though the pandemic brought unique challenges to each member of the AIMS community, we remained united and committed to making the school year an enriching experience for all. Our families enjoyed virtual events that united the community, including pep rallies,

# Alumni Letter



Dear <Name>,

As we prepare to welcome students back to campus, this year is even more special as we prepare to celebrate our 25th year of existence in the Oakland community. As alumni who played an integral part in us achieving this milestone, we would love to share some highlights from this school year. We have a lot of special activities planned throughout the year and we'd be honored if you could join us to celebrate. **We also would like to invite you to participate in a special social media campaign to honor this milestone (scroll down for more details)!**

## Celebrating Academic Excellence

While our District has gone through several changes throughout the past 25 years, one thing certainly hasn't changed: Our commitment to academic excellence.

We are grateful to celebrate another year of stellar academic achievements. The AIMS District is in the top 12% in Math and top 24% in English Language Arts in Oakland. AIMS Elementary and Middle Schools have been recognized by Innovate Public Schools for closing the achievement gap for low-income African Americans in English Language Arts & Math. We have a 100% completion rate of A-G requirements for African-American and Latinx students, and are proud to serve a diverse student body that reflects Oakland's communities. Our students begin taking AP classes in the 9th grade, setting them up for an enriching and comprehensive academic high school experience.

## Show Your AIMS Pride!

As we enter our 25th year, we would like to invite you to participate in our **25th Anniversary social media campaign**, which will highlight the people who form our wonderful community. We are thrilled to shine the spotlight on our alumni, and hope that you'll consider supporting your alma mater and participating in this exciting campaign.

**To participate, please record a video (1-minute or less), using the following guidelines:**

1. Record your video at eye level in portrait mode (hold the phone vertically)
2. Leave some space between your head and the top of the frame
3. Bottom of the frame should be around the middle of your chest
4. Choose a natural outdoor location that is relatively quiet during the day.
5. Hold the phone with your hand when recording (selfie mode)

Introduce yourself and choose **one** question you'd like to answer and aim for around **1 minute** in length (please include the question in your response)

A - What is your name?

1. What AIMS accomplishment fills you with pride?
2. What sets AIMS apart from other schools in Oakland? What makes it special?
3. What's the best part about being part of the AIMS community?
4. What's one word that you would use to describe AIMS? And Why?

**Feeling (video) camera shy? No problem!** If you would like to participate without recording a video, you can also send us some photos and answer a question of your choice in writing. We would love to see photos from your AIMS days, as well as ones that are more recent.

**Please send your videos and photos to Suzen Chu at [suzen.chu@aimsk12.org](mailto:suzen.chu@aimsk12.org).**

# 25th Anniversary: Logo

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# 25th Anniversary: Outdoor Banner



# 25th Anniversary: Social Media Campaign



# 25th Anniversary: Video (Coming Soon)

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**Objective:** To create a video that celebrates the 25 year legacy of AIMS K12 College Prep Charter schools in Oakland, CA. We want to amplify the story of educational excellence and continued achievement through the years by highlighting the people, successes and newsworthy moments that have occurred throughout these extraordinary years.

**Tone:**

- Upbeat
- Inspirational
- Reflective
- Energetic
- Celebratory

# 25th Anniversary: Video

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**Goal:** Although there have been ups and downs throughout the 25 year trajectory of AIMS-12 College Prep Charter Schools, this is our opportunity to celebrate, amplify and provide a visual representation of the exceptional history that makes up the AIMS community. Our goal is to create a 3:00-3:30 minute video that honors this history while amplifying the academic and social successes of the institution through a colorful, energetic and inspiring look at moments that reflect the values and credo of AIMS.



# Recommended Next Steps

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- A culminating event in 2021-2022 that will 1. garner media attention, 2. serve as a fundraising type of event and 3. create school spirit among current students, alumni and the Oakland community at large
- Begin a monthly newsletter/blog starting in November that keeps the AIMS community informed on the latest news, profiles, any accolades, etc.
- Increase Social Media presence through consistent postings, student takeovers, etc.

# Thank You!



An equity-first communications firm.

