

**PIONEER VALLEY PERFORMING ARTS  
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**



**STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN  
2021-2026**

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## **FOREWORD:**

The 2021-2026 Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for PVPA focuses on strengthening the current school culture, and it emphasizes three important frameworks that are weaved throughout the document: re-calibrating our practices; increasing inclusivity; and committing to more transparency across our community. The recurring expectation of this SAP is for the school leadership to assess programs and resources by listening to a broad diversity of perspectives and transparently implementing plans to systematize what is working. The previous SAP (2016-2021) launched PVPA along many important paths of improvement, and it helped to guide the school through significant leadership changes, the creation of a teachers' union, and the COVID-19 pandemic. With this SAP, we attempt to capture the spirit of drilling down to further clarify, strengthen, and sustain the work that has already been set in motion.

The SAP was developed with the collaboration and contributions of a broad range of

stakeholders, and it attempts to distill those voices and concerns into a practical and meaningful path forward. Many members of the community gave invaluable input to the SAP Committee along our journey of investigation, and we truly appreciate their work. The committee particularly wishes to thank the many people who participated in the Focus Group gatherings -- it was inspiring and wonderfully productive to hear views from so many people working together in the same virtual space! Additionally, there were many people who completed our Community Survey in the spring of 2020, and who met or corresponded with the committee -- we thank you all for those important contributions as well.

## **MISSION:**

The Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School offers its students intensive exposure to the performing arts within the context of an excellent college preparatory curriculum.

The goal is to provide students with a supportive and challenging environment that

is responsive to multiple learning styles, emphasizes learning through the arts, and integrates critical and creative thinking throughout the curriculum.

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## **VALUES:**

During the time of writing the 2011-2016 Strategic Action Plan, the committee members attempted to capture the intangible aspects of the school treasured by the community. These values continue to be alive in the PVPA community in 2021, at the time of drafting this Strategic Action Plan; we keep them in this current plan because we hope they will continue to hold a central place in our school.

–Critical and Higher Order Thinking Skills: These include searching for and evaluating sources, holistic analysis, the ability to ask appropriate questions, the capacity to evaluate and judge, and openness to outliers of thought and minority opinions. We value rigorous thinking and approaches to learning such as the recognition of

connections between one's own life and the larger society, willingness to embrace paradox and ambiguity without rushing to conclusions, and an ability to recognize multiple perspectives—all of which are foundations for students' future education.

–Creative Thinking: We value experimentation, risk-taking and mistake-making, interdisciplinary approaches, collaboration between co-creators, divergent as well as convergent thinking, and the ability to draw from oneself the material for creating and for making new and essential connections.

–A Passion for Inquiry and Self-Reflection: We value the right to question assumptions and to demonstrate knowledge in a variety of forms. This passion is modeled by the outstanding educators at PVPA—teachers who, in their fields of expertise, are enthusiastic facilitators of student learning. Passion and learning go hand-in-hand and are compatible with rigorous standards and expectations.

–A Loving Community: Students, faculty, families, administrators, Board members, people from various social classes, ethnicities, life experiences, and with a variety of learning styles are respected. We value all voices being heard when important decisions are made and expect community members to support the school's mission and values. PVPA aspires to be a safe environment for students and encourages them to develop their own ideas and opinions.

–School as One Part of a Larger Learning Community: We believe that education goes on all the time and everywhere. We value our essential connections with the broader

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community and with artists in various disciplines. PVPA is committed to being part of a community of artistic organizations, where our approaches to education are shared, where our students present arts performances, where we both receive and give. We seek to enhance our visibility in the communities where our students reside and in other public schools.

## **VISION:**

The 2021-2026 Strategic Action Plan builds on the foundation set by the previous plan.

In continuing the school's growth and progress, we see three primary areas of focus: recalibrating our practices; broadening our understanding and implementation of inclusivity; and committing to more transparency across our community.

Our first objective is in the spirit of offering PVPA an opportunity to recalibrate by focusing attention to the areas that need it most. A robust commitment to education and students has led to the creation of a number of quality programs and initiatives that have been started, and not yet fully realized. We now have the opportunity to refocus and intentionally embed these programs into our school culture.

Our second objective—centering equity and inclusivity—aims to expand resources and initiatives in support of all members of the PVPA community. Through these goals and objectives, we will make an intentional effort to uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of our mission. By committing to these practices, we will be poised to better serve marginalized populations and ensure that all students are empowered to create a path to success.

Our last objective seeks to address an area of growth within the PVPA community, transparency of leadership. During times of change, trusting and understanding structures of leadership is key in maintaining a healthy school environment. In this Strategic Action Plan we aim to outline both broad goals and specific strategies to accomplish transparency and build clearer structures of leadership within PVPA at all levels. The onus of responsibility for implementing and creating success with the plan rests with the head of school, the administrative team, and the Board of Trustees.

## **Leadership & Governance**

**Goal 1:** Prioritize PVPA's mission in every aspect of the school community.

**Objective 1.1:** Maintain a Director of Arts and a Director of Academics as key leadership positions.

**Goal 2:** Improve transparency and increase the use of inclusive, collaborative decision-making.

**Objective 2.1:** Clearly define leadership positions, roles, and responsibilities in a solidified organizational and leadership structure and share this openly with the greater PVPA community.

**Objective 2.2:** Develop a Policy Handbook to clearly delineate school practices and procedures.

**Objective 2.3:** Work with the Labor-Management Committee to create a flow chart of how decisions are made.

**Objective 2.4:** Ensure the successful implementation of the PVPA Student Opportunity Act Plan.

**Objective 2.5:** Create a plan for systemic growth and share the plan openly with the greater PVPA community.

**GOAL 3:** Cultivate and maintain our leadership position in the community as a faithful adherent to, and innovator of, best practices.

**Objective 3.1:** Support the successful implementation of Restorative Practices, Arts Integration and prioritized curricular approaches including Universal Design.

**Objective 3.2:** Provide relevant professional development, coaching, and mentoring to all staff, faculty and administrators to support leadership growth and to ensure effective outcomes.

**GOAL 4:** Improve overall effectiveness of the Board, through consistent communication, community engagement, and increased Board accountability for promoting, protecting, and ensuring PVPA's mission of academic excellence.

**Objective 4.1:** Board representatives will communicate regularly with the head of school to review progress on priorities set by the school administration.

**Objective 4.2:** Board members should prioritize attending school events and activities and engaging with community members outside of Board meetings.

**Objective 4.3:** The Board will create and promote an avenue for community members to communicate with the board beyond attendance at Board meetings.

**Objective 4.4:** Board subcommittees will support and monitor academic concerns such as MCAS, Charter School directives, grades, and college acceptance/attendance.

**Objective 4.5:** Recruitment for Board of Trustee membership and Senior Administration will include arts experience considerations as well as diversity and student identity representation in the hiring / selection process.

# Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism & Inclusion

**Goal 1:** Strategically expand representation in all parts of the PVPA community.

**Objective 1.1:** Continue to prioritize efforts to recruit, hire, and retain teachers, administrators, staff, and Board Trustees whose identities are reflective of the student body.

**Objective 1.2:** Update and continue implementation of the [PVPA Diversity Plan](#).

**Objective 1.3:** As the Board of Trustees, share openly with the PVPA community detailed steps the board is taking to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at a board level.

**Objective 1.4:** Create/Update and publish a statement on commitment to diversity and inclusion, including benchmarks with specific goals and timelines. (For the school and Board of Trustees.)

**Goal 2:** Increase opportunities for students to learn about social justice issues, and to engage in social justice action.

**Objective 2.1:** Provide social justice education to middle school students, with opportunities for a culminating social action project by the end of 8th grade.

**Goal 3:** Openly acknowledge and address challenges in the community related to diversity, equity, anti-racism and inclusion.

**Objective 3.1:** Acknowledge achievement gaps that exist in an effort to overcome barriers to learning and create an equitable educational space.

**Objective 3.2:** Name racism, ableism, and inequity when it is seen.

**Goal 4:** Increase opportunities for staff, faculty, administrators and board members to develop anti-racism skills.

**Objective 4.1:** Plan regular anti-racism professional development.

**Objective 4.2:** Include racial sensitivity training as part of the on-boarding or hiring process (including for new board members).



# School Climate

**GOAL 1:** Deliberately and demonstrably create a safer, more supportive, and more inclusive school environment.

**Objective 1.1:** Continue to implement PVPA's Restorative Practice initiative that includes

school-wide positive behavior plans; restorative justice; and a peer mediation program.

**Objective 1.2:** Improve how the PVPA community is supported to enact the values represented by PVPA C.A.R.E.S.

**Objective 1.3:** Identify harmful behaviors; create and share an equitable system to determine the range of potential responses to such behaviors.

**Objective 1.4:** Support and further develop the 7th and 8th grade advisory program, with an aim toward broadening arts exposure and improving rates of student retention.

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**Objective 1.5:** Consider how to create an advisory for high school grades.

**Objective 1.6:** Increase diversity, anti-racist, and anti-bullying trainings for students and staff.

**GOAL 2:** Work towards creating a space that inspires students, staff, faculty and administrators.

**Objective 2.1:** Hire a diverse group of professional performing artists to teach students.

**Objective 2.2:** Encourage staff, faculty, administrators and board members to engage in and experience student creative works.

**GOAL 3:** Maintain full student enrollment and implement efforts to increase student retention as compared to the previous 5 years.

## Arts and Academics

**GOAL 1:** Analyze achievement data to understand and address trends for specific demographic groups.

**Objective 1.1:** Create and develop a team of school personnel to analyze school data.

**Objective 1.2:** Provide professional development for teachers to become more comfortable with data analysis (trusting the data).

**Objective 1.3:** Identify changes to be made at any/all levels (within curriculum to new school policy) based on school data.

**GOAL 2:** Improve the shared understanding of Standards Based Grading and increase consistency of implementation across all classes.

**Objective 2.1:** Use professional development to improve shared understanding and implementation for all teachers and administrators.

**Objective 2.2:** Increase education opportunities and communication about Standards Based Grading for students and families.

**Objective 2.3:** Use professional development to ensure that implementation of the Standards Based Grading is consistent.

**Objective 2.4:** Develop a common understanding of what represents high-quality evidence of learning within subject areas.

**Objective 2.5:** Establish clear expectations for communication through Powerschool.

**GOAL 3:** Work to develop a school culture in which all students are expected to do quality, meaningful work.

**Objective 3.1:** Support teachers to design instructional environments that ensure appropriate levels of challenge for students using Universal Design for Learning as a framework.

**GOAL 4:** Evaluate scheduling system and course offerings to improve overall timeliness of scheduling and access to classes.

**Objective 4.1:** Ensure students can access required courses.

**Objective 4.2:** Work to balance class sizes.

## Student Support

**GOAL 1:** Increase the integration of trauma-sensitive practices and social-emotional learning school wide.

**Objective 1.1:** Assess and report on the current status of implementation.

**Objective 1.2:** Create a plan to further support successful implementation.

**GOAL 2:** Expand the use of a school wide Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to improve student outcomes as measured by academic performance, attendance, and behavioral

incidents.

**Objective 2.1:** Create an MTSS team to assess student needs and implement support.

## **Faculty/Staff Support and Development**

**GOAL 1:** Clarify a framework and implement a process of support and evaluation whereby faculty and staff can successfully implement the following prioritized initiatives: Universal Design for Learning; Restorative Practices; School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support.

**Objective 1.1:** Evaluate the current status and effectiveness of the above-named initiatives/programs.

**Objective 1.2:** Use the findings from 1.1 to develop a plan to dedicate time and create opportunities for faculty and staff members to implement the initiatives successfully.

**GOAL 2:** Articulate teacher leadership roles and responsibilities.

**Objective 2.1:** Clarify role of Department Leaders.

**Objective 2.2:** Re-establish the Mentor Program as an effective peer guidance program.

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## **Communication and Outreach**

**GOAL 1:** Increase accessibility to school communication and engagement with families with language and/or communication barriers.

**Objective 1.1:** Identify, increase and promote pathways for caregivers with language and/or communication barriers to engage with school communications, interact with faculty and administration, give feedback, and participate in providing student support.

**Objective 1.2:** Maintain a student recruitment and enrollment plan that supports a diverse student applicant pool, including ELL students.

**GOAL 2:** Increase PVPA's engagement with the wider community and raise awareness of PVPA's strengths and resources.

**Objective 2.1:** Continue to produce PVPA performance and showcase opportunities that take place in the wider community.

**Objective 2.2:** Highlight information about PVPA's arts and academics programs, student supports, restorative practices, diversity initiatives, and opportunities for engagement on the PVPA website.

**Objective 2.3:** Create and strengthen partnerships with local/regional entities, both artistic and not, to support student engagement in the community and foster an opportunity network for creative showcasing.

**Objective 2.4:** Continue fostering relationships with local media to better broadcast stories and examples of student success - artistically, academically and otherwise.

## Technology, Facilities, & Services

**GOAL 1:** Work with the Friends of PVPA to maintain aspects of the building that are up to code, and update areas as needed to bring the entire infrastructure up to current operating standards.

**Objective 1.1:** Establish a consistent schedule and a committed membership for the Long Range Infrastructure Planning Task Force, considering all diverse members of the PVPA community.

**Objective 1.2:** The Long Range Infrastructure Planning Task Force will seek community input to weigh infrastructure ideas, evaluate costs associated with building needs based

on Strategic Action goals, and create proposals for administration and board review.

**GOAL 2:** Offer EdTech Professional Development focused on student learning, enhancing sustainable instructional practices that support equity and inclusion, and promoting individualized learning.

**Objective 2.1:** Re-establish the Tech Steering Committee.

**Objective 2.2:** Improve day-to-day technological support.

**GOAL 3:** Continue to improve the school meals program in order to increase equitable access to healthy food options.

**Objective 3.1:** Clarify the lunch program process for families and students, especially protocols for ordering and paying.

**Objective 3.2:** Evaluate options beyond ordering from South Hadley PS, Family Pizza, and current vending machines.

**Objective 3.3:** Assess long-term options for internalizing as much of the meals program as possible (eating space, hot/cold storage, heated serving area, etc.).

**GOAL 4:** Maintain a state-certified school librarian to foster the community network of libraries and bring awareness to internal capacity for community and library curriculum. **Objective 4.1:** Maintain participation in CW/MARS consortium by keeping up the library's Mass Library System membership.

**Objective 4.2:** Support the Librarian to offer curriculum to each grade annually.

**Objective 4.3:** Increase awareness of the community network of partner libraries and of how our library can foster community within PVPA.

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## Strategic Action Plan Committee

*The SAP Committee was originally formed in the fall of 2019, and the membership of the committee evolved over time. This list comprises all the members, past and present, and also includes our invaluable Focus Group facilitators.*

David Potter, Chair Board Member, Parent

Loris Bjorkman-Joslyn, Co-Vice-Chair Staff

Shino Yoshen, Co-Vice-Chair Board Member, Alumna 2007 Jacob

Rosenblum, Secretary Board Member, Student 2021

Marcus McLaurin Board Member

Laura Davis Staff

Demetria Shabazz Parent

Analua Moreira Student 2021

Thom Vreeland Staff

Shannon Materka Staff

Frank Newton Staff

Lissa Pierce Boniface Staff, Parent

John Kulas Staff, Parent