



PACIFIC OAKS CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

2019-2022

STRATEGIC PLAN





## INTRODUCTION: HISTORY & IMPACT

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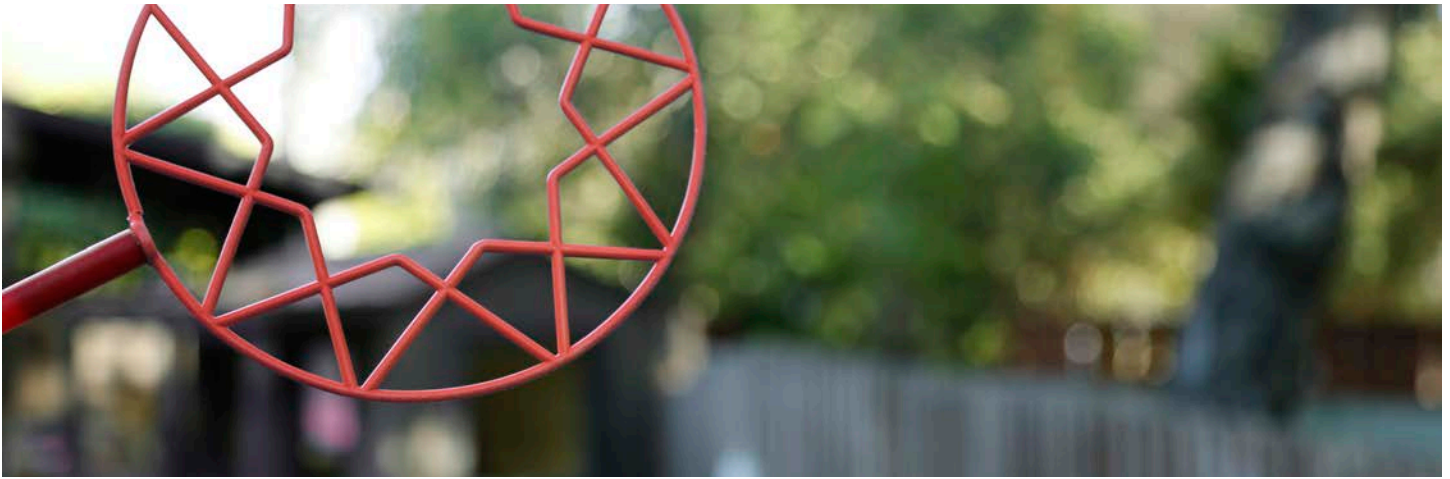
Pacific Oaks Children's School has long been a pioneer in early childhood education.

The school traces its roots back to 1906 when the then director of Polytechnic School Kindergarten built La Loma House as a resident home for young orphaned children. Soon after, California House was added, and a kindergarten program and primary school was established to meet the needs of the orphans. Today, both houses serve as classrooms at Pacific Oaks.

Seven Quaker families purchased the school in 1945 with the plan of developing an educational approach built on the values of equality, simplicity, non-violence, and community. The new Pacific Oaks Friends School was born and those founding values remain rooted in the culture of Pacific Oaks Children's School to this day.

It has been more than a century since the La Loma House was built. As Pacific Oaks has evolved, it has never lost its forward-thinking spirit of innovation, exemplifying the belief that a good education is never really finished. Learning is a life-long journey. Pacific Oaks inspires young children to begin it with joy and confidence.

This progressive approach to teaching at Pacific Oaks Children's School—as well as a need to prepare and inspire future early childhood educators—inspired the formation of Pacific Oaks College in 1959. Today, the college remains dedicated to the same fundamental principles on which it was founded more than five decades ago— inclusion, social justice, and the value of every human being.



## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

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The process for creating the new Strategic Plan for Pacific Oak Children’s School (POCS) occurred in the context of a rapidly changing early education environment and a need to focus on progressive education.

The last Strategic Plan set the course for the previous three years, and with the accomplishment of those goals, the Children’s School is well positioned to be a leader in this early progressive learning environment. Many of the assumptions from the previous Strategic Plan continue to be significant and were considered as foundational elements in the preparation for the current plan. The ability of POCS to focus on early progressive education rooted in social justice pedagogy, emergent curriculum, humanism, developmental science, and respect for the child provides a platform for continued success in meeting future challenges.

The new Strategic Plan provides an overarching framework of goals and objectives that establishes priorities and

informs decision-making and annual budgets. The Strategic Plan, as the guiding document for POCS, will be reviewed and reflected upon annually. This process of review and reflection provides the opportunity to add objectives or to modify the plan based on changes in the environment and an ongoing assessment of student learning.

Inclusion of represented stakeholders in the process has provided a 360-degree perspective of the Children’s School. These stakeholders, the parents, teachers, staff, alumni, administrators and trustees, participated in vision sessions on the strategic directions. Key considerations were gathered from an environmental scan of emerging trends, and their impact on progressive early childhood education and the importance this has on the children’s future and the communities that they represent. This includes enhancing technology in order to improve administrative efficiency.



## INTEGRATION OF THE CHILDREN'S SCHOOL IN THE COMMUNITY

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As with all strategic planning at POCS, the mission is the foundation of the school's process and all conversations began with a reaffirmation of this principle.

### **Vision:**

Igniting curiosity, creativity and compassion that lasts a lifetime.

### **Mission:**

We provide spirited education that inspires a love of learning and confidence through an intelligent, imaginative curriculum. A culture of inquiry and innovation is

cultivated for children and adults, as we embody the notion that a great school is one in which everybody learns. We deepen parents' appreciation of early development and their role in supporting their child's growth.

### **Values:**

Informed by Quaker principles, Pacific Oaks Children's School was built to bring an inclusive approach to early childhood education—teaching children to respect and embrace the differences that make others unique.

# THE PACIFIC OAKS PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

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## **Responsive Curriculum**

Learning is most potent when it is personally meaningful to children and so we begin with them – their interests and questions. We co-create the curriculum with children, and so it changes each year. We are committed to teach in ways that invite curiosity and cultivate creativity by responding to, and building upon, children's questions and ideas.

## **Playful Learning**

Exploration and play are primary modes of early learning. Through play children inquire, investigate, develop theories, test, and expand their thinking in a playful application of the scientific method. For young children there is little separation between play and learning. We believe that joy and playful learning are worthy educational goals for young children as they contribute to a strong foundation for a lifetime of curiosity and learning.

## **Respect that is Deep and Abiding**

Respect is evident in all that we do. We deeply respect children and the particular pace of learning in the early years and that shows in the way in which we teach and model respect ourselves. Respect is also evident in our approach to resolving conflicts and in our regard for differences of all kinds. We coach and guide children so that they can resolve issues constructively.

## **Equity, Empathy, Humility**

A diverse and inclusive community that offers varied perspectives is important to deep learning and real-world preparation. Steeped in the legacies of our Quaker roots and the groundbreaking anti-bias work at Pacific Oaks nearly seventy-five years ago, our commitment to equity, empathy, social justice, and cultural humility is unwavering. We want children to be at home in a diverse world, to recognize stereotypes and bias, and take constructive action in the face of disrespect and injustice.

## **Relationships and Community**

The quality of relationships among children, teachers, and families is essential to a transformative educational experience. When we feel understood, engaged, and respected we are safe to take risks, try new things, and make mistakes – essential to transformative learning. Good teaching and learning hinges on caring relationships. Community is made up of a web of relationships and children develop a sense of responsibility to the group. Adults too share responsibility for the collective well-being of the school.

# STRATEGIC GOALS 2019-2022

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**01**

Reaffirm and promote our commitment to Early Progressive Education



**02**

Improve brand/image of the Children's School as a leader in Early Progressive Education



**03**

Expand collaboration between the College and Children's School for research and practices related to Early Progressive Education



**04**

Optimize resources to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness through collaboration between the Children's School and the College



**05**

Create a support system that can enhance diversity



## 01

### Reaffirm and promote our commitment to Early Progressive Education

- Align programs and curriculum to provide rich learning experiences rooted in child development based upon Early Progressive Education principles
- Publicly articulate the School's Early Progressive Education philosophy
- Support teachers in their professional development
- Enhance organizational learning through information sharing and parent education programs
- Designate a Curriculum Coach for teachers to enhance our practices within Early Progressive Education



## 02

### Improve brand/image of the Children's School as a leader in Early Progressive Education

- Update and maintain the School's website
- Actively engage in social media
- Increase the School's presence in local and national Early Childhood Education and Progressive Education events and conferences
- Enhance public relation activities to position the School as a leader in Early Progressive Education in Pasadena
- Create an official communication to serve as an introduction to the philosophy of POCS as well as a tool for parent education, especially incoming parents
- Develop relationships with members of the immediate neighborhood community
- Deepen relationships with elementary schools in the Pasadena area



### 03

#### Expand collaboration between the College and Children's School for research and practices related to Early Progressive Education

- Collaborate with the College to produce more research and literature related to Early Progressive Education
- Co-publish and co-present relevant research with the College
- Create opportunities for Pacific Oaks College students to intern or work at the School
- Develop lab school-like activities to re-connect the College and the School
- Create a conference series to be hosted by the College and the Children's School on Progressive Early Childhood Education
- Explore grant opportunity between the College and Children's School



### 04

#### Optimize resources to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness

- Optimize enrollment process across all programs
- Expand and increase revenue through multiple sources
- Contain operational costs through operational efficiency
- Develop manual to support the Pacific Oaks Parents Association
- Utilize shared governance model to support operations



### 05

#### Create a support system that can enhance diversity

- Develop a plan to secure scholarships that promote socio-economic diversity, with a continued focus on ethnic, racial, and language diversity
- Increase scholarship awards by 5% by 2022
- Promote diversity among children, school teachers, and staff
- Attract diversity through curriculum including language immersion
- Create a system to support the needs of diverse families
- Increase scholarships for teachers to send their children to POCS



# THANK YOU TO MEMBERS OF THE POCS COMMUNITY FOR CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

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## Former Parents and Alumni

Melanie Freeland  
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## Current Parents

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Henry Choi  
Karina Graves  
Rachel Jackson  
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