

KHS Strategic Plan, 2025-2029

Executive Summary

The 2025-2029 Strategic Plan for Kirby Hall School has been created by Kirby Hall's Board of Directors with reference to the previous strategic plan and in response to stakeholder input from parents, teachers, staff, and board members. Our goal is to refer regularly to the document and to use it as a benchmark and guide over the next five years.

Kirby Hall School will offer a robust and challenging curriculum while nurturing each student individually. The seven habits of mind essential for humanity will be crucial: curiosity, creativity, imagination, innovation, compassion, resilience, and self-reliance. Learning will be experiential, project-based, and active, engaging in a broad range of studies, and encouraging facility in both written and oral communication. Use of technology will be intentional, with heavy favoring of books and handwriting over screens and keyboards.

Teachers will be supported with professional development, regular contact with the administrative staff and the board of directors, competitive compensation and benefits. They will be involved in the school as essential stakeholders.

The board will support robust marketing and communications campaigns to raise awareness of and recognition for Kirby Hall School's excellence and to retain students and encourage enrollment.

The Board will aim to break even as quickly as possible and undertake long-range financial planning and capital improvements plans. An endowment fund will be started. The Board will support the continued maintenance of and improvements for our school's wonderful home, Kirby Hall. Hiring, development and retention of all staff will also be a board priority.

We will aim to keep a vibrant and involved board of kind volunteers with a variety of skill sets applicable to our mission. We will maintain organizational culture with an eye to review of bylaws, regular reference to the Strategic Plan, and mutually agreed upon scheduling of meetings.

Educational Attainment Goals

Goal #1	Kirby Hall School will provide an academically challenging environment where each student’s strengths are identified and nurtured to their highest potential in a manner that is appropriate for their developmental stage, with an abundance of opportunities to progress beyond grade level throughout the elementary and middle-school years.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Establish schoolwide processes that make it a habit for teachers to intentionally identify and document their students’ strengths, subsequently matching students to assignments, courses, or extracurricular activities that provide enhanced growth in these areas.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Multi-grade activities such as quiz bowls or projects that provide students with an opportunity to work with people who are in a grade above theirs.
KPI to Measure Success <i>*KPI: Key Performance Indicator</i>	Academic records that show progress for each student, but grading skills (not traditional grading) for the youngest students.
KPI to Measure Success	Standardized test scores, such as the Iowa tests currently used at Kirby Hall.

Goal #2	Kirby Hall School will educate all students about the complex, vibrant worlds they inhabit, delivering robust curricula to ensure that students are (1) knowledgeable historically, geographically, and scientifically as well as locally, nationally, and globally, (2) articulate in written and oral communication, and (3) inspired to pursue solutions with their fellow humans.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Professional development and mentoring will be available and encouraged for faculty, with opportunities to explore techniques for social and emotional learning (for example, Positive Psychology https://positivepsychology.com/positive-psychology-schools-edu

	cation/) for applying their knowledge to real-world interpersonal interactions.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Intentional enhancements to the learning environment will be made continually, the garden and outdoor classroom, and classroom setups reflecting the priorities of the educational goals. As the budget and fundraising initiatives permit, Kirby Hall will invest in spaces and materials that enhance learning in tangible ways.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Administrators will foster a culture of innovation in which teachers work collaboratively to explore best practices and to generate experiential, hands-on learning opportunities for students.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	The curriculum will require students to be careful and thoughtful readers of written and digital texts, both fiction and nonfiction. Those who can read deeply can process complex information deeply.
KPI to Measure Success	A multimedia showcase of learning spaces, teachers' assignments, and most importantly student work, such as recordings of presentations or the publication of an annual student-research anthology, will be shared with parents and staff alike. In-class assessments by teachers and school-wide reading assessments by non-teachers can be implemented as well.

Goal #3	Kirby Hall School will equip students with the ability to navigate the digital world proficiently and ethically without impeding their curiosity, creativity, imagination, innovation, compassion, resilience, and self-reliance—the habits of mind that are essential for humanity.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	The curriculum will include technology essentials but also assignments on the ethical use and development of that technology, with applications that stoke the seven habits of mind listed above. Physical education, outdoor learning spaces, and analog tools will be abundant.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Experiential learning and project-based learning will be a cornerstone of the curriculum, including service learning. Other

	examples can include literature fairs, class poetry books, newsletters, exploring the local watershed, and taking field trips, using technology as a supplement, not as the centerpiece.
KPI to Measure Success	Combined with the KPI for #2: A multimedia showcase of student work. Strategies: project-based learning and "publication" (through things like literature fairs, class poetry books, literary newsletters, etc.)

Stakeholder Engagement Goals

Engage key stakeholders in long-term and meaningful deliberations that mutually benefit the school and stakeholders while also developing legacy loyalty in stakeholders.

Goal #1	Kirby Hall School will identify key stakeholders and their interests and needs, and define how the school’s interests and needs benefit each stakeholder group.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Identify key stakeholders (such as students, parents, faculty and staff, and alumni) to analyze their interests and needs regarding the interest and needs of KHS.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Identify, document and communicate KHS needs and interests which would benefit from stakeholder engagement and assistance, and establish short-term working groups as needed (including representatives from each stakeholder group) to study, discuss, and develop action plans, timelines, and make recommendations.
KPI to Measure Success	Increased enrollment across all grades.

Goal #2	Kirby Hall School will explore ways to engage key stakeholders (students, parents, faculty and staff, and alumni donors) in KHS planning, promotional, and volunteer opportunities.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Specifically define and convene separate short-term working groups for each stakeholder group to plan and develop targeted communications and engagement strategies and activities, as needed.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Develop workplans and timelines for implementation and evaluation.
KPI to Measure Success	Increased enrollment across all grades.

Financing Goals

Maintain and expand KHS' financial assets to sustain long-term stability.

Goal #1	Kirby Hall School will aim to break even as quickly as possible. Operational revenues exceed all costs (Note: FY 24-25 is more on budget).
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Set student recruitment and retention goals based on finances.
Strategy to Achieve Goal	Operate at or under cost budget for the coming year.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Examine all line costs for savings and long-term planning.
KPI to Measure Success	<\$250,000 loss for 2025/2026 Fiscal Year. Break even or better by 2027/2028 Fiscal Year In order to support a socially and academically healthy school environment, the goal is to operate a Middle School that comprises 30 students in grades 6-8.

Goal #2	Kirby Hall School will support students and teaching staff with long-term financial planning. Plan for sustainable, fair, and incentivized compensation and curriculum costs.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Examine curriculum and plan on a per student basis.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Examine and propose a sustainable compensation plan.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Examine and propose a fair benefits package.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Consider a bonus plan.
KPI to Measure Success	Faculty salary schedule should be within 5% of AISD at every experience level. Tuition increase will cover any rise in compensation.

Goal #3	Kirby Hall School will plan and implement a multiyear capital improvements program. Develop a comprehensive long-term capital improvements plan and educational endowment.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Define areas for physical improvements and rank order.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Detail top three areas.

Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Propose a FY25-26 budget and matching campaign.
KPI to Measure Success	<p>Capital improvement budget created each year and approved by the Head of School.</p> <p>Establish an endowment.</p> <p>Capital Improvement plan given to parent team to initiate matching campaign for funding attainment.</p> <p>Funding attained.</p> <p>100% of Board Members to make yearly donations to the school.</p>

Communications Goals

Develop public awareness and recognition for KHS for its high standards of academic achievement and for its value to its stakeholders including students, families, potential students, and the greater Austin community.

Goal #1	Kirby Hall School will create and sustain effective communications channels to successfully achieve KHS awareness and recognition.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Utilize existing parent groups and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer to strengthen and promote KHS's key messaging and practice strategic targeting for different stakeholders. Channels: website, social media, print media Stakeholders: students, families, faculty, administration, potential students and families
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Inventory and optimize current communications and public relations channels, professional associations, local associations, and service organizations.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Maintain and strengthen high quality KHS-owned content on website, social media, and printed materials such as brochures, posters, marketing postcards, bumper stickers, etc.
KPI to Measure Success	Increased awareness in the Austin community as measured by, <i>e.g.</i> , number of inquiries, number of tours, and waitlist numbers.

Goal #2	Kirby Hall School will develop and execute robust marketing and communications campaigns to build stakeholder engagement, retain students and attract potential students.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Marketing and Admissions officers to identify and engage influencers (example: current parents) and to collect and manage data.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Continue to plan and execute events and activities that bring together stakeholders in social settings that allow limited presentations on future plans (including but not limited to family/community nights and kids' playdates).

Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Recognize people within and outside the school who epitomize KHS values and engage them to become influencers (such as current parents, HW Brands, any former families or retired faculty members living in Central Texas).
KPI to Measure Success	Student retention rate of 90%.
KPI to Measure Success	Minimum of one family per grade level in the Parent Ambassador program.
KPI to Measure Success	Increased awareness in the Austin community as measured by, <i>e.g.</i> , number of inquiries, number of tours, and waitlist numbers.

Management Goals

Manage KHS in a manner consistent with its mission and values to optimize its present and future assets to help achieve its mission in service of its stakeholders.

Goal #1	The Board will support the KHS mission through continued creation, improvement, and maintenance of a physical environment that is a secure and inspirational school home.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	The Board commitment encompasses the historic building of Kirby Hall itself, any future additions, and the grounds. (In May 2024, the Helen M. Kirby Hall Centennial Capital Campaign was launched to honor the building’s centennial.)
KPI to Measure Success	Refer to KPI for Long Term Capital Improvement plan under Financial goals.

Goal #2	The Board will continue to support the hiring, development, and retention of staff, both administrative and faculty, as needed to fulfill the KHS mission and maintain excellence in curriculum and instruction.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Ensure that all have annual opportunities for professional growth.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	The Board will plan to interact regularly with the faculty and staff.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	The Board will continue to manage and evaluate the Head of School.
KPI to Measure Success	Head of School to draft professional training and education plans each year. Track and verify faculty and staff completion of plan. Board continues to invite faculty and staff to board meetings, with invitees being chosen by the Head of School. Head of School evaluation is performed on an annual basis. Each Board member will visit Kirby Hall School once a year during a school day.

Governance Goals

To create an organizational culture of excellence that proactively, productively, and effectively achieves KHS' mission.

Goal #1	Identify, recruit, orient and retain Board members with competencies required to sustain KHS. Our Board Members will continue to be kind volunteers who are not and have never been paid, and who serve out of the love of KHS and its educational mission.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Recruit board members with the intent to have at least one board member with competency in the following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education 2. Law - an attorney who works for a law firm or is self-employed 3. Finance/Accounting 4. Marketing 5. Business 6. Architecture/Construction/Building Maintenance 7. Fundraising or grant writing 8. Experience in Austin's non-profit community
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Provide opportunities for Board members' self-education by providing educational opportunities for Board members.
KPI to Measure Success	Maintain a board of 3 to 11 members with varying competencies and qualifications, pulling from the above list. Recruit and interview 2 potential board members per year.

Goal #2	Create and sustain an organizational culture that helps achieve organizational excellence.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Maintain written policies and update when needed.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Establish groups (i.e., working groups and other entities) with clearly defined responsibilities and authority to study, recommend, and implement actions upon Board approval (e.g., Finance, Marketing, Fundraising/Development, Succession Planning.)

Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Compile and maintain information and knowledge Board members require to be effective in an easily accessible place (e.g., Google Drive).
KPI to Measure Success	Review policies on a rotating basis. Create a schedule for policy review.

Goal #3	Effectively conduct Governance function and Board meetings to best achieve their desired outcomes.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Establish the anticipated number of Board meetings at the beginning of each year.
KPI to Measure Success	Maximize attendance at scheduled meetings, such that a quorum is met.

Goal #4	Review and revise Bylaws so they are reflective of current organizational standards, are in alignment with KHS goals, and are useful in facilitating good governance.
Strategy to Achieve the Goal	Established a working group for yearly and as needed review of the Bylaws.
KPI to Measure Success	Ability to use an up to date and living Bylaws document.

Educational Attainment Subcommittee: Paige Arnell (staff), Amy Clements (former board), Jared Dailey (staff), Teri Fickling (former board and former staff), MacDonald Kempf (board), Sara Pevaroff Schuh (board), Ianthe Brock Wooley (board)

Stakeholder Engagement Subcommittee: Sabina Behague (board), Everett Lunning (board), Andy Liddell (board)

Financing Subcommittee: Victoria Rase Shinn (board), Howard Rase (board), and MacDonald Kempf (board)

Communications Subcommittee: Sabina Behague (board), Everett Lunning (board), Andy Liddell (board)

Management Subcommittee and Governance Subcommittee: Victoria Rase Shinn (board), Howard Rase (board), and MacDonald Kempf (board)