



ISB STRATEGIC PLAN

IGNITING A PASSION FOR LEARNING
CARING FOR ALL
IMPACTING LIVES





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Executive Summary

Dear ISB Community:

We are pleased to share with you our Strategic Plan for the International School of Beijing (ISB). While this next step in our strategic planning was developed under the leadership of the Board of Trustees, it reflects the collaborative spirit that makes ISB such a special school. Parents, administrators, faculty, staff, and students all contributed their ideas about how we can further improve our great school and build on our unique competitive advantages. We are grateful for our community members’ time and willingness to serve ISB in this important role.

One of the hallmarks of our new Strategic Plan is its strong emphasis on promoting student-centered, personalized learning. Making learning more personal for students isn’t a new idea; one of our host country’s most famed educators, Confucius, recognized the power of personalized learning centuries ago when he said: “I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.” As a forward-looking community, our vision is about putting the “doing” into learning by cultivating inspirational and creative opportunities to develop each student's unique potential.

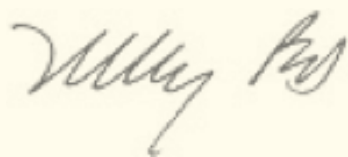
ISB has always been a mission- and vision-driven school, where success is achieved by working together as a community. This Strategic Plan provides a blueprint for future implementation of our mission and vision, and we are confident that this plan will further help us fulfill our core purpose of nurturing each student’s growth and learning. We sincerely thank you for your support and welcome your involvement as we embark upon this next exciting stage of our school’s development.

Warm regards,

Tarek Razik, Ed. D
ISB Head of School



Marc Murphy Ph. D
Board of Trustees Chair



Our Mission



The International School of Beijing offers an academically rigorous, balanced and engaging learning environment enriched by being in China and strengthened by collaboration with parents and external partnerships. We cultivate inspirational and creative opportunities to develop each student's unique potential. We nurture confidence and intellectual curiosity through experiential learning and innovative applications of knowledge and skills.

Our Vision



The International School of Beijing aspires to be an adaptive, inspirational, forward-looking learning community, cultivating relationships that ignite each student's passion for lifelong-learning. We will nurture the intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of each child. We will embrace change, inspire creativity and foster innovation. We will actively promote global understanding and respect within and between cultures. Our community will model integrity and seek opportunities to serve with compassion and conviction.

Our Core Values



ISB and its community embody the following values:

Global-Mindedness fosters diversity of thought among students who consider their role in an increasingly connected world.

Integrity is as highly valued as results, laying the platform by which we function.

Respect among our community is a fundamental attribute for learning together.

Balance in the lives of all our community members is promoted and supported.

Service prepares engaged global citizens committed to contributing to the world around them.

Creativity is a critical quality for future success, which along with innovation is valued and promoted.

Introduction to ISB’s Strategic Plan



Since ISB was established in 1980, our success has been built upon strategic planning developed through school-wide consultation. Excellence is never an accident, as the adage goes, and at ISB our measure of excellence is how effectively we deliver on our mission and vision. This plan maps our future and establishes the goals and aspirations that will allow our school to reach new heights.

Just like its predecessors, our new Strategic Plan sets the priorities and identifies the strategies that will help ISB provide an outstanding education for all our students.

Our work on this plan is shaped by the changes occurring to education and our world. We recognize the need to consider ISB’s role and position in an increasingly global and economically diverse world, and our new Strategic Initiatives reflect this. Education has evolved from the industrial age, and if we are to fulfill our mission and vision, we too must continuously improve as an international school in an increasingly competitive environment.



In 2015-16, representatives of the ISB Board of Trustees, the administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students gathered to share views and consider ways our school should evolve to meet future needs and challenges. This document represents a culmination of this work. It comprises specific initiatives, measurable through Student Impact Statements, that can be undertaken to strengthen and enhance ISB.



Our strategic planning process is always about the future and invariably builds on ISB’s past and present accomplishments. One outcome of this process is confirmation that we start from a position of great strength. We have an outstanding faculty and administration, and a community of responsible and engaged students. We have sound financial health and a robust L2I curriculum that promotes skills essential for future success. From this fortunate position, we are able to aspire to achieve even greater heights.

Strategic Initiatives

Our community identified four key Strategic Initiatives to translate the ISB mission and vision into practice. These initiatives specify concrete steps for advancing ISB as an inclusive, student-centered community in the coming years. The four Strategic Initiatives in this plan are:

- **Unite as a community around our core purpose and future direction.**
- **Facilitate each student’s growth through personalized, student-centered learning.**
- **Optimize school systems that increase flexibility to achieve ISB’s mission and vision.**
- **Advocate for and support each student’s intellectual, physical, social and emotional health in partnership with students and families.**

Each of these initiatives represents our medium- and long-term objectives as a school. All initiatives are contingent on each other, specifying concrete actions to advance ISB’s mission and vision. Uniting as a community around our core purpose and future direction is necessary to facilitate each student’s growth through personalized, student-centered learning. To achieve the latter initiative, we recognize the importance of optimizing school systems that increase flexibility of resources – including space, scheduling, time, and technology – to achieve our mission and vision. Finally, by implementing these three initiatives we can advocate for and support each student’s intellectual, physical, and social-emotional health in partnership with students and families. This embodies the “bigger picture” of our Strategic Plan and represents the culmination of all of our Strategic Initiatives.

Strategic Student Impacts

As a forward-looking, adaptive learning community, all decisions at ISB are based on advancing implementation of our mission and vision. To this end, it is important that our systems and guidelines help us achieve these goals. Strategic Student Impacts help us to measure implementation of our initiatives. Through continuous improvement and by using qualitative and quantitative data, we can effectively monitor progress in achieving our Strategic Student Impacts and, more broadly, the implementation of our Strategic Plan.

We acknowledge that the following Strategic Student Impacts will initially be difficult to measure. Nonetheless, we are committed to ensuring that all of our students strive to fulfill them to the best of their ability.

Our Strategic Student Impacts ensure that each student will:

- **Develop intellectual curiosity and demonstrate a personal passion for learning.**
- **Confidently and skillfully identify and engage with real-world challenges.**
- **Continually develop his/her intellectual, physical, social and emotional health.**

As we progress with our work in these areas, various systems will be created to collect qualitative and quantitative data to assess how well students are reaching these impacts. Methods for collecting this data may include reflections, surveys, interviews, and internal and external assessments. Analyzing this data will follow established processes to track student progress, celebrate success, and develop future plans of action.



Strategic Initiative 1

Unite as a community around our core purpose and future direction.

ISB is home to exceptionally talented and caring faculty, administrators, staff, parents, and students, all of whom contribute unique skills that sets our community apart. Everything we do at ISB – from parent workshops to teacher development – advances our core purpose to support the growth and learning of each student.

Our core purpose is reflected in our mission, which commits us to provide “an academically rigorous, balanced and engaging learning environment enriched by being in China and strengthened by collaboration with parents and external partnerships.” Uniting as a caring community of parents, faculty, and students allows us to cultivate better educational outcomes for all our children.



It is remarkable to see the positive impact and the power of collaboration. An example of success in this area lies in our ever-growing network of internal and external partnerships facilitated by our Office of Strategic Learning that create authentic, meaningful learning opportunities for students of all grades. By engaging our stakeholders and consolidating new and existing partnerships in the framework of our new Strategic Plan, we are building on the successes of the past and making great strides forward that allow us to further deliver on our mission and vision.

Our Board and administrators have listened closely to the needs of our community to explore new ways to enhance our unity. Our inclusiveness over the past 35 years has contributed significantly to ISB’s modern success. Similarly, our capacity to remain a leader in international education depends on our strength as a collective, unified learning community.

Strategic Initiative 2

Facilitate each student's growth through personalized, student-centered learning.

Our goal is to capitalize on emerging opportunities by creating environments that encourage key L21 skills – such as communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, and problem solving and inquiry – and to facilitate personalized, student-centered learning that nurtures each child's intellectual curiosity and individual growth.

Every child learns differently; some like to read and process information, others prefer to acquire deeper understandings through experiences. By individualizing instruction and putting each student's interests at their center of their learning, our teachers can help them achieve their fullest potential and embrace ISB's core values.

Historically, education was based on the classroom-centered model characterized by collective, not individualized, instruction. Minimal attention was given to students' individual abilities and needs, let alone their interests or passions, which often prevented students from claiming responsibility for their own growth and development.



While academic success continues to be an important part of our rigorous learning culture, we recognize it is only possible for each student to achieve their unique potential when we nurture personal growth and development. By facilitating personal growth, we can ensure each student excels through diversified, not standardized, measures of achievement.

We aspire for each ISB student to be at the center of their learning experience. Learners in the 21st century have an unprecedented level of stimulation in a world that is increasingly connected. They are naturally creative thinkers who have access to enormous learning opportunities in the digital age.

Strategic Initiative 3

Optimize school systems that increase flexibility to achieve ISB's mission and vision.

Flexibility is a key component of our mission and vision for ISB. By increasing flexibility for our students and to our resources, particularly through improved use of technology, time and space, we can make the most of our internal systems to better implement our mission and vision.

Technology has become an indispensable educational tool in the information age, allowing unprecedented opportunities for blended learning and individualized pacing of lessons. However, flexible use of technology goes beyond its layering on existing systems or merely equipping students with computers and other gadgets. We aspire to incorporate technology in a meaningful way by redesigning the structures and core concepts within ISB to make education more engaging for students through enhanced individualization and interactivity. Technology should be used to supplement, not substitute, teaching and allow students to acquire deeper understandings of L21 skills including communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, and critical thinking, problem solving and inquiry.



Time has traditionally been the constant in education, with content being the variable. In the 21st century, time has become the variable and content has increasingly symbolized the constant. More malleable units of time than the typical class period are required for project-based learning or multidisciplinary themes. Furthermore, each student needs a different amount of time to master each lesson or performance. In order to successfully personalize learning and differentiate for the varied needs of learners at ISB, we must investigate ways to optimize school schedules to allow for each student to have the time they need to challenge themselves and to meet their unique potential.

Space should be optimized to facilitate movement and multidisciplinary learning. In today's interconnected, technology-driven world, learning typically takes place in physical and virtual places. It is an integrated, highly-technical environment in which learners learn. We aspire for our new learning spaces to incorporate technologies, engage students, create new learning possibilities, enhance achievements, and extend interactions with local and global communities.

Strategic Initiative 4

Advocate for and support each student's intellectual, physical, social and emotional health in partnership with students and families.

A student reaches his or her unique potential when the school focuses on nurturing the whole child, which includes their intellectual, physical, social and emotional well-being. Children excel at studying and managing stress when they feel safe and secure. Balance is therefore a key hallmark of an ISB education, which is why we provide diverse learning opportunities and co-curricular activities.



Students are encouraged to be physically fit and active by participating in sports and activities in our state-of-the-art facilities. Those passionate about the performing arts can have fun and forge friendships as musicians, dancers, or thespians. Just as there isn't a single track to success in life, at ISB there are many pathways for students to excel in our balanced, stimulating learning environment.

Promoting social and emotional development at ISB involves teaching and modeling social and emotional skills, providing opportunities for students to practice and hone those skills, and giving students opportunities to apply those skills in various situations. As educators, we know that social-emotional learning not only involves academic achievement, but also promotes behaviors such as kindness, sharing, and empathy. It also improves student attitudes toward school and reduces depression and stress. Students are more successful in school and in daily life when they know how to manage themselves, understand the perspectives of others, and make sound personal and social decisions.



Strategic Student Impact 1

Each student will develop intellectual curiosity and demonstrate a personal passion for learning.

Students who achieve this impact will:

- Formulate rich, thought-provoking questions
- Pursue new knowledge and skills
- Develop a clear understanding of their interests
- Gather ideas and resources from a variety of sources and people
- Investigate with a sense of purpose

Strategic Student Impact 2

Each student will confidently and skillfully identify and engage with real-world challenges.

Students who achieve this impact will:

- Demonstrate intellectual curiosity toward their personalized learning plan
- Show awareness of existing challenges
- Investigating the source and solution to various challenges
- Balance and consider multiple perspectives
- Gather diverse data through meaningful inquiry

Strategic Student Impact 3

Each student will continually develop his/her intellectual, physical, social and emotional health.

Students who achieve this impact will:

- Learn and selectively employ multiple strategies to effectively address challenges
- Persevere through intellectual challenges
- See failure as an opportunity to learn from mistakes
- Independently recognize and promote characteristics of a healthy lifestyle
- Effectively maintain and improve healthy habits related to eating, sleeping, hygiene, and exercise

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