



PURPOSE BUILT  
SCHOOLS ATLANTA

**Strategic Plan**  
2025-2030

*Developed from September - December 2024  
in collaboration with Bellwether*



# Table of contents

## Who we are

- Mission, vision, and core values
- Who we serve
- Program model
- Story of impact

## Where we are now

- Current student outcomes
- Cluster strengths and opportunities

## Where we are going

- Graduate Profile
- Intended Impact Statement & Goals

## How we will get there

- Strategic priorities and initiatives



# Executive Summary

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- Founded in 2016, Purpose Built Schools Atlanta (PBSA) operates the “Carver Cluster” within Atlanta Public Schools, serving nearly **1300 students, grades PK-12, at Slater Elementary School, Price Middle School, and Carver STEAM Academy.**
- PBSA intentionally serves **the most concentrated area of chronic poverty in Georgia** with a mission to change the status quo through outstanding academics and enrichment; **100% of its students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch and 97% are Black.**
- PBSA has **numerous successes and strengths to celebrate**, including (a) **marked improvement of student and school outcomes**, from academic results to graduation rate to the removal of its schools from the GA DOE’s CSI list, (b) a **highly collaborative and committed staff**, and (c) **ample enrichment and supports for students.**
- PBSA also has **key areas of opportunity**, including (a) **enhancing internal alignment** on what matters most, (b) **ensuring rigorous instruction** for all students, (c) **galvanizing caregivers and community partners**, and (d) working towards **long-term organizational sustainability.**
- With these growth areas in mind, PBSA defined a new **Graduate Profile** - a clear vision for the competencies of its graduates - and **set of quantitative Intended Impact Goals** to define success for students, families, staff, and the organization over the next 5 years.
- Aligned to these goals, PBSA identified **4 strategic priorities** to guide its work and developed an implementation plan to set them in motion, beginning Spring 2025:
  1. **Strategic and aligned leadership**
  2. **Rigorous and relevant learning for all students, every day**
  3. **Galvanized caregivers and community partners**
  4. **Organizational sustainability**

# The strategic plan was crafted from a wide **range of inputs**, including deep stakeholder engagement with students, caregivers, and staff



## PBSA Self-Assessment



## Student Outcome Data

(see examples in [appendix](#))



## Internal Data & Artifacts



## Classroom Observations

(16 total: 8 @ Carver, 4 @ Price,  
4 @ Slater)



## Focus Groups

(~20 total: network coordinators, school  
instructional & culture leaders,  
instructional & support staff, students,  
caregivers, and community members /  
partners)



## 1:1 Stakeholder Interviews

(15: 8 on the Steering Committee, 7  
external)

## Who is PBSA



Founded in 2016 in partnership with APS, PBSA's **mission and vision** are grounded in driving change through student empowerment and agency

## Vision

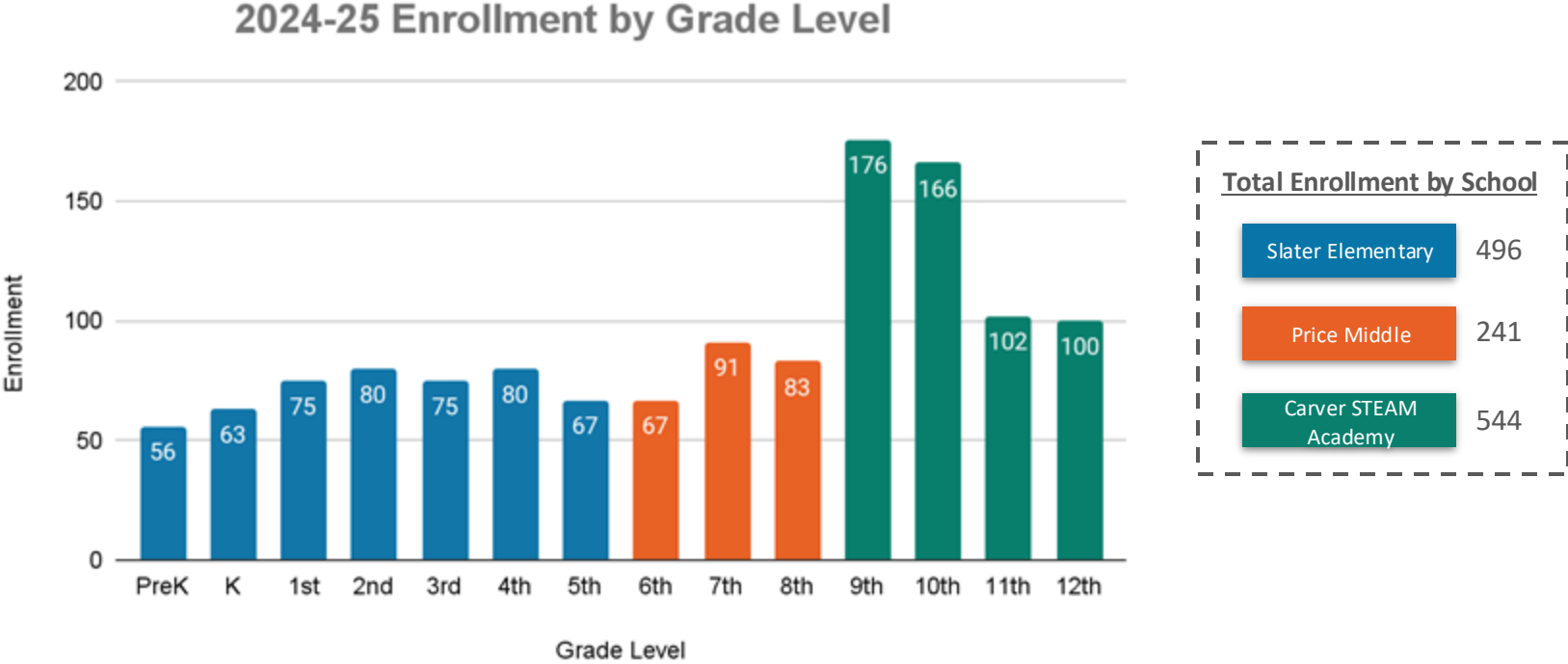
We graduate empowered change agents who create positive, long-lasting impact in their communities.

## Mission

We cultivate students' skills and agency in pursuit of their unlimited potential. We do this through authentic and culturally relevant project-based instruction alongside enrichment, a safe and positive climate and culture, and student and family supports.

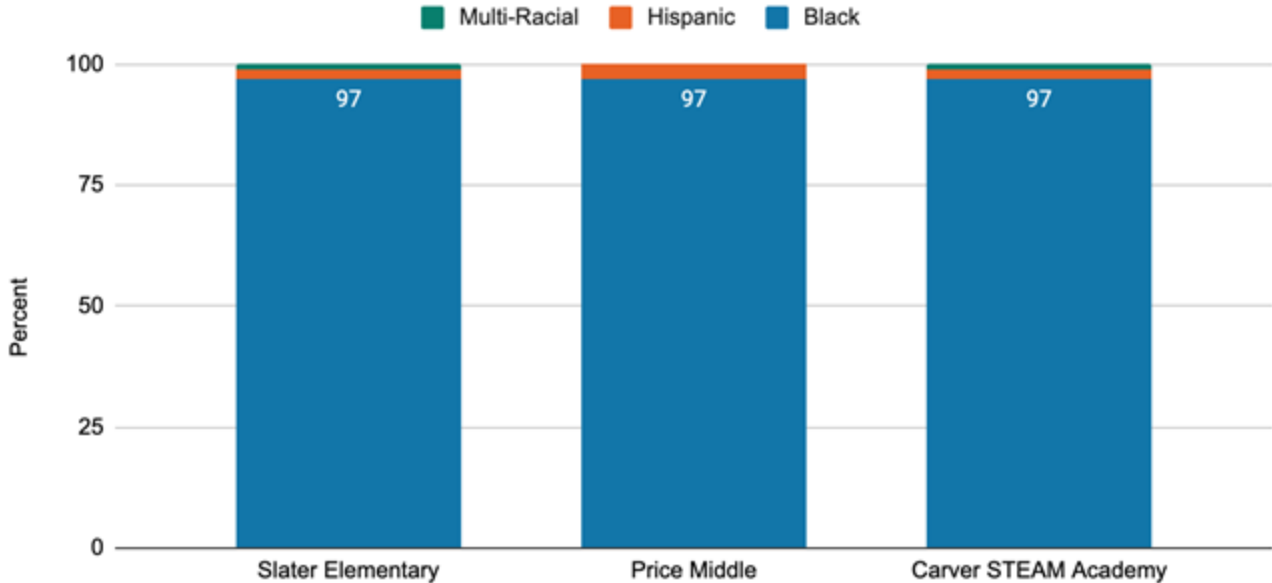


# PBSA currently serves approximately **1300 students**, PreK-12, across three campuses: Slater Elementary, Price Middle, and Carver STEAM Academy



# 97% of PBSA's students are **Black** and 100% qualify as **Economically Disadvantaged**

2024-25 PBSA Racial Demographics by School



Historically, the Carver Cluster has been the lowest-income K-12 feeder pattern in Georgia. PBSA is determined to show that race and zip code do not define educational excellence and access.



# PBSA's current program involves four pillars: project-based instruction, whole child development, positive climate & culture, and strategic partnerships



# Over the last 8 years, PBSA's impact on its students and families is unmistakable...

## GROWTH EVERY YEAR

 <p><b>SCIENCE</b> <b>5TH MOST IMPROVED</b> APS elementary school</p> <p><b>ELA</b> <b>5TH MOST IMPROVED</b> APS elementary school</p> <p><small>SY17 – SY22: Rank based on 51 APS elementary schools</small></p>	 <p><b>MATH</b> <b>5TH MOST IMPROVED</b> APS middle school</p> <p><b>SCIENCE</b> <b>7TH MOST IMPROVED</b> APS middle school</p> <p><small>SY18-22: Rank based on 21 APS middle schools</small></p>	 <p><b>US HIST</b> <b>1ST MOST IMPROVED</b> APS high school</p> <p><b>AM. LIT</b> <b>3RD MOST IMPROVED</b> APS high school</p> <p><b>BIO</b> <b>3RD MOST IMPROVED</b> APS high school</p> <p><small>SY19-SY22: Rank based on 16 APS high schools</small></p>
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## DOUBLED CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

Caregiver attendance at parent-teacher conferences has more than doubled since each school's baseline.



## GAINS IN GRADUATION RATE

Carver STEAM Academy has increased its graduation rate by 10.3 percentage points in the four years since APS partnered with Purpose Built Schools Atlanta to run Carver STEAM. This is the largest improvement in graduation rate of any other high school in the district over this four-year period (2018-2022).

graduation rate increased by

**10.3**  
percentage points

## MORE SCHOLARSHIPS

Carver STEAM Academy's Class of 2022 earned more than \$4.5 million in scholarships for continuing education—a school record.

**\$4.5M**  
in scholarships for Class of '22

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Carver STEAM Academy is the only high school in Atlanta to offer P-TECH Carver STEAM, a free multi-year program from IBM that equips students with a degree from Atlanta Technical College and the technical skills needed to get their dream careers right out of school.

**\$3.5M**  
in scholarships for Class of '23  
- and counting!

...even while navigating COVID and repeated internal transitions over the last 8 years



Where PBSA is now



# PBSA conducted a comprehensive assessment of its cluster health and performance across 9 dimensions

**Common factors considered across all components: mission, vision, core values, commitment to equity**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Academics	Network & School Culture	Talent	Leadership	Community Engagement	Governance	Operations	Finance	Strategic Planning
<b>C O M P O N E N T S</b>	Program Vision & Design	Culture Vision & Expectations	Talent Philosophy	Org Roles & Responsibilities	Family Engagement	Board Membership & Composition	Technology	Financial Planning & Forecasting	Long-Term Planning
	Curriculum	Positive Relationships	Recruitment, Hiring, & Onboarding	Decision- Making Structures	Community Partnerships	Board Governance Structures	Data Systems & Processes	Budgeting Tools & Processes	Annual Planning
	Instruction	Community Building Practices	Professional Development & Coaching	Meeting Structures		Strategic Oversight	Physical Environment	Fundraising Capacity	
	Data and Assessment	Non-Academic Skill Building	Staff Collaboration	Internal & External Communications		Board Culture	Daily Building Logistics		
	Response to Intervention	Restorative/ Discipline Practices	Evaluation, Retention & Promotion	Distributed Leadership			Student Recruitment & Enrollment		
	Student Supports								

*Source:* Bellwether, Network Health Assessment

**Outcomes: academic performance, student / adult culture, operational effectiveness, financial sustainability**

# The assessment elevated **numerous strengths and assets** of the community; below are four that were most pronounced

PBSA is living a legacy of **positive change** in South Atlanta

- Students, families, and staff told repeated stories of positive progress across academics, culture, staffing, and operations
- In 2023 - its first year of relative post-COVID stability - PBSA hit almost every GA Milestone growth target

PBSA has intentionally built a **student and staff culture** that can catalyze transformational outcomes

- Adults are committed champions and advocates for their students, offering stability, structure, love, and respect; they possess a consistent asset-orientation
- Staff know and care for each other, bound together by a shared belief in PBSA's mission and an awareness that it won't be realized without a unified team

The spirit of **experiential, project-based learning** is alive and well across classrooms and schools

- Teachers are well prepared and deliver lessons that actively engage students in relevant, hands-on learning experiences
- Real-world applications and enrichment - from the agricultural and aviation pathways to DJing - are injected into the student experience

PBSA is increasingly leveraging best practices to address **key barriers to learning** for students

- Facilities and physical learning spaces are pristine, organized, and reflect the beauty of the community; students are nourished with farm-to-table lunches; operations (that aren't dependent on APS) are largely streamlined
- Social-emotional learning and mental health supports are prominent across schools

# These strengths have precipitated strong historical growth; Slater and Price met nearly all CCRPI Improvement Targets for all students and key subgroups

	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science
ALL STUDENTS			
AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKAN NATIVE			
ASIAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER			
BLACK			
HISPANIC			
MULTI-RACIAL			
WHITE			
ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED			
ENGLISH LEARNERS			
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY			

	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
ALL STUDENTS				
AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKAN NATIVE				
ASIAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER				
BLACK				
HISPANIC				
MULTI-RACIAL				
WHITE				
ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED				
ENGLISH LEARNERS				
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY				



### LEGEND

- Subgroup met improvement target\*
- Subgroup met improvement target
- Subgroup made progress, but did not meet improvement target
- Subgroup did not make progress and did not meet improvement target

\*This flag is only available for Economically Disadvantaged, English Learners, and Students with Disability subgroups.



# PBSA's strengths also manifest in what surrounds the classroom: ample and diverse community partnerships and extracurricular opportunities

*Illustrative examples:*



**ATLANTA VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOUNDATION** has represented 418 families (with 1,016 children) in housing-related disputes, including 128 instances of threatened foreclosure and 379 instances of neglected repairs.

**BEARINGS BIKE WORKS** hosts Price and Slater students at bike shop each week to teach social-emotional skills through less traditional learning styles. Bearings Bike Works also hosts Carver Steam students in high school internships each summer.



**BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS** makes matches between adult volunteers ("Bigs") and children ("Littles"). These pairings last throughout the school year and act as a mentoring relationship for the students at Price Middle School.

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF METRO ATLANTA** facilitates after-school programming for all three schools at Purpose Built Schools Atlanta.



**CAMP HIGHLAND** brings enriching experiences to students at each grade level. Camp Highland hosts 9th grade students on an overnight retreat, focusing on leadership development and relationships between students and their teachers.

**CHRIS 180** helps PBSA children and their families through school based mental health counseling. Each PBSA school is equipped with one licensed therapist as well as a community support personnel.



## FEEDING THE COMMUNITY

Our school farms are vibrant and participatory local food systems that address the unequal distribution of healthy food in south Atlanta.



## LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

Our robust college and career readiness program and enrichment opportunities are designed to narrow the opportunity gap, thus giving students the same exposure and experiences for career advancement and income earning potential.

## YEAR-ROUND ENRICHMENT

Through our partnership with Horizons Atlanta, we provide free summer programming for approximately 250 elementary school, middle school and special education students. The programs provide a balance of academics, enrichment, recreational sports and confidence-building activities.





# The assessment also revealed **four key opportunities for growth**

1

**Aligned cluster and school leadership**

## ***Focusing here may mean:***

- Developing vertical alignment and horizontal coherence on a clear, unified vision of success; refining roles, responsibilities, and performance metrics for all network and school leaders in alignment with that vision
- Building a multi-level data dashboard with goals, measures, and targets that will support progress monitoring
- Setting meeting structures with a clear purpose, agenda, dashboard use, and cadence that allow for more streamlined collaboration and communication in alignment with goals

2

**Consistent, rigorous instruction for all**

- Refining an organizational vision and indicators of success for effective PBL instruction; designing and delivering aligned PD and coaching; monitoring progress and iterating consistently
- Enhancing network-wide data-driven coaching cycles with a focus on student work analysis
- Executing a consistent Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) protocol that centers on providing coherent academic and non-academic Tier 2 & 3 supports

3

**Galvanized caregivers and community partners**

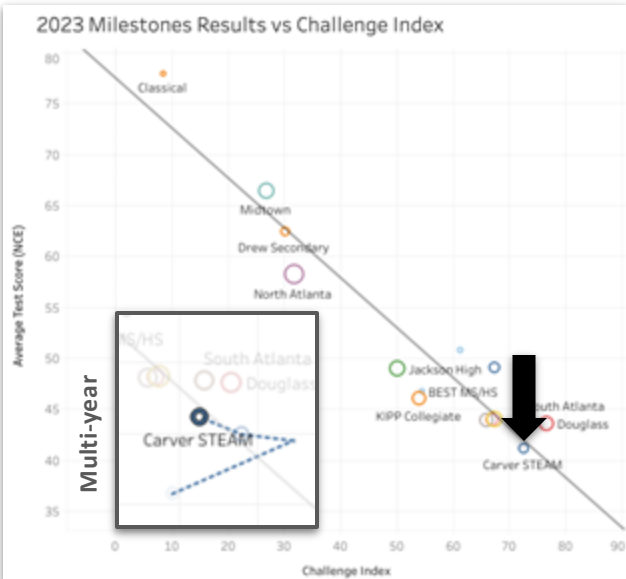
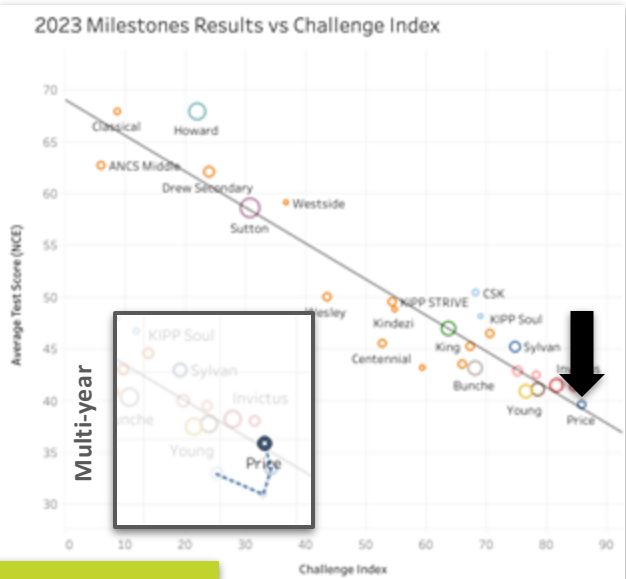
- Designing and executing a brand identity and marketing strategy that tells PBSA's story of growth and impact to current/prospective families and community partners
- Increasing opportunities for authentic caregiver engagement that equip caregivers with tools to better support their children towards academic and personal excellence
- Assessing and realigning org capacity to support community and caregiver engagement efforts

4

**Organizational sustainability**

- Meeting or exceeding annual enrollment and retention targets via strategic engagement and coordinated local family recruitment
- Aligning personnel spending with refined roles and responsibilities and long-term goals
- Executing the core K-12 program on the public dollar; leveraging philanthropy for enrichment, wraparound services, early childhood education, and postsecondary support

# PBSA schools' performance on the Challenge Index over time underscores these opportunity areas



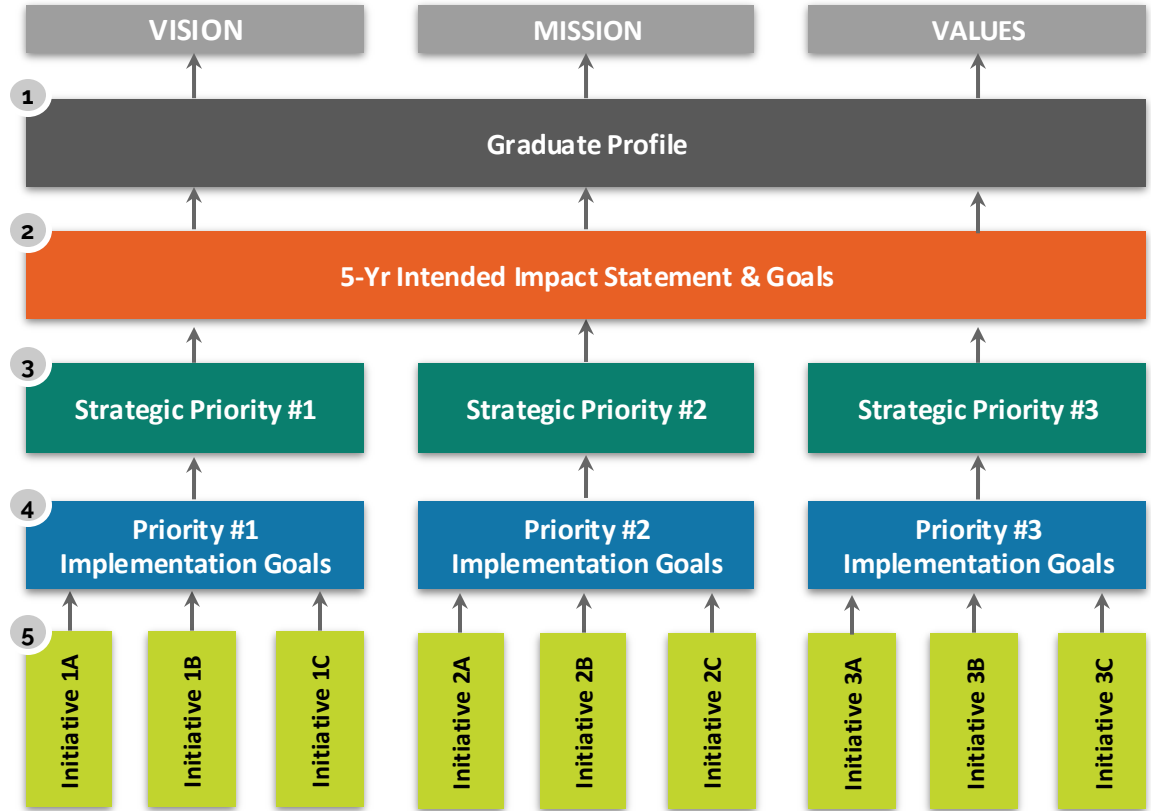
A school's placement on or below the regression line indicates that its students' performance does not outpace what's predicted based on the level of poverty they experience

Where we are going



# PBSA's strategic plan crystallizes a 5-year destination through a new Graduate Profile and Intended Impact Statement & Goals

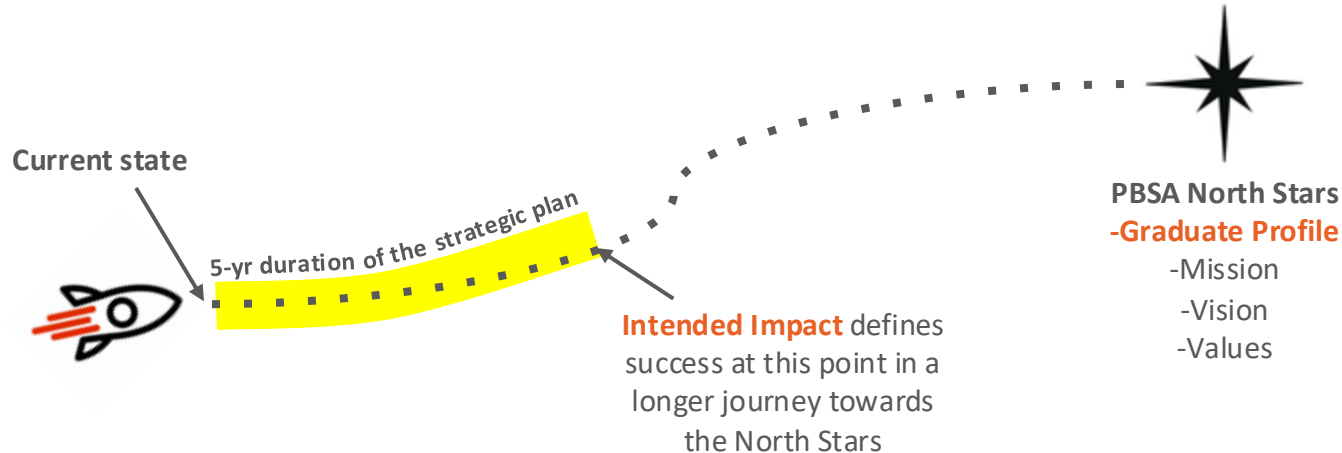
- 1 Graduate Profile:** The long-term skills, habits, & mindsets PBSA seeks to instill in graduates
- 2 5-Yr Intended Impact Statement & Goals:** High-level qualitative and quantitative description of the mission-aligned impact PBSA seeks to have by 2029
- 3 Strategic Priorities:** Major categories of work that will accelerate PBSA towards its Intended Impact Goals
- 4 Priority Implementation Goals:** The specific, measurable, and time-bound outcomes that define success for each priority over the five years
- 5 Initiatives:** Smaller workstreams that break down each strategic priority into more concrete action steps



# How do the Intended Impact and Graduate Profile function together?

The **Graduate Profile** (GP) is both a programmatic assertion and an aspirational North Star: All program elements should build students' skills, habits, and mindsets towards the GP, realizing it will likely take longer than 5 years to bring all scholars to GP-level attainment.

The **Intended Impact Statement & Goals** define success across both program and non-program functions of the organization for the next five years. The program goals must align with and define meaningful progress towards the Graduate Profile and the non-program goals must create the enabling conditions for program success.



# Informed by student, caregiver, and staff voice, **PBSA's Graduate Profile** defines the competencies that all students will possess upon graduation

## **Advocates for Self and Others.**

PBSA scholars **set ambitious goals** and **advocate for themselves** in pursuit of them. They **understand their strengths and growth areas**, **accessing resources** to grow their skills. They **extend advocacy from self to others**, ultimately ensuring a positive, long-lasting impact on their community.

## **Prepared for an Opportunity-Rich Life.**

PBSA scholars are **ready for a future filled with choice and opportunity**. They have the coursework and real-world experience to access a diverse array of pathways in college and career. They are able to **connect their passions and aptitudes to professions** that will lead to **fulfillment and financial freedom**, laying a **strong foundation for future generations**.

## **Academically Equipped.**

PBSA scholars have the **knowledge and skills required to successfully complete** any postsecondary path they choose. They are able to effectively leverage **current and emerging technology** to enhance their learning. They build enduring confidence and character by **taking cognitive risks, persevering through challenge, collaborating with others, and celebrating growth**.

## **Critically Conscious and Inclusive.**

PBSA scholars understand systems of oppression and **take action to interrupt them**. They are empathetic and operate with the belief that **all people have value** in order to contribute to a community that is **welcoming to all**.

# Each domain of the Graduate Profile has been distilled into a **set of student actions** - “I can” statements - that will drive future program design

## Advocates for Self and Others.

- I can **identify my strengths and areas of growth**.
- I can **set ambitious goals** and create a plan to achieve them.
- I can effectively **express my ideas** and ensure **I am heard**.
- I can **use resources** and **seek help** when I face challenges, both for myself and for others.
- I can find ways to **support my community** and **take action** to have a positive impact.

## Academically Equipped.

- I can **make meaning** of complex texts and concepts using appropriate strategies.
- I can **apply my reading and writing skills** to express my ideas clearly.
- I can **ethically use technology** to support my learning.
- I can take **cognitive risks** and **learn from my mistakes**.
- I can **work with others** to achieve goals.

## Prepared for an Opportunity-Rich Life.

- I can **make informed decisions** about my future pathways.
- I can succeed in coursework and real-world experiences **that build the knowledge, skills, and perspectives** I need for future pathways.
- I can plan for my **near- and long-term financial future**.

## Critically Conscious and Inclusive.

- I can **analyze different perspectives** on a social issue and **form my own opinion**.
- I can take action to challenge and **interrupt injustices**.
- I can show **empathy and kindness** in my interactions with others.
- I can talk with others to help **everyone feel understood and valued**.

# PBSA will evaluate and adjust current programming to align with the student actions within the Graduate Profile

Developed

To be developed



**Example:**  
Advocates for Self and Others.

**Example:**  
I can identify my strengths and areas of growth.

**Example:**  
SEL Lesson Exit Ticket: Students complete self-reflection identifying strengths and areas of growth.

**Example:**  
Adults articulate what they are doing well and areas they are working on.

**Example:**  
Positive Climate and Culture; Social Emotional Learning - Competency Domain: Self Awareness



PBSA has also developed an **Intended Impact Statement**, which names the topline impact that it seeks over the 5-year lifetime of the strategic plan

**By 2030, Purpose Built Schools Atlanta will offer community schools of choice that South Atlanta families proactively seek out for their children. Our graduates will excel in competitive colleges, future-focused employment or entrepreneurship, and military career-level tracks. We will achieve this through four priorities: (1) developing a shared system for defining and measuring success, (2) preparing and supporting teachers to deliver rigorous project-based learning, (3) building an energized coalition of families and community leaders, and (4) securing our long-term organizational sustainability.**



How we will get there



# To reach its goals, PBSA will focus on **four strategic priorities** over the next five years

Strategic Priority	Why This Matters
<b>1</b> <b>Strategic and aligned leadership</b>	Realizing an ambitious 5-year vision begins with cluster and school leadership developing a shared, inspiring picture of what success looks like, measuring progress against it, and taking vertically aligned (intrafunctional) and horizontally coherent (interfunctional) action towards it
<b>2</b> <b>Rigorous and relevant learning for all students, every day</b>	Our most valuable asset is our teachers and as such, our success ultimately hinges on the degree to which they are prepared and supported to consistently facilitate exceptional rigorous and relevant learning experiences for our young people

Strategic Priority	Why This Matters
<b>3</b> <b>Galvanized caregivers and community partners</b>	Building an energized coalition of families and community leaders who believe in and show up for our vision will not only support student and alumni outcomes, but also drive student enrollment and retention
<b>4</b> <b>Organizational sustainability</b>	Our long-term viability depends on our achieve and maintain financial solvency, recruit and retain mission-aligned talent, and build a more robust, diverse, and structured board

PBSA has defined a set of **detailed initiatives** to advance each priority; here they are for Priority #1: Strategic and aligned leadership

Strategic Priority	Why This Matters	Detailed Initiative
<p data-bbox="57 354 96 398">1</p> <p data-bbox="77 627 367 709">Strategic and aligned leadership</p>	<p data-bbox="425 425 879 911">Realizing an ambitious 5-year vision begins with cluster and school leadership developing a shared, inspiring picture of what success looks like, measuring progress against it, and taking vertically aligned (intrafunctional) and horizontally coherent (interfunctional) action towards it</p>	<p data-bbox="927 360 1874 535">1a. Update and share a <b>unified vision of success</b>; align the necessary roles, responsibilities, expertise areas, performance metrics, and resources across cluster and school leadership teams to accelerate progress towards this vision</p> <p data-bbox="927 584 1845 715">1b. Align capacity towards and build a <b>multi-level, efficient data dashboard</b> with goals, measures, and targets updated regularly to support progress monitoring &amp; communications</p> <p data-bbox="927 764 1854 977">1c. Document and continually update a <b>5-year implementation plan</b>, including meeting structures, periodic data-driven reviews, and a communications plan to monitor progress to goals, celebrate success, and adjust course throughout</p>

PBSA has defined a set of **detailed initiatives** to advance each priority; here they are for Priority #2: Rigorous and relevant learning

Strategic Priority	Why This Matters	Detailed Initiative
<p data-bbox="63 354 96 404">2</p> <p data-bbox="63 584 386 758"><b>Rigorous and relevant learning for all students, every day</b></p>	<p data-bbox="425 496 956 846">PBSA's most valuable asset is its teachers and as such, success ultimately hinges on the degree to which they are prepared and supported to consistently facilitate exceptional rigorous and relevant learning experiences for PBSA students</p>	<p data-bbox="1000 376 1845 507">2a. Crystallize, communicate, and reinforce a <b>vision for instructional excellence</b> that is both grounded in best practice and authentic to PBSA's values and beliefs</p> <p data-bbox="1000 573 1854 704">2b. Design and deliver <b>data-driven instructional PD and coaching</b> that is tightly aligned with the instructional vision - at both cluster and school levels</p> <p data-bbox="1000 758 1874 977">2c. Lay the foundation for <b>gold-standard STEAM and PBL</b> through the systematic implementation of signature structures and strategies (e.g., problem-based or experiential learning, sustained inquiry, and/or implementation of a capstone project)</p>

PBSA has defined a set of **detailed initiatives** to advance each priority; here they are for Priority #3: Galvanized caregivers and community partners

Strategic Priority	Why This Matters	Detailed Initiative
<p data-bbox="63 358 98 401">3</p> <p data-bbox="63 609 388 734">Galvanized caregivers and community partners</p>	<p data-bbox="430 521 960 822">Building an energized coalition of families and community leaders who believe in and show up for PBSA's vision will not only support student and alumni outcomes, but also drive student enrollment and retention</p>	<p data-bbox="1002 374 1850 500">3a. Design and execute a <b>brand identity and marketing strategy</b> that tells PBSA's story of growth and impact to current/prospective families and community partners</p> <p data-bbox="1002 560 1860 778">3b. Increase opportunities for <b>caregiver engagement</b> by establishing key infrastructures (PTAs, parent centers, parent learning opportunities, etc.) and equipping school-based personnel with the tools for ongoing, authentic communication with caregivers</p> <p data-bbox="1002 844 1875 969">3c. Cultivate <b>community and caregiver champions</b> who are positioned to advocate for PBSA through both formal structures and informal relationships</p>

# PBSA has defined a set of **detailed initiatives** to advance each priority; here they are for Priority #4: Organizational sustainability

Strategic Priority	Why This Matters	Detailed Initiative
<b>4</b>  <b>Organizational sustainability</b>	PBSA's long-term viability depends on achieving and maintaining financial solvency, recruiting and retaining mission-aligned talent, and building a more robust, diverse, and structured board	<p>4a. Meet year-over-year <b>annual student enrollment and retention</b> targets through strategic engagement and coordinated local family outreach</p> <p>4b. Refine our <b>talent philosophy and organizational recruitment and retention strategy</b> that ensures our people are equipped to drive towards PBSA's Intended Impact and ultimately realize the mission</p> <p>4c. Build a <b>larger, more diverse, and more structured board</b> to broaden its influence in the local and national landscape, leverage balanced expertise in education, finance, law, human capital, and fundraising, and develop clear processes for committees and succession planning</p>