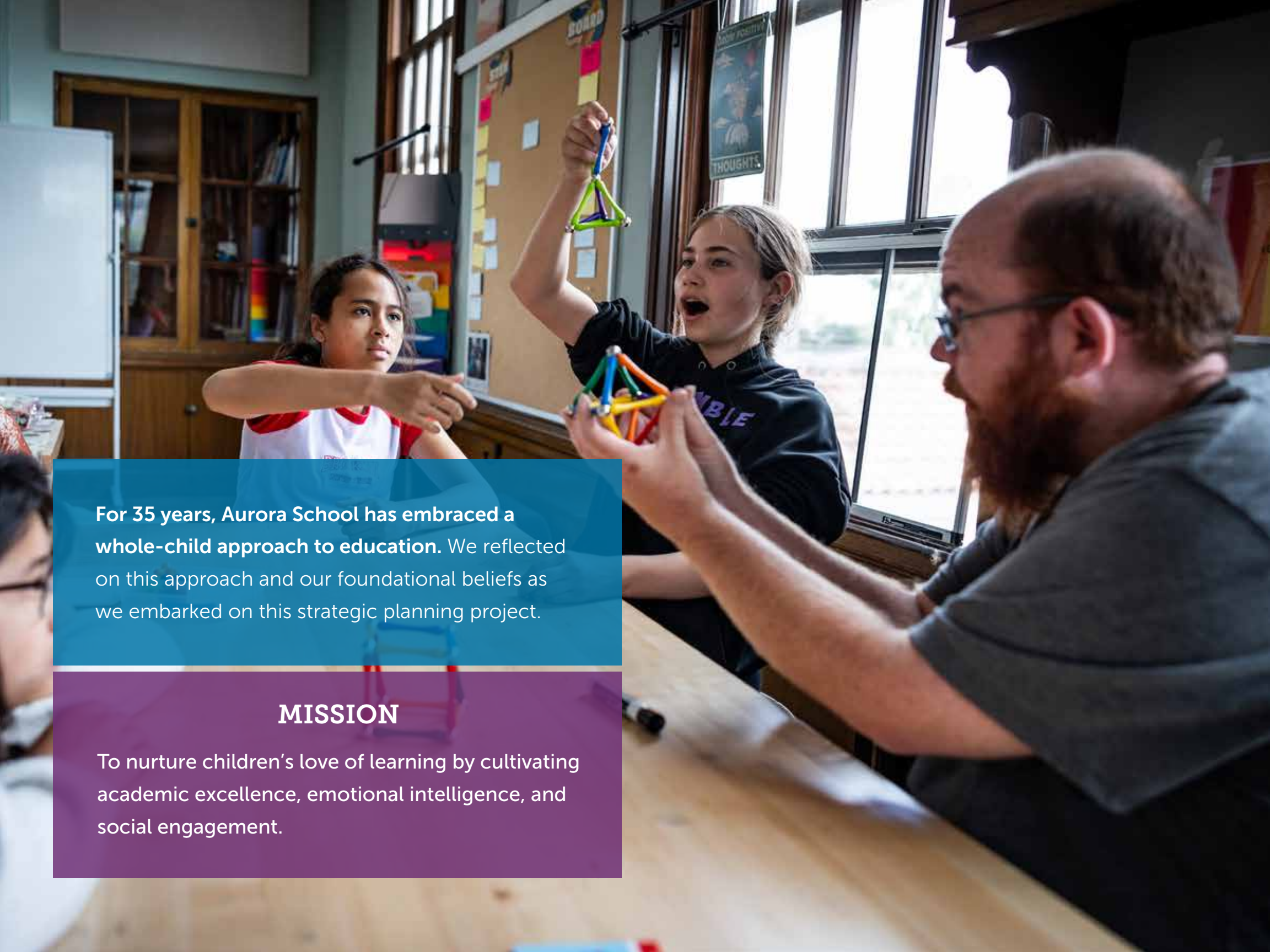


aurora school

STRATEGIC PLAN



A photograph of a classroom scene. A male teacher with a beard and glasses is seated at a wooden table, looking towards two young students. One student, a girl with long brown hair, is holding up a colorful geometric stick structure. The other student, a girl with dark hair, is also holding a similar structure. The background shows a classroom with a bookshelf, a whiteboard, and a window with a poster that says "THOUGHTS".

For 35 years, Aurora School has embraced a **whole-child approach to education**. We reflected on this approach and our foundational beliefs as we embarked on this strategic planning project.

MISSION

To nurture children's love of learning by cultivating academic excellence, emotional intelligence, and social engagement.



Rationale

In a competitive educational landscape, Aurora School stands out with unique qualities that resonate with families seeking personalized education for their kids. The board recognizes the importance of building on these qualities to maintain Aurora's status and attract families who are the right fit.

Our strategic vision acknowledges ongoing demographic changes, especially sped up by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to fewer school-aged children in many East Bay neighborhoods. Despite economic recovery, some families still struggle financially to afford private school fees. In response, Aurora School has taken strategic steps to adapt and thrive. A significant move was adding a middle school, a milestone in our history showing Aurora's commitment to offering a complete educational path for students leading to high school.

By aligning our vision with community needs and educational trends, Aurora School is poised to address demographic challenges and become a symbol of educational excellence and innovation in the East Bay. Through collaboration and dedication to our mission, Aurora School delivers an outstanding educational environment where every student can flourish academically, socially, and emotionally.

Vision

At Aurora School, our vision is to understand and nurture each student's potential, valuing intellectual and social-emotional learning. Learning isn't just about knowledge; it's about discovering joy and personal development. We provide academic support while embracing diversity, inclusion, and unity. Additionally, community involvement and collaborative engagement are key to creating a school culture that is inclusive and socially just. We're committed to upholding these values, ensuring every member of our school community feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.

True North

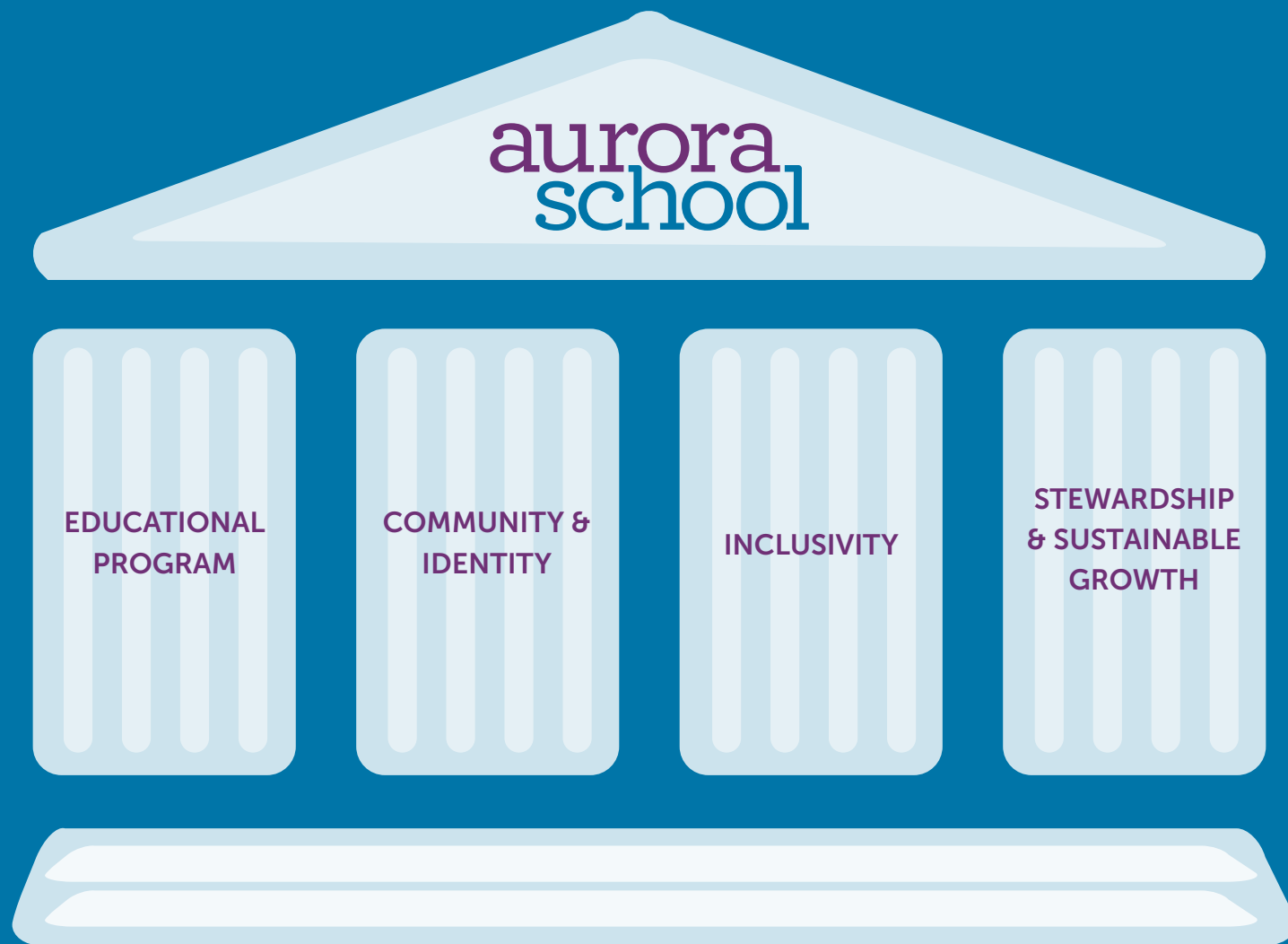
Academic Excellence: To challenge students to achieve academic and social-emotional growth.

Inclusivity: To support a school culture and policies that promote an environment of inclusiveness and social justice.

Enrollment: To harness the power of an intimate school size that supports personalized and responsive education while being large enough to foster a diverse community.



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN IS ORGANIZED AROUND FOUR PILLARS:



A photograph of two young women, likely students, wearing white lab coats. They are looking at a complex, three-dimensional structure made of wooden sticks and cardboard, which resembles a model of a building or a mechanical device. The structure is composed of many interconnected rectangular frames. The student on the left is holding a small blue and green object, possibly a component of the model. The background shows a classroom with other students and tables.

1 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

We will provide a rich and relevant educational program that cultivates compassion and critical thinking skills. Through deep exploration of real-world questions and problems, students will develop critical thinking and collaboration skills and will engage in the meaningful process of inquiry, research, reflection, creativity, and problem solving.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING (ACADEMIC QUESTS): Enhance our thematic, project-based approach to teaching by empowering students to apply their academic and social skills to real-world challenges and problem-solving projects in elementary school.

MIXED GRADE CLASSROOM: Evaluate the efficacy of mixed-grade configuration across elementary and middle school to ensure optimization of student academic and social-emotional success.

DIFFERENTIATION: Provide our faculty with professional development and resources they need to harness the power and potential of mixed-grade classrooms in meeting each student's academic and social/emotional needs.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING & SOCIAL JUSTICE: Develop a roadmap for Aurora to take a leadership role in the social emotional learning arena and take social justice education from the classroom to the broader community.

A photograph of four children playing on a playground structure. They are hanging from a horizontal bar. The child on the far left is a girl with blonde hair wearing a patterned shirt and dark leggings. Next to her is a boy with brown hair wearing a blue t-shirt and dark pants. Then a girl with blue hair wearing a pink t-shirt and dark shorts. On the far right is a boy with dark hair wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows a playground with a slide and some trees.

2

COMMUNITY & IDENTITY

We will clarify, celebrate, and communicate our distinct identity both within our school community and throughout the Bay Area in order to engage mission-aligned families and to ensure their long-term commitment to our school.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

HONE OUR MESSAGE: Develop a clear, succinct, and powerful articulation of our distinct mission, values, and program that can be shared in various formats including print, video, written, and spoken messages.

GRADUATE PROFILE: Clarify our graduate profile in order to ensure that prospective families and current families fall in love with the student experience.

BECOME STORYTELLERS: Build the capacity of our board, school leadership, faculty, and staff to tell the Aurora School story.

ENSURE CONSISTENCY: Ensure that all of our community events and communications for prospective parents and current families consistently align with our message, values, and mission.



3 INCLUSIVITY

Aurora has a long history of educating students in social justice. We are committed to strengthening diversity of all types. The school's future depends on its ability to succeed in this area, especially in a rapidly changing East Bay demography.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION: Build a school community that reflects the diversity of the East Bay. Ensure that the culture and policies support a welcoming and socially just environment for everyone.

BOARD HEALTH: Expand the number and diversity of the Board of Directors and empower the Board to meet the deliverables in the strategic plan as well as performing their oversight function.



4

STEWARDSHIP & SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

We will carefully steward our financial and human resources in order to ensure the long-term fiscal health and vibrancy of our school.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

TUITION: Set tuition in consideration of the value of an Aurora education and how it compares with peer schools, and continue to provide tuition assistance (flexible tuition) at a level that cultivates a diverse and inclusive learning community.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Ensure a substantial professional development budget in order to support our outstanding faculty.

PHILANTHROPY: Develop a culture of philanthropy within the community in order to increase non-tuition revenue that will support operations, our commitment to diversity and affordability, and enable us to execute this strategic vision.

FACILITIES: Evaluate and assess facilities to determine their suitability for supporting safety and security, as well as the educational program.

A photograph of three young boys sitting on a playground. The boy on the right is wearing a bright green t-shirt with a colorful geometric design and blue-rimmed glasses. He is pointing at a book held by the boy in the middle. The boy on the left is wearing a grey hoodie. They are all looking intently at the book. The background shows a playground with green structures and a blue sky.

Conclusion

As we move forward with our strategic plan, we are committed to fostering an educational environment that prioritizes academic excellence, community identity, inclusivity, and long-term financial sustainability.

Through our **focus on innovative educational programs**, such as project-based learning and differentiated instruction, we aim to equip students with the critical thinking and collaboration skills necessary for success in an ever-evolving world.

Our **commitment to community and identity** will ensure that we articulate and celebrate our unique mission, engaging families and stakeholders in a shared vision for our school's future. By embracing diversity in all its forms, we will create a welcoming and equitable environment where every individual feels valued and empowered to contribute.

Moreover, through **prudent stewardship of our resources**, we will secure the financial health of Aurora School, enabling us to provide ongoing support for our exceptional faculty and maintain a robust educational experience for our students.

In conclusion, this strategic plan serves as a roadmap for achieving our collective aspirations, ensuring that Aurora School not only meets the challenges of today but thrives as a nurturing, inclusive, and academically rigorous community for years to come. Together, we will transform our vision into reality, fostering an educational journey that inspires joy, curiosity, and lifelong learning.