



the TNCS *strategic plan*





A Message from the President of the Board

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and Strategic Planning Committee, it is my pleasure to introduce The New Community School's newly adopted strategic plan.

Why does a school like TNCS need a strategic plan? Strategic planning is vital to any organization, providing a sense of direction and outlining measurable goals. A good strategic plan informs both day-to-day decisions and larger long-term initiatives. I am proud to say that the questions asked in this plan and the goals set forth are bold, help position our school for a bright future, and enhance our mission of empowering bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related learning differences.

The genesis of this plan began more than three years ago, and this final document is the work of numerous meetings with stakeholders within our community: faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and more. You will also find within this summary a new vision statement for the school. As goals of this new plan came together, it became clear that we needed a new vision statement to help summarize what we hope this school will become.

When I look back at all that this school has accomplished during the course of our last strategic plan, I am filled with pride. Thanks to a commitment to that plan, our school went

from an enrollment of 100 to our current student body of 189. We designed and constructed the school's first purpose-built academic building, and raised the funds necessary to build and endow it. We went from a school with spotty wi-fi in a few buildings to a fully networked campus with technology in the hands of every student and faculty member. Our campus is more secure than ever. Our program has grown to meet the needs of our students with better academic, athletic, and artistic offerings, and our commitment to a customized experience for each has never been stronger. I cannot wait to see what we will accomplish with the direction provided by this new plan.

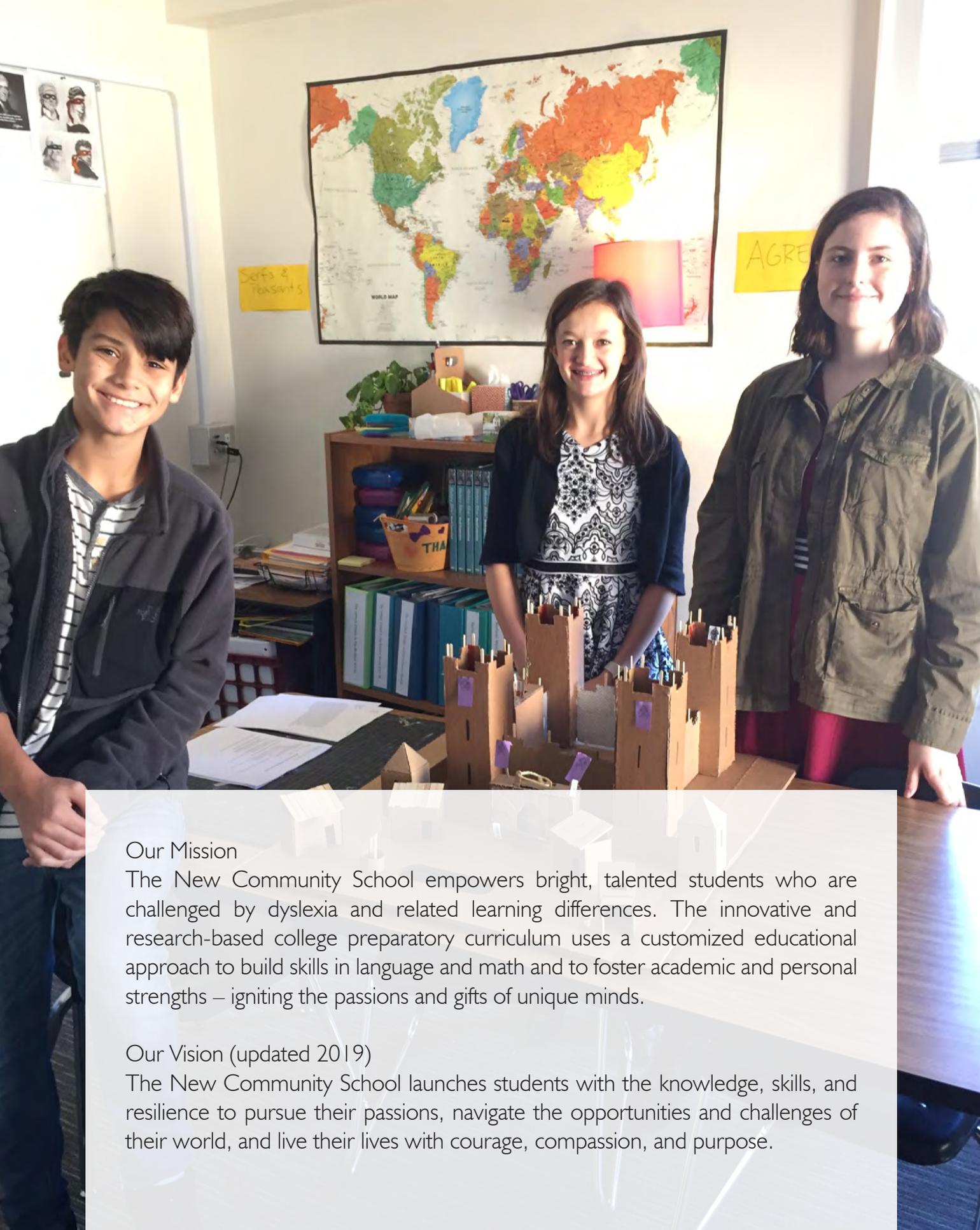
I am grateful for the leadership of our strategic planning chairs, Susan Quinn and Corynne Arnett, the members of our strategic planning team, and everyone who gave their valuable input during this process. I wish that our friend and colleague, Donn Lancaster, could be with us to see this finished product. His wisdom and passion were a vital part of the creation of this new strategic direction for the school.

Thank you for being a part of The New Community School's present, and our future.

Michael Bland
President, TNCS Board of Trustees

Cover: Morgan and Davis stop to enjoy the views during the Summer 2018 Europe Trip. Photo by Alex Phillips, Class of 2019.
Left: Ryland strategically makes his way up the wall as part of the school's first rock climbing team. Photo by Triangle Rock Club RVA.
Below: Katie and Michael stop for a photo with the statue of James Madison during the Junior Class College Trip in November. Juniors visited James Madison University, Longwood University, and Lynchburg University.





Planning for a Bright Future

In 1974, four families came together to create The New Community School, a place where bright students with dyslexia and related learning differences could get the help they deserved to build their skills, uncover their passions, and fulfill their enormous potential. Since those early days, The New Community School has found its home on Richmond's Northside and grown in size of campus, number of students served, and scope of services offered. From humble beginnings of 24 students, today TNCS is serving 189 students in grades 5-12.

A bold, forward-thinking strategic plan is vital to keeping our school healthy, vibrant, and nimble to meet the ever-changing needs of our students. This strategic plan, developed by a team of TNCS board, faculty, and staff members, seeks to provide a framework for growth, guidance toward a bright future. As we look to our 50th anniversary in 2024, we understand that the world our students are living in is a vastly different one from the days of our founding. We seek to ensure that we are preparing bright people with dyslexia and related learning differences with the tools they need to move boldly into college, career, and roles unimagined with the skills, self-awareness, and mindset to be a positive force in their own lives and the lives of others. We know that in an unpredictable future, asking the right questions is more important than having the right answers and that grit, resilience, and courage are needed attributes. TNCS seeks to remain an ongoing and accessible lifetime resource for our alumni and community in an expanding web of guidance, support, and connection.

With this plan, The New Community School is reaffirming our commitment to our mission of empowering bright students with dyslexia and related learning differences. A healthy strategic plan is one that should never be carved in stone. Like our most recent strategic plan, this plan will grow and change with time. As we seek to continually improve our program, we will strive to answer three essential questions:

- 1 How does TNCS design an enhanced, comprehensive experience that prepares our students for their future?
- 2 How do we ensure that TNCS remains a vibrant, relevant, and sustainable organization?
- 3 How do we best extend the reach of TNCS to our alumni and external communities?

Our Mission

The New Community School empowers bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related learning differences. The innovative and research-based college preparatory curriculum uses a customized educational approach to build skills in language and math and to foster academic and personal strengths – igniting the passions and gifts of unique minds.

Our Vision (updated 2019)

The New Community School launches students with the knowledge, skills, and resilience to pursue their passions, navigate the opportunities and challenges of their world, and live their lives with courage, compassion, and purpose.

Left: Charlie, Leona, and Lauren proudly display the medieval castle they built in 9th grade World History after learning about life in Medieval Europe. All the students showed great resourcefulness, creativity, and ingenuity.



1

How does TNCS design an enhanced, comprehensive experience that prepares our students for their future?

1

A TNCS education is defined by the comprehensive experience of our students. We understand that in order to prepare our students for their future, it is not enough to focus solely on academic growth. Their social and emotional well-being is just as important to help launch vibrant, resilient graduates. When answering this question of a comprehensive experience, we are looking at the best ways to build a program that meets our students' needs academically and personally, and builds a supportive, cohesive school culture.

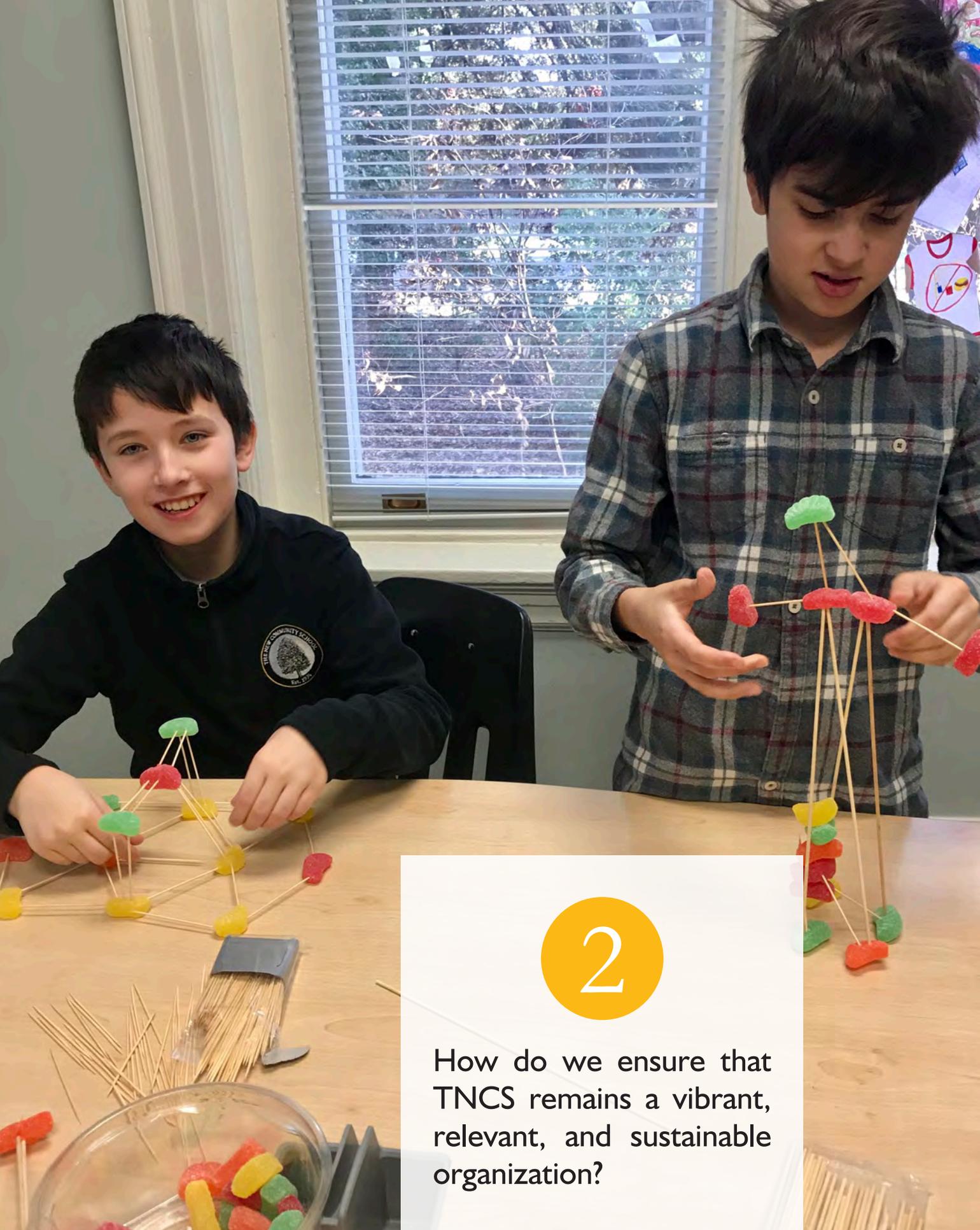
As we examine how to design an enhanced comprehensive experience that prepares our students for their future, we will focus our work around these strategic initiatives:

- Refine the **CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES** of the school.
- Define the profiles of **TNCS GRADUATES AND EDUCATORS**.
- Continue to refine the **CURRICULUM** in a way that is customized to the needs of each student, supports the growth of their personal strengths, and is intentionally designed to emphasize college and career preparation.
- Assess the **SCHEDULE AND SCHOOL CALENDAR** to best support our faculty and students.
- Continue to design relevant and effective **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** programs to support our faculty.
- Develop a schoolwide **WELLNESS** plan that supports the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of each student.
- Cultivate a **CULTURE** among students, families, faculty, and leadership that fosters growth, learning, wellness, diversity, and respect.
- Promote an inclusive, supportive, and safe environment where every member of our community feels empowered to **TRUST AND TRY**.
- Identify the human, financial, technological, and facilities **RESOURCES** needed to realize these initiatives.

Left: Kirby practices chords in the first ukulele elective class.

Below: New and returning members of the National Honor Society at the annual induction ceremony.





2

How do we ensure that TNCS remains a vibrant, relevant, and sustainable organization?

2

For 45 years, The New Community School has remained a healthy organization, thanks to careful fiscal management and good stewardship of our campus and facilities. Today TNCS is stronger and healthier than ever before. As our enrollment has grown, our campus has grown in recent years through the construction of Founders Hall, and the purchase and renovation of adjoining properties.

Education in the United States and throughout the world is changing at a rapid pace. In an age of instantly accessible information, how our students discern information, solve problems, and think critically is just as important as what our students learn. How, where, and when students attend school is likely to change in an increasingly connected and global society. In order for The New Community School to remain a healthy and growing organization, we must work to ensure the future success of the school as an organization, enhance the TNCS brand, ensure our ongoing fiscal health, and identify and manage risk whenever possible. Additionally, we will seek to grow and enhance our campus facilities in a way that understands the changing needs of our students and takes into account their social and emotional well-being as much as their academic growth.

As we seek to ensure how TNCS remains a vibrant, relevant, and sustainable organization, we will focus our work around these strategic initiatives:

- Gather and analyze data to track and monitor the **SUCCESS** of TNCS students and alumni to assess our impact and refine our comprehensive program.
- Enhance our strategies and programs to recruit, develop, and retain high-quality **FACULTY AND STAFF**.
- Strengthen our brand in the community through effective **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS** to our internal and external communities.
- Identify, develop, and nurture key strategic resource **PARTNERSHIPS**.
- Continue to develop the **FINANCIAL RESOURCES** to ensure future success.
- Determine capacity for **FUNDRAISING** and prioritize funding needs, including those identified in the strategic plan.
- Explore alternative streams for **REVENUE, PROFIT, AND BRAND AWARENESS**.
- Evaluate and manage the school's awareness of and **PREPAREDNESS FOR RISK**, including physical, technical, administrative, and financial.
- Continually evaluate our **CAMPUS MASTER PLAN** to leverage current facilities and plan for our future.

Left: Luke and Kai participate in a design engineering activity with skewers and candy during the Middle School winter break celebration.



3

How do we best extend the reach of TNCS to our alumni and external communities?

3

The New Community School recognizes the opportunity and responsibility to support our alumni and develop programs to assist non-TNCS students in the Greater Richmond area, expanding the reach of our resources beyond our campus. Recognizing that dyslexia and related learning differences are lifelong, we have an opportunity and responsibility to serve our alumni as they continue their education, enter the work force, and navigate career challenges. We recognize also that these resources should be shared with people who are not TNCS alumni, whether they are students or teachers at other schools, companies seeking to better understand and benefit from their employees with dyslexia and related learning differences, or individuals in our community who could benefit from skills development and a better understanding of their learning style. Additionally, TNCS takes seriously its role in furthering the research into dyslexia and related learning differences and expanding thought leadership in the field.

As we explore how best to extend the reach of TNCS to our alumni and external communities, we will focus our work around these strategic initiatives:

- Explore and enhance **PROGRAMS** that will have a positive impact on our alumni and our external communities, such as:
 - **TUTORING**
 - Language Fundamentals and Orton-Gillingham Based Remediation
 - Distance Learning Support
 - **COACHING**
 - Career Planning and Transitions
 - Support for College Students
 - **CONSULTING**
 - Educational Testing
 - Skills Assessment
 - College and Career Testing Preparation
 - **OUTREACH**
 - Offering TNCS Experts as a Speaker Series
 - Dyslexia Simulation Presentations
 - **TRAINING**
 - Executive Functioning
 - Workplace Training
 - Wellness and Mental Health
 - Educator Training
 - Keystone Manual Training
- Research the viability of creating a division or institute to house **ALUMNI AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**.
- Collaborate and partner with research associations to further the **AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF DYSLEXIA**.
- Expand our **THOUGHT LEADERSHIP** in the field of dyslexia by giving our faculty greater opportunities to speak at local, regional, and national conferences.

Left: Language Fundamentals teacher Katherine Loria leads a station during the Simulation: Experience Dyslexia event.

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Questions or comments about this Strategic Plan? We welcome your feedback. Please contact Dan Stackhouse, Director of Development, at 804.264.3276 or dstackhouse@tncs.org.

Charlie, Reid, Julian, Sawyer, Seven, and Anthony have fun playing croquet during a visit to Westminster Canterbury Richmond.

