



IVY PREP

A C A D E M Y

SCHOLARS TODAY. SISTERS **FOREVER.**

2025-2030
STRATEGIC PLAN



"We will always have STEM with us. Some things will drop out of the public eye and will go away, but there will always be science, engineering, and technology. And there will always, always be mathematics."

**-KATHERINE JOHNSON,
NASA Mathematician Inspiration for "Hidden Figures"**

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“They’ll tell you you’re too loud, that you need to wait your turn and ask the right people for permission. Do it anyway.”

-ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ
United States Representative

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends and Supporters,

In the heart of a community that thrives on diversity and innovation, Ivy Prep Academy stands as a beacon of potential and promise for young girls who will become the leaders and change-makers of tomorrow. Established with the vision to cultivate female leaders who manifest changes in the world, our work has never been more critical.

As we look around us, the need for a robust educational framework that not only addresses the basics but dives deep into the realms of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) is glaringly apparent. Women, particularly Black women, continue to be underrepresented in these fields. **While women constitute 48% of the U.S. workforce, they hold only 35% of STEM jobs¹. This disparity widens further for Black women, who make up merely 2% of the science and engineering workforce².** Our goal is to challenge these statistics head-on by nurturing a generation that is not only prepared but equipped and eager to excel in these fields.

Our strategic plan for Ivy Prep over the next five years is designed with the dual goals of instilling a solid sense of self and preparing our scholars for the future demands of the workforce. This plan is built on a foundation of academic excellence and cultural empowerment, recognizing the unique hurdles that our scholars face.



While women earn a majority of undergraduate and advanced degrees, they still represent a small share of degree earners and job holders in higher-paying STEM fields like engineering and computer science relative to their share of the adult population. **In 2019–2020, women of color earned only 15.1% of bachelor's degrees across all STEM fields.³ Some areas of STEM degree attainment have seen backward progress; from 2010 to 2019, STEM doctoral degree attainment among Black women decreased from 1.3 percent to 1.1 percent of all doctoral degrees awarded.⁴**

This data is disheartening, but an Ivy Prep education can make a difference for our girls. Girls educated in all-girls learning environments are more likely to choose careers in STEM fields.

We envision creating an environment where our girls can see what they can be. This includes an expanded curriculum incorporating cutting-edge technology and hands-on learning experiences, partnerships with local tech companies, and a mentorship program connecting our scholars with Black women thriving in STEAM careers.

Our commitment extends beyond our curriculum. We are enhancing our school culture to ensure that every scholar feels valued, respected, and supported. Initiatives to enhance student well-being, promote mental health, and foster a community of inclusivity are at the forefront of our plans.

The journey ahead is filled with both challenges and opportunities. With the continued support of our community, donors, and partners, we are confident in our ability to make a significant impact. We are not just teaching our girls to navigate the world; we are preparing them to reshape it.

Thank you for your unyielding support and belief in the vision and mission of Ivy Prep Academy. Together, we will empower our scholars to reach their fullest potential.

The Right Choice for Girls,

Charcia M. Nichols

Charcia M. Nichols, Ed. D., CCSFM
Executive Director, Ivy Prep Academy

[1] Elizabeth Grieco and Steven Deitz, "Diversity and STEM: Women, Minorities, and Persons With Disabilities 2023 | NSF - National Science Foundation," n.d.

[2] Thomas Bostick, "Inspiring the Next Generation of Women in STEM," Forbes, March

[3] National Center for Education Statistics, "Number and Percentage Distribution of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Degrees/Certificates Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity, Level of Degree/Certificate, and Sex of Student: 2010-11 Through 2019-20," n.d., https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_318.45.asp.

[4] Brianna Wright, Olivia Gunther, and Jinann Bitar, "Why STEM Equity Must Address the Experiences of Women of Color - the Education Trust," The Education Trust, July 24, 2023,

BY THE NUMBERS



Women in STEM still earn only



of their male counterparts' median income.

Hispanic and Black women earn only **63%** of what men make ⁵

On average, women in STEM earn nearly **\$15,000 less** than men, while Latina and Black women in STEM earn around **\$33,000 less** than men in their field ⁶

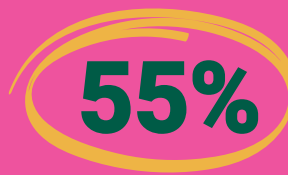


of the people in the Science and Engineering workforce in the US are Black women



of STEM Bachelor degrees awarded in the nation are to Black women ⁷

STEM-based programming is shown to facilitate up to a



increase in **STEM confidence** among girls ⁸

[5] Nadeem, "STEM Jobs See Uneven Progress in Increasing Gender, Racial and Ethnic Diversity."

[6] "The STEM Gap: Women and Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – AAUW: Empowering Women Since 1881."

[7] Black Girls Do STEM, "Black Girls Do STEM."

[8] Martinez-Garcia, Vowels-Duce, and Messmore, "The Impact of STEM Based Programs on Girls and Women."

BY THE NUMBERS



64% of Black children



51% of Hispanic children have family histories that include adverse childhood experiences ¹¹

Adolescent suicide among girls has risen by

56%

since 2009 ⁹

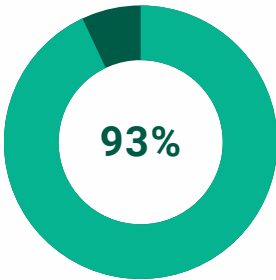
Suicide death rates for Black teenage girls increased by

182%

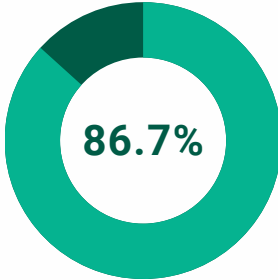
from 2001 to 2017 ¹⁰

Black girls are **suspended five times** as often as their white peers ¹¹

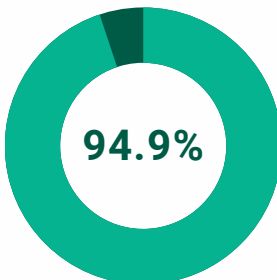
ALL-GIRL SCHOOLS FOSTER NURTURING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS According to a survey of all girl school students:



say they received **greater leadership opportunities** than their co-ed peers ¹²



feel their **opinions are respected** (compared to 58.1% of girls at coeducational public schools) ¹³



say they are motivated by their **desire to succeed outside of school** ¹³

Virtually all students at all-girl schools expect to earn a **four-year degree** and **more than two-thirds** expect to earn a **graduate or professional degree** ¹³

[9] Leary and 4Girls Foundation, "Mental Health and Girls of Color."
[10] Price and Khubchandani, "The Changing Characteristics of African-American Adolescent Suicides, 2001–2017."
[11] Leary and 4Girls Foundation, "Mental Health and Girls of Color."
[12] NCGS, "Why Girls' Schools Are More Relevant Than Ever."
[13] Holmgren and National Coalition of Girls' Schools, "Steeped in Learning: The Student Experience at All-Girls Schools."

The Ivy Solution

Ivy Preparatory Academy is proud to be a part of the solution in an era where the intersection of education and empowerment is more crucial than ever. Our innovative approach is designed to address the systemic challenges young women face, particularly in underrepresented communities, and to create a nurturing environment where girls of color can thrive academically and personally.

Here are some of the results of our promise to cultivate the potential within every scholar, preparing her to make a significant impact on the world:

One of our scholars received a **\$350,000 scholarship** to the prestigious Miss Porter School

80% of our scholars are reading at or above grade level

Our school met charter authorizer (SCSC) standards **every year** post-pandemic

Our school **outperformed** the state's progress score on the College Career Readiness Performance Index

The Ivy Solution

Ivy's debate team achieved **top ten rankings** and won community awards in the Atlanta Urban Debate League and the **Veritas Debate Institute**

Ivy is a member of **International Coalition of Girls Schools** & an Affiliate of the **Student Leadership Network of Young Women's Leadership Academies** in Georgia.

Ivy received the **Golden Radish Award** for extraordinary work in the Farm to School initiative by the Georgia Department of Education

Our scholars **earned second runner up** for Girls Basketball in the Metro Atlanta Charter Athletic League (2023 & 2024)

Ivy is the only Charter School for Girls in Georgia accredited by **Cognia**

Our scholars won **first place** in competitive cheer and dance competitions, and **high placements** in state track meets

These achievements highlight the success of our holistic approach and the dedication of our scholars, staff, and community. Together, we are building a brighter future, one empowered girl at a time.



IVY PREP
ACADEMY

Our **VISION**

Ivy Preparatory Academy cultivates female leaders who manifest change in the world.

Our **MISSION**

Ivy Preparatory Academy fosters a culture of collaboration, passion for learning, integrity, and servant leadership in an environment design especially for girls.

Our **VALUES**

Sisterhood

We believe in the honorable premise of unity and uplifting of young women in order to teach and assist them with building higher levels of self-worth, self-respect, self-esteem, self-awareness, and self-confidence.

Scholarship

We believe in well-rounded young women who possess the necessary academic skills and knowledge and are excited about learning.

Service

We believe that we as a network must serve and help each other, our scholars and their families, volunteers, and community partners through mutually beneficial arrangements. We recognize that our continued success is dependent on serving our stakeholders effectively.



OBJECTIVE 1

ESTABLISH STAFF CULTURE

Foster a vibrant workplace with professional standards that elevates the school environment and optimizes classroom instruction.

STRATEGIES

- Develop and enforce a **Professionalism Code** for all staff
- **Establish, promote, and hold staff accountable for an Ivy Code of Leadership** tailored specifically to an environment for female scholars
- Design and execute initiatives to **bridge gaps and strengthen relationships**



OUTCOME

Ivy Preparatory Academy will create a school environment where **staff are empowered and motivated**, enhancing classroom instruction and overall school performance. The professional culture will **attract and retain high-quality educators** committed to the school's mission.

OBJECTIVE 2

ENHANCE SCHOLAR CULTURE

Cultivate an uplifting education atmosphere where scholars thrive, collaborate, and display servant leadership within the school community.

STRATEGIES

- **Introduce and uphold The NEW Ivy Way** for scholars
- **Implement mentorship programs** to foster collaboration, support, and guidance among scholars
- **Embed restorative practices** to help scholars address harm and rebuild relationships
- **Promote service learning** to help scholars develop empathy and leadership skills
- **Foster an environment of open communication** where scholars feel comfortable expressing their ideas, concerns, feedback (e.g. suggestion boxes)



OUTCOME

Ivy Preparatory Academy will **see increased scholar engagement, collaboration, and leadership.** Scholars will thrive academically and socially, displaying leadership and a commitment to their school community, resulting in **higher retention, decreased discipline issues, and higher Ivy completion rates.**

OBJECTIVE 3

Empower Confidence & Foster Leadership

Instill confidence in scholars and nurture leadership abilities to empower girls holistically.

STRATEGIES

- **Formulate a Community Service Leadership Committee:** Establish a dedicated committee to design and oversee community service projects. This committee will define participation criteria, schedule activities, and identify specific skills to be developed through each initiative
- **Establish a Capstone Design Team:** Form a collaborative group comprising of teachers, community leaders, and partners. This team will focus on creating programs that enhance awareness and exposure for scholars, integrating real-world applications and community engagement into their learning experiences
- **Incorporate Confidence-Building Activities and Leadership Challenges:** Embed tailored exercises including etiquette and public speaking into the curriculum, implement reflection sessions for feedback, and celebrate scholar achievements to foster self-esteem, critical thinking, and confidence
- **Connect PBL with Community Leadership Challenges:** Engage scholars in community issues through competitions or projects that require them to propose solutions to real-world problems



OUTCOME

Ivy Preparatory Academy will empower its scholars to become **holistic leaders**. Graduates will demonstrate **increased self-esteem, leadership skills, and community involvement**, positioning them for success in their future educational and career endeavors.

OBJECTIVE 4

ENHANCE INSTRUCTION

Transform instructional delivery through integration of STEAM, 21st century learning skills, and culturally responsive content.

STRATEGIES

- Provide training on incorporating **interdisciplinary STEAM concepts** into lesson plans, designing project-based learning experiences, and integrating culturally responsive content into daily learning
- **Invest in educational infrastructure and resources** (e.g. , STEAM programming budget, PBL coach, and arts integration)
- **Forge partnerships with community organizations, cultural institutions, and STEAM-related industries** to enrich learning experiences, provide access to resources, and connect classroom learning to real-world contexts
- **Embed culturally relevant content, examples, and resources into the curriculum** to make learning meaningful, engaging, and inclusive for all scholars



OUTCOME

Scholars will be well-prepared for higher education and future careers, particularly in underrepresented STEM fields. Through an inclusive, creative, and innovative academic program, scholars will demonstrate consistent content mastery, particularly in Mathematics and Science.

OBJECTIVE 5

STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL FOUNDATION

Expand and diversify revenue sources to enhance IPA's financial resilience and improve its academic program.



STRATEGIES

- **Deliberately increase enrollment numbers** to fully utilize the facility's capacity, ensuring optimal use of space and resources
- **Optimize revenue-generating streams** that share the IPA campus with the broader community
- **Encourage Governing Board engagement with public, private, philanthropic, and granting partners** to increase financial and in-kind support where there is mutual alignment between IPA and partners
- **Explore asset valuation strategies** to increase CPF performance and better position IPA for renewal

OUTCOME

Achieving a robust financial foundation will ensure the **sustainability of the school's mission**, enabling continuous investment in student resources, infrastructure, and academic excellence.



Thank You

This strategic plan was developed through a stakeholder-informed process that included interviews, facilitated sessions, and surveys. We would like to extend our gratitude to the hundreds of scholars, alumnae, faculty, staff, community members, and board members who participated in the process. Your input has been vital to this plan and our future.

Thank you for your time, your honesty, your vision, and your support.

Let's Stay Connected

 www.ivyprepacademy.org

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