CAPITAL AREA SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS CHARTER SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026-2031









BUILDING ON EXCELLENCE – A ROADMAP FOR OUR FUTURE

Adopted by the CASA Board of Trustees | **June 22, 2026**

CAPITAL AREA SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS CHARTER SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN



Dear CASA Community,

Capital Area School for the Arts Charter School (CASA) was founded on a bold idea: that young artists thrive when they are challenged academically, inspired creatively, and supported by a community that believes in their potential. Every day, our students remind us why this mission matters. They bring curiosity, courage, and imagination into our classrooms and studios, and they push us to continually evolve as educators and leaders.

As CASA enters its next chapter, we recognize both the opportunities and responsibilities before us. Our school has grown in visibility and impact, and with that growth comes the need for a clear, intentional roadmap that will guide our decisions over the next five years. This strategic plan reflects that commitment. It is grounded in our mission, aligned with our vision, and shaped by the voices of students, families, faculty, staff, board members, alumni, and community partners.

Throughout this planning process, we engaged in honest reflection about our strengths, our challenges, and the aspirations we hold for CASA's future. The result is a set of strategic priorities that will strengthen academic and programmatic excellence, ensure longterm financial stability, expand our visibility and partnerships, and invest deeply in the faculty and staff who make our mission possible. These priorities are supported by six core pillars that define the essential domains of our work and provide the structure for our goals and initiatives.

This Strategic Plan is both a celebration of what we have built and a declaration of what we intend to achieve. It represents a five-year roadmap that will guide every dimension of our institution – from the arts disciplines we offer and the academic supports we provide, to the partnerships we cultivate, the technologies we adopt, and the resources we steward. At its core, this plan is about ensuring that CASA remains a place of excellence, equity, and opportunity for every student who chooses us.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed their time, insight, and passion to this process. Your voices shaped this plan, and your partnership will bring it to life. Together, we will ensure that CASA continues to grow, innovate, and inspire. We invite each of you to see yourselves in this work, and to join us as partners in making it a reality.

With appreciation and optimism,

Dr. George W. Ioannidis
CEO

Alicia McDonald
Board President

Erica Leonard
Principal

WHO WE ARE | OUR MISSION

CASA's mission is the foundation upon which every program, partnership, and decision is built. It reflects our unwavering commitment to our students and to the power of arts-integrated education to transform lives.

> *To provide students with a rich, rigorous, arts-infused high school program that enables them to succeed in college and careers.*

This mission speaks to the dual promise CASA makes to every student who walks through our doors: that they will be immersed in a creative, culturally rich environment, and that they will be equipped with the academic skills, habits of mind, and real-world experience necessary for long-term success.





WHERE WE ARE GOING | OUR VISION

While our mission grounds our daily work, our vision challenges us to imagine what CASA can become in the years ahead. It articulates the future we are collectively building — not only for our students, but for the field of arts education and the communities we serve. It is an aspirational statement that challenges us to reach further and aim higher.

> *To be a significant and innovative provider of multidisciplinary arts and academic education to creative students, attracting talented and motivated students and serving as a model for 21st-century learning.*

Realizing this vision requires sustained investment, intentional leadership, and a culture of continuous improvement. This Strategic Plan is our roadmap for doing exactly that — and for demonstrating to the broader educational community what is possible when artistic passion and academic excellence are pursued together.

The Pillars:

CASA'S CORE DOMAINS OF WORK

The following six pillars represent the foundational areas through which CASA fulfills its mission. They define the essential components of a high-quality arts and academic program and serve as the organizational structure for goals, initiatives, and measures of success.



01

Artistic Excellence & Program Growth/Expansion

CASA is committed to providing rigorous, conservatory-style arts instruction that nurtures creativity, mastery, and innovation. This pillar encompasses program development, interdisciplinary collaboration, performance and exhibition opportunities, and the continual evolution of arts pathways.

02

Academic Rigor

High expectations for academic achievement are central to CASA's model. This pillar focuses on curriculum alignment, instructional quality, assessment practices, and the integration of arts and academics to support student success in college and careers.

03

Equity, Access & Student Wellness

CASA strives to create an inclusive, supportive environment where all students feel valued, safe, and empowered. This pillar includes student support services, mental health and wellness, restorative practices, and equitable access to programs and opportunities.

04

Pathways & Postsecondary Success

CASA prepares students for life beyond high school by cultivating strong postsecondary pathways in the arts, higher education, and the workforce. This pillar includes college and career readiness, internships, dual enrollment, industry partnerships, and alumni engagement.

05

Community Partnerships & Visibility

CASA's success is strengthened by its relationships with sending districts, arts organizations, higher education institutions, families, and the broader community. This pillar focuses on outreach, communication, recruitment, public presence, and collaborative programming.

06

Facilities, Technology & Sustainability

A high-quality arts education requires safe, functional, and inspiring spaces, along with the technology and resources necessary for 21st-century learning. This pillar includes facilities planning, technology integration, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

HOW WE GOT HERE
OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This Strategic Plan was built from the ground up — shaped by the voices, experiences, and aspirations of the people who make CASA what it is. Our process was designed to ensure that the plan would reflect not the perspective of any single leader or committee, but the collective wisdom of our entire community. Students, families, faculty, staff, board members, alumni, and community partners were all participants in this process, and their contributions were essential to every insight and priority that emerged.

Community members participated in structured surveys designed to gather honest reflection and candid input. From these surveys, powerful themes emerged with clarity and consistency: a deep commitment to academic excellence; an affirmation of CASA's inclusive culture; a shared recognition of the need for long-term financial sustainability; and a desire to strengthen CASA's visibility and role within the broader community. Board members and school leaders provided critical governance-level perspective, offering insights into institutional growth, emerging challenges, and the metrics and milestones that will define success over the coming years.

The synthesis of this input led directly to the identification of the framework that organizes this strategic plan: the Six Pillars of Our Work and the Four Strategic Priorities. These are not abstract constructs — they are the direct product of what our community told us matters most. They represent the areas where CASA must grow, the investments we must make, and the outcomes we must achieve if we are to fulfill our mission and realize our vision for the next five years and beyond.





CASA'S STRENGTHS

(BASED ON STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK)

Throughout the planning process, clear and consistent strengths emerged across all stakeholder groups.

A TRANSFORMATIVE ARTS FOCUSED ENVIRONMENT

Across every stakeholder group, CASA is described as a place where creative students thrive. Respondents highlighted the school's deep artistic rigor, high quality instruction from passionate teachers, and a culture that nurtures creativity, identity, and self expression. Many emphasized that CASA's arts centered model is its greatest asset and core differentiator.

A SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Students, families, alumni, and staff consistently described CASA as emotionally safe, welcoming to all students, and inclusive of diverse identities. Many shared that CASA is a place where students "find their people," reinforcing the school's reputation as a community where young artists feel seen, valued, and supported.

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND STAFF

Stakeholders repeatedly emphasized the strength of CASA's relationships. Teachers and staff are described as knowing students deeply, going "above and beyond," and creating a small school environment that fosters trust, connection, and personal growth.

A UNIQUE DOWNTOWN LOCATION THAT ENHANCES LEARNING

Nearly every group identified CASA's Harrisburg location as a strategic advantage. The proximity to arts organizations, museums, theatres, and government agencies provides realworld learning experiences and supports CASA's "city as classroom" model. Stakeholders expressed a desire to leverage this asset even more intentionally.

STRONG POSTSECONDARY OUTCOMES

Parents, alumni, and board members highlighted CASA's success in preparing students for life after high school — including acceptance into competitive arts programs, scholarships, and professional artistic careers. Many noted the growth in confidence, independence, and creative identity that students experience during their time at CASA.

DEEP COMMUNITY GOODWILL AND SUPPORT

Across donors, alumni, parents, and board members, there is a strong belief in CASA's mission and a desire to support the school through volunteering, partnerships, and philanthropy. Stakeholders expressed enthusiasm for more communication and more opportunities to engage with the school's work.

These strengths affirm CASA's identity and provide a powerful foundation for the goals and priorities that follow.

ABOUT THIS PLAN



CASA stands at a remarkable intersection of artistic exploration and academic achievement. As a high school dedicated to arts-infused learning, CASA draws students who are creative by nature, motivated by purpose, and ready to be challenged in ways that traditional educational environments often cannot provide. For years, CASA has fulfilled its promise to those students, and the fruits of that commitment are visible in every student who graduates prepared, passionate, and positioned to make their mark.

THE PLAN IS ORGANIZED AROUND SIX PILLARS THAT DESCRIBE THE ESSENTIAL AREAS OF CASA'S WORK:

- Artistic Excellence & Program Growth/Expansion
- Academic Rigor
- Equity, Access & Student Wellness
- Pathways & Postsecondary Success
- Community Partnerships & Visibility
- Facilities, Technology & Sustainability

These pillars reflect the full scope of what it means to operate a high-performing, arts-centered school—they are interconnected, mutually reinforcing, and essential to our mission.

WITHIN AND ACROSS THESE PILLARS, THE PLAN IDENTIFIES FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES THAT CONCENTRATE OUR FOCUSED ACTION OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS:

- Strengthening academic and programmatic excellence
- Ensuring long-term financial stability
- Expanding visibility and community engagement
- Recruiting, retaining, and developing outstanding faculty and staff.

The relationship between the pillars and the priorities is intentional. The Six Pillars describe where CASA does its work—the domains that define us as an institution. The Four Strategic Priorities describe how we will direct our energy and investment to advance that work in the years ahead. Together, they form a framework that is comprehensive enough to capture CASA's full complexity, yet focused enough to drive meaningful, measurable progress. We invite you to engage with this plan, to hold us accountable to it, and to partner with us in bringing it to life.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:
FOCUS AREAS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

While the pillars provide the structure for CASA's work, the Strategic Priorities provide focus. They identify the cross-cutting themes that will drive the school's growth and improvement over the next five years. These priorities emerged from the feedback we received from the CASA community and reflect the most urgent and high-impact opportunities for the school community.

1

Strengthen Academic and Programmatic Excellence, Accountability, and Opportunities

CASA will deepen the quality, consistency, and alignment of its arts and academic programs, ensuring that all students have access to rigorous instruction, meaningful opportunities, and clear expectations for success.

2

Ensure Long-Term Financial Stability and Growth

CASA will build a resilient financial foundation by strengthening enrollment, diversifying revenue, expanding partnerships, and planning strategically for future needs in staffing, facilities, and technology.

3

Expand Visibility, Partnerships, and Community Engagement

CASA will enhance its presence across the region by cultivating strong relationships with districts, families, arts organizations, and community partners, increasing awareness of its impact and expanding opportunities for students.

4

Recruit, Retain, and Develop Faculty and Staff

CASA will invest in the people who make its mission possible by strengthening professional development, improving communication and collaboration, and ensuring a supportive, sustainable work environment.

INITIATIVES BY STRATEGIC PRIORITY:
HOW WE WILL ADDRESS OUR PRIORITIES

The following initiatives outline how CASA will advance each Strategic Priority over the next five years

1 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: STRENGTHEN ACADEMIC AND PROGRAMMATIC EXCELLENCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop, refine, and vertically align arts and academic curricula with each other, to ensure coherence across grade levels, alignment to state standards and postsecondary expectations, and integration of contemporary industry practices, guided by a curriculum development calendar outlining when each course will be reviewed and updated. *(Academic Rigor, Artistic Excellence & Program Growth/Expansion)*
- Explore and pilot new or expanded arts programs (e.g., digital media, arts technology, arts management) based on student demand and workforce trends. *(Artistic Excellence & Program Growth/Expansion)*
- Expand dual enrollment, AP, and college-credit opportunities to increase postsecondary readiness. *(Pathways & Postsecondary Success)*

2 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: ENSURE LONGTERM FINANCIAL STABILITY AND GROWTH

- Strengthen recruitment partnerships with sending districts, including school visits, showcases, and collaborative programming. *(Community Partnerships & Visibility)*
- Develop a longterm facilities and technology plan that addresses space needs, safety, accessibility, and future growth while strengthening classroom technology and exploring expanded or renovated spaces to support program and student needs. *(Facilities, Technology & Sustainability)*
- Review and implement systems to improve operational efficiency, including data management, scheduling, and resource allocation. *(Facilities, Technology & Sustainability)*
- Strengthen financial planning and revenue diversification, including grants, partnerships, and fundraising. *(Facilities, Technology & Sustainability)*

3 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: EXPAND VISIBILITY, PARTNERSHIPS, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Enhance the visibility of CASA's showcases, exhibitions, and performances by strengthening communication and outreach efforts to more effectively highlight student work and elevate CASA's regional presence. *(Artistic Excellence & Program Growth/Expansion)*
- Strengthen and expand partnerships with local arts organizations, nonprofits, and highereducation institutions to provide masterclasses, residencies, internships, and realworld learning experiences that enhance programming and student opportunities. *(Pathways to Postsecondary Success)*
- Enhance communication with families to ensure all parents and caregivers understand available supports and opportunities, and strengthen family engagement through workshops, performances, and community events. *(Equity, Access & Student Wellness)*
- Develop and implement a comprehensive communications and marketing strategy that elevates CASA's brand and impact, strengthens alumni engagement for mentorship and networking, and enhances the school's digital presence across its website, social media, and storytelling platforms. *(Community Partnerships & Visibility)*

4 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: EXPAND VISIBILITY, PARTNERSHIPS, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Provide targeted professional development in instructional strategies, arts integration, and data-informed teaching to include formative & Summative assessment practices, leadership development, trauma-informed practices and student support strategies. *(Academic Rigor; Equity, Access & Student Wellness)*
- Establish an annual feedback loop that gathers meaningful input from faculty and staff to identify the factors that influence recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction, and to inform strategies that strengthen the overall employee experience. *(Facilities, Technology & Sustainability)*
- Evaluate CASA's overall compensation package—including salary, benefits, and employee perks—against comparable local and regional schools to ensure competitiveness and to inform strategies that strengthen faculty and staff recruitment, retention, and satisfaction. *(Facilities, Technology & Sustainability)*
- Develop a comprehensive employee recognition plan that celebrates faculty and staff contributions through multiple modes of acknowledgment—including formal recognition at Board of Trustees meetings—to strengthen organizational culture, reinforce a sense of value and belonging, and support longterm retention. *(Facilities, Technology & Sustainability)*
- Build a staff wellness program that includes mental-health supports, workload management strategies, and opportunities for community-building among faculty and staff. *(Facilities, Technology, and Sustainability)*

Together, these initiatives represent the actionable steps that will move CASA from vision to implementation.

CONCLUSION

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

CASA's Strategic Plan is more than a set of goals — it is a shared commitment to the students, families, educators, and community partners who make our mission possible. The initiatives outlined in this plan reflect the strengths identified by our stakeholders, the aspirations we hold for our future, and the responsibility we carry as stewards of an arts infused public education.

As we move into the next five years, CASA will approach this work with transparency, collaboration, and accountability. Progress will be reviewed regularly by school leadership and the Board of Trustees, and updates will be shared with our community to ensure that this plan remains a living, responsive roadmap. The work ahead is ambitious, but it is grounded in the same spirit that has defined CASA since its founding — creativity, excellence, and a belief in the transformative power of the arts. Together, we will continue to build a school where young artists thrive, where innovation is encouraged, and where every student is prepared to succeed in college, career, and life.

We look forward to partnering with you as we bring this vision to life.

