Weave a Vibrant Learning Community
Strategic Directions 2020-2025
A Strategic Planning Committee composed of trustees, faculty, and administrators has spent the last thirteen months listening to Lick-Wilmerding High School faculty, staff, students, parents, board, and alumni about their thoughts on the school’s priorities for the next five years. The committee relied heavily on the findings from our recent accreditation self study, spent time reviewing longitudinal data and researched the educational landscape of the San Francisco Bay Area and the United States. Common themes emerged, in particular, providing holistic support to our student and adult community and preparing students to successfully navigate an increasingly complex society.

We are pleased to present to you Weave a Vibrant Learning Community: Strategic Directions 2020-2025.

At the center of this plan is the theme of weaving: the meshing of the LWHS community in a myriad of ways for the benefit of each person, the whole community, and our society. Educating in the current political and social climate is one of the greatest challenges faced by schools today. The concept of building a nation of weavers to help foster community and a sense of belonging is critical in these difficult and often polarizing times. Just as we teach students to design and build in the technical arts program, our goal is to teach and inspire students to build communities marked by inclusion and belonging.

The recent accomplishments listed to the right lay a strong foundation for this ambitious strategic plan, which will further the school’s commitment to educate for life, nurture the diversity, equity, and inclusiveness of our community, and deepen the school’s support of our outstanding educators. These three threads, when woven together, support a school that is resilient, compassionate, innovative, and fosters the next generation of weavers.

I look forward to partnering with you as we Weave a Vibrant Learning Community.

Eric J. Temple
Head of School

As LWHS celebrates its 125th year, this next chapter of our school builds on recent accomplishments and enduring strengths, including:

Our diverse and vibrant community of learners that mirrors the Bay Area and broadens the perspectives of each community member.

A diverse, talented, and committed faculty and staff who collaborate, innovate, and model their passion for learning.

An outstanding academic program and an ever-evolving Head, Heart, Hands philosophy that asks students to use knowledge and skills to address the most complex societal issues.

Our nationally recognized technical arts program that builds upon the founding principles of the school, teaching students to solve problems and demonstrate resilience.

Eric J. Temple
Head of School

Our commitment to public purpose exemplified by the work of The Center for Civic Engagement.

Broad interest in the school, enabling LWHS to craft a learning community that embodies our mission.

A solid financial foundation and increased charitable giving to support the school and its commitment to access and success for all of our students.

A beautiful urban campus marked by innovative design, a sustainable footprint, and spaces that foster collaboration and connection.
LWHS educates for life. We nurture the healthy development of the whole person and inspire both students and adults to become weavers—those who actively build communities.

Through small actions and large initiatives, members of the LWHS community will learn to weave their relationships, skills, and knowledge to meet the challenges of a changing world.

LWHS has always focused on educating the whole person through its Head, Heart, Hands philosophy, which is fundamental to our strong academic program. The public purpose program is integral to realizing this vision. Additionally, educational experiences that foster empathy for others, focus on the physical and emotional well-being of our community, and promote integrated thinking will prepare students for life. The LWHS experience enables students to navigate adult life well beyond high school and college.

LWHS will:

- Nurture a community of passionate lifelong learners who strive for a sense of purpose in their work and gain fulfillment through healthy relationships.
- Guide students to collaborate, participate, and lead in their work for a more just world.
- Support the social and emotional health of LWHS students through fostering a sense of community, self-awareness, empathy, and inclusion.
- Engage the school community, including alumni, in a lifelong dialogue and partnership.

Using the building blocks of the current Habits of Mind—Imagine, Inquire, Collaborate, Persist, and Reflect—LWHS will reassess and broaden the Habits of Mind needed to develop the whole person and educate for life.

With these Habits of Mind, LWHS will review and enhance current programs (such as public purpose, equity, social justice, antiracism, wellness, belonging, and environmental sustainability) to optimize impact and promote innovation.

As LWHS assesses current programming and develops new initiatives, we will prioritize students’ physical well-being and mental health.

LWHS will assess our use of time (both daily and over four years), to ensure that it aligns with the Habits of Mind and supports a healthy learning environment.

LWHS will expand engagement with our multi-generational alumni community to create lifelong dialogue, relationships, and ongoing teaching, learning, and mentoring experiences.
LWHS is well positioned to attract a talented pool of students and faculty from all backgrounds to join our unique educational community.

We enroll a diverse student body, hire and develop a diverse faculty and staff, and support the extended LWHS community through intentional equity and inclusion programs. LWHS’ long-standing commitment to a dynamic, socio-economically diverse student body is nationally recognized. A key tool in building this community is the LWHS Flexible Tuition program. We aspire to support 40% of our students with an average tuition discount of 70%. Additionally, through extensive outreach, LWHS strives to create a community of learners from all walks of life.

Beyond Flexible Tuition, fostering a deep sense of belonging is critical for individuals to thrive in our school. Belonging celebrates differences and allows one to express and see their authentic self reflected in the community. Prioritizing equity and inclusion requires significant resources and support for educational programs, professional development, community events, and other potential initiatives.

Extend our efforts to create a student, faculty, and staff community that reflects the diversity of the San Francisco Bay Area in its many facets.

Continually strive to ensure that each person, student and adult, has equitable access to the resources they need to thrive.

Actively build a culture of inclusiveness and belonging throughout the community.

goals LWHS will:

1. Continue to prioritize Flexible Tuition as mission critical and seek new avenues to reach the desired goal of 40% of the student body receiving Flexible Tuition with an average tuition discount of 70%.

2. Regularly assess the holistic student and adult experience at LWHS—from outreach to onboarding to beyond—to foster a sense of belonging. Identify other resources needed to thrive at LWHS.

3. Deliver robust equity and inclusion programming to nurture this diverse and dynamic community. Equip students, faculty, staff, and parenting adults with the tools to engage deeply in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work.

strategies
Skilled, knowledgeable, compassionate, and motivated educators are at the heart of the LWHS experience. Recruiting, retaining, and supporting such a vibrant adult community is integral to the foundation of a student’s LWHS education. We hire talented lifelong learners who model this skill for each other and our students. Continued investment in the faculty and staff in support of their professional development and growth is a cornerstone of an LWHS experience for its employees.

Continue to recruit and retain an exemplary, diverse faculty and staff in light of the anticipated shift in age demographics among teachers.

Strengthen the bonds of our community where all employees of the school feel valued for their contributions and understand their roles and responsibilities.

Explore and provide multiple paths for professional growth to attract and support lifelong learners.

Evaluate the current compensation model at LWHS for its effectiveness in recruiting, retaining and supporting an exemplary faculty and staff. The Bay Area cost of living, the connection between compensation for teaching and other responsibilities, and non-salary benefits will be particular areas of focus.

Enhance current communications and other initiatives to support a diverse workplace built on trust, transparency, and equity.

Support the professional growth of faculty and staff by identifying new and unique opportunities, including avenues for advancement for those in underrepresented groups.
Making the Future, our last Strategic Plan, achieved a wide range of goals, including: the adoption of our schoolwide Habits of Mind, the growth of the school to serve 550 students increased financial strength, and the completion of a $28M capital campaign to build our new net-zero 52,000 square foot main classroom building. LWHS is in a strong position to continue to build upon its strengths and recent accomplishments.

The Make the Future Capital Campaign resulted in a new classroom building that significantly increased the school’s ability to meet its mission.

One new and three renovated science labs
Six new classrooms
New spacious College Counseling offices and meeting space
New athletic locker rooms
Public gallery for student work
Renovated courtyard
Flexible work spaces for student and adult collaboration
On grade entry to the school to increase accessibility
New larger dance studio
Ten new collaborative workspaces for students and adults
Upgraded security, A/V and safety systems
New administration and department offices
New athletic locker rooms
Centrally located and redesigned Center for Civic Engagement and Learning Strategies Center

Imagine, Inquire, Collaborate, Persist, Reflect—these Habits of Mind constitute a set of overarching skills that help students meet the educational and societal complexities of the 21st Century. They provide a construct for students to learn and demonstrate skills that give life to the mission’s emphasis on educating the whole student. Through deliberate scaffolding from freshman to senior year, students gain an increased ability to apply these habits of mind to solving intellectual and personal challenges. Moreover, schoolwide Habits of Mind create a shared purpose and common vocabulary for curricular and pedagogical initiatives.

Learn more about the Institute for Habits of Mind at www.habitsofmind.org
LWHS believes that the privilege of a great education comes with the responsibility of working to create a more just world.

Through the school’s four-year Public Purpose Program, comprised of community service requirements as well as classes with a service focus, students learn to give back to our communities and discover how they can make a difference in their own lives by making a difference in other people’s lives. Additionally, each year students participate in workshops and programming during our Sam Mihara Days of Justice. Alumnus Sam Mihara ’51 was imprisoned in a Japanese Internment Camp during World War II and has since dedicated his life to dismantling prejudice and hate. He embodies the spirit of our Public Purpose Program.

For more details about how Lick-Wilmerding High School is working to create a more just world, as well as other initiatives from The Center for Civic Engagement, please visit lwhs.org/community and lwhs.org/thecenter.

Flexible Tuition supports Lick-Wilmerding High School’s mission to educate a highly motivated, economically diverse student body who learn from each other’s experiences and perspectives, and enrich the learning environment for everyone. To fully realize this mission, robust Flexible Tuition is critical to enable a significant number of students to attend LWHS whose families otherwise would not have the financial means to do so. In this spirit, we aim to provide Flexible Tuition to 40% of all students at an average tuition discount of 70%, thereby ensuring that LWHS’s commitment to access is a national model that motivates other schools to promote economic diversity.

When asked if I am pessimistic or optimistic about the future, my answer is always the same: If you look at the science about what is happening on earth and aren’t pessimistic, you don’t understand data. But if you meet the people who are working to restore this earth and the lives of the poor, and you aren’t optimistic, you haven’t got a pulse. What I see everywhere in the world are ordinary people willing to confront despair, power, and incalculable odds in order to restore some semblance of grace, justice, and beauty to this world.”

—PAUL HAWKEN

Flexible Tuition Statistics:

- Launched in 1990.
- Currently 35% of all students receive Flexible Tuition at an average tuition discount of 70%.
- $6.5 million awarded in Flexible Tuition for the 2019-2020 school year.
- The Flexible Tuition program accounts for 25% of LWHS’ Operating Budget.

The chasm between America’s top income earners and the middle class is widening in nearly every major metropolitan area, with San Francisco leading the way.”

—BLOOMBERG 3/22/19
Weaving is the central metaphor and theme of Lick-Wilmerding High School’s new strategic direction.

First inspired by David Brooks’ Op Ed in The New York Times titled, “A Nation of Weavers,” and his subsequent work with the Aspen Institute, Weave: The Social Fabric Project, weaving as a metaphor has blossomed into a visual anchor about the many ways we work to fulfill the LWHS mission. Weaving is a physical act, much like the work we do with our hands in technical arts classes. It also calls to mind the ways we form connections, as well as how we teach students to build and actively participate in these interconnected communities. We can be taught to weave, and not just to lead. Weaving means empowering others to be part of the whole. The strength of the LWHS community relies on both the individual strands and the fabric formed by coming together for a common purpose.

Weaving is a way of life and a state of mind, not a set of actions. It’s about the spirit of caring you bring to each interaction with someone else. It’s a willingness to be open and loving, whether you get anything in return. As humans, we long for honest, deep connection. Weavers make the effort to build those connections and make others feel valued.

—WEAVE: THE SOCIAL FABRIC PROJECT

Strategic Plan Committee:
Tricia Stone (Chair)
Randy Barnett
Kim Drew
Jack Chin
Alisa Fetterick
Lucinda Lee Katz
Nancy Kehoe
Oscar King
Will Madison ’11
Wally MacDermid ’87
Tina Misra
Staci Slaughter
Eric Temple
Tanisha Williams
Lara Witter

Sub Committee Members:
Anne Condren
Barre Fong
Catherine Fong
Adnan Iftekhar
Michecia Jones
Anton Kikowski
Cara Moshay
Avery Pickford
Mika Varma
Kate Wiley
Nikkia Young

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LWHS Mission

A private school with public purpose, Lick-Wilmerding High School develops the head, heart, and hands of highly motivated students from all walks of life, inspiring them to become lifelong learners who contribute to the world with confidence and compassion.