



Chicago Hope Academy Strategic Plan 2023 - 2024

President's Message

Hope is on the rise. With dozens of families inquiring about seat availability at CHA, we are proud to recognize that our positive reputation continues to spread throughout Chicago. I give plenty of credit to our staff, but I must also recognize the parents who promote our school. They are proud of the way we helped their students feel loved, valued, prepared, deserving of firm correction and worthy of grace. Parents recognize that we see the goodness in their students and that we look to bring that goodness to the forefront of their identity.

While Hope does a great job of loving students and creating a sense of belonging, we must raise the bar of expectations for this generation of students. Disappointingly, today's cultural norms and political climate have entitled many people (adults and children) to believe that we deserve things simply for existing. This is not *Chicago Participation Medal Academy*...we will not be giving out participation medals. We intend to advance the Hope culture so that our students are challenged to meet high expectations and embrace the moral virtue of hard work. We will ask our students to take pride in doing the little things diligently, considering, "*Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much*" (Luke 16:10).

With work-ethic and integrity in mind, our students will also be pushed to be respectful because – rich or poor, first generation or legacy student – it costs \$0 to treat someone with respect. I regularly watch the potential for wisdom transference vanish as the youth ignore the wealth of experience all around them – preferring the entertainment of cellular devices to conversations with adults. Upholding Hope traditions, our students will turn in their phones during school hours, introduce themselves with firm handshakes to leave lasting first impressions, and understand that, on principle, those who have come before us deserve our respect and courtesy.

As a champion of good cheer and conviviality, I also expect our students to have a good attitude...because attitude matters a lot in this world. There is an uphill battle that many of our students are climbing as they compete for university seats, scholarships, and career opportunities against other students who may have had more financial support, educational privilege, or social advantages at their disposal. A great attitude, an optimistic perspective, and a posture of gratitude can turn what our students **have** into **enough** as they patiently or hurriedly march uphill toward an improved life.

While coupling ambition with character, my Hope is for students to become impressively introspective and self-aware as they struggle through varying levels of adversity. I pray that greatness and power will arise within them as they change that adversity into prosperity. While financial prosperity is a pursuit I support as students look to improve the socioeconomic status of their families, I pray that they find prosperity in their relationships: Their relationship with God, with their families, and with their peers. As we build relationships with the students of Hope, let's create a social platform for them to stand upon, a powerful network for them to leverage, and a community of peace where the currency of trust brings out the best in each of them.

Make No Small Plans,

Ike Muzikowski, President and Principal, Chicago Hope Academy

MISSION

Chicago Hope Academy is a college and life preparatory high school dedicated to nurturing and challenging the whole person – body, mind, and spirit – to the glory of God. We seek to provide a high-caliber, affordable, Christian educational experience to motivated families.

VISION

While Chicago Hope students will grow spiritually and academically, they will be celebrated for shining the light of Christ to the world by pursuing a passion beyond the classroom -- athletic excellence, artistic creativity, civic engagement, or philanthropic ambition.

VALUES

Embody Christ
Keep education high-quality and affordable
Celebrate the pursuit of a passion
Encourage future-mindedness
Facilitate affordable college admittance and persistence
Equip for career preparedness
Ensure social-emotional health
Establish a community of connection
Model love, forgiveness, and patience

Strategic Plan 2023 - 2024

Development and Stewardship

- Guide and support the Chief Development Officer in order to exceed all fundraising goals, including donor retention and donor stewardship.
- Patiently expand the Development Office in order to grow the CHA donor base
- Strategically steward the gifts of foundations (Harold C. Smith, McS Charitable, Grace & Mercy, McCormick, MIGMIR) in order to competitively submit applications for renewal.
- Leverage the role of Marketing and Communications Director to strengthen the Hope brand with a dual focus on donor retention and new recurring donors.
- Identify, package, and pitch ten naming right opportunities for Hope supporters.
- Develop processes across all departments to further solidify Hope's internal structure
- With over half of our students receiving or on-the-waitlist for the Invest in Kids Scholarship Program, raise ample funding to cover all scholarships through the various Tax Credit Scholarship platforms such as Empower Illinois.
- Collaborate with the Untapped Potential Project and Trade Unions to form a committee that will generate a feasibility study for a potential capital campaign to construct a new building on the West Campus (with Welding, HVAC, Plumbing, Electrician, and Carpentry bays).
- Effectively execute a Housing Education Initiative with Wintrust Bank in order to generate interest in larger scale real estate investment projects near our West Campus. ○ With UPP and Wintrust advancements in mind, generate a plan for real estate acquisition in the blocks adjacent to the West Campus. Create a vision to build offices and housing that will increase the positive Hope impact within the community.
- Collaborate with the Chicago Lions in the capital campaign effort to build a second field and bubble on the undeveloped land owned by Hope and Lions on Polk Street. ● Strengthen and steward our relationship with Special Olympics Chicago to increase brand name recognition as a place of inclusion, love, and kindness while also expanding our donor base.

School Operations and Culture

Academic

- Foster healthy relationships and formalize feedback and check-in strategies to ensure a fantastic workplace environment for our staff. With 20 of 23 teachers returning and 18 of 18 key administrators returning, Hope had the strongest year of retention in school history. Leverage staff connectivity and experience to innovate and enhance the Hope experience for all stakeholders.
- Empower the Six Department Heads (Science, Math, Literature, History, Spanish, Bible) to collaboratively lead the faculty with our Deans.
- Execute curriculum deliverables for 10 Advanced Placement, multiple Honors courses, and 10 Elective courses, General Education classes, and Academic Support classes for our diverse academic community.
- Balance learning track distinction and blended classrooms placements to ensure instructional efficiencies while also facilitating inclusion and community for all learners.
- Launch a Trades Pathway course in collaboration with the Untapped Potential Project and labor union partnerships. Maintain our credibility as a College Prep High School while also expanding our
- Launch two computer science courses with the Microsoft TEALS program and pursue additional

opportunities to increase STEM exposure and curriculum access to our students.

- Empower our Diverse Learning Specialist to educate our instructional staff to celebrate academic growth as well as academic success. Test, track, and inspire our learners with the highest growth potential to push their limits by celebrating effort, determination, and consistency.
- Apply for grants to secure a full time Arts Director/instructor position for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Collaborate with Special Olympics Chicago, OneChance Illinois and other thought leaders to secure funding and high levels of programmatic confidence to launch a Special Education Program for 3-7 students in the fall of 2024.

Spiritual:

- Maintain high expectations for our Spiritual Life Director (Senior Bible Teacher) and Dean of School Culture to build a community that prioritizes the pursuit of spiritual growth.
- Ensure students have access to scripture reading, spiritual mentorship, honest reflection, and emotional support through Discipleship Groups, Chapel Services, Worship Nights, Bible Studies, and Youth Group partnerships with city churches.
- Increase the influence of our Spiritual Life Team in order for our student leaders to shape culture at Hope.
- Coordinate strategies between the Social-Emotional Counselor, Deans, administrators, and teachers to facilitate trauma-informed wrap around services for our students and families.
- Volunteering and engagement
 - Require 100% of students to volunteer with Special Olympics Chicago once each semester.
 - Require seniors to participate in two full service days (one with Feed My Starving Children) in order
 - Explore partnerships to re-launch spring break mission trips in Mexico and/or Puerto Rico for small groups of students.
 - Complete 2 large group service activities with Tri Taylor Community Association and the 28th Ward.
- Ensure a spiritual sincerity pervades the Hope Retreat experience

College, Career, and the Hope Network:

- Determine a point person to launch a Hope Advisory Board or Hope Junior Board to increase the support and collaboration between Hope supporters and full time staff members.
- Facilitate strategy sessions between our Board, Development Office, and our Career Advancement Director to generate high leverage networking opportunities as we build out a Corporate Partnership Strategy – internships, corporate scholarships, mentoring, and industry exposure.
- Track student summer activity, job experience, volunteer experience, and program enrollment in order to easily facilitate resume building workshops with volunteers and career advancement staff.
- Strengthen partnerships with Wheaton College, Moody Bible Institute, Olivet Nazarene University, and UIC as we guarantee each student attends an on-campus college visit each school year.
- Facilitate full day and overnight visits for small groups of students to University of Chicago, U of I Urbana-Champaign, Notre Dame, Northwestern, Calvin College, and additional out of state schools.
- Mobilize Volunteers to support in the college application process with a particular focus on personal statement writing and financial viability for college selections.
- Leverage Hope Board and Hope supporter expertise to explore Certificate Program pathways and opportunities in the STEM field.
- Activate the Director of Alumni Engagement position to ensure continued high rates of collegiate

persistence for Hope graduates. Strategically connect our alumni with wrap-around support and social resources if they have left school due to financial difficulty or alternate circumstances.

- Uphold the culture of respect and strong first impressions within the student body in order to make a lasting, positive impression on Hope guests, working professionals, mentors, Hope supporters, and potential employers.
- Host a series of school wide workshops that teach students the interview techniques, dining etiquette, golf etiquette, and expectations related to professional courtesies.

Athletics and Extracurriculars:

- Maintain high levels of athletic participation across all eighteen Hope sports programs.
- Commit to the prioritization of sportsmanship, noble conduct, and respect as competitors
- Create cohesive branding via social media and team traditions
- Continue developing partnerships with organizations that promote participation in sports and activities that recognize underrepresentation from inner-city communities: Crew, Archery, Lacrosse, Golf, and Chess.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Steward relationships with 8th Grade Counselors and Scholarship Organizations as our Admissions Office experiences a high volume of applications.
- Pair families with volunteer advisors for college financial planning sessions
- Host First Fridays morning coffee sessions for parents to meet with Hope Administration for Q&A and connectivity. Host monthly parent community events at the Athletic Center to build relationships between parents and staff as well as increase parent-to-parent connectivity.
- Continue to host Parent Teacher Conferences with incredibly high levels of hospitality, friendliness, and encouragement each semester.
- Host New Family Welcome BBQ, grade level Back To School Nights, Senior Family Activities Week,

Campus Improvements

● **West Campus**

- Collaborate with Special Olympics Chicago to determine how developments can be supported through TIF funding. Hosting large events for the Special Olympics Athletes would be wonderful for the East Garfield Park neighborhood.
 - Astrourfing of the field inside of the track
 - Installation of bleachers on the west side of the track
 - Building of a field house underneath the bleachers.
 - Lights installation to allow for 6-9PM programming similar to evening activities taking place at Altgeld Park and at the Lions for Hope field.

● **East Campus**

- Build a computer lab in the College Counseling room to be utilized throughout the day and for after school study hall
- Renovate spaces within the Rectory to create an inviting environment for the Development Department and Career Advancement Department.
 - Repaint the entire school while producing new scripture verse wall art and murals through Hope artists in our Creative Arts course.
 - Complete roof and HVAC repairs.
 - Continue to pursue grants to enhance the safety of our school with

Security Cameras and Building Access improvements.

- Renovate spaces in the Convent for the UPP program.

Finance & Operations

- Build a model for a rolling 3 year forecast to budget for capital projects and improvements and ensure Hope can withstand financial shocks
- Finalize our process for tuition collection for all students
- Review budget and look for any strategic gaps where we can create efficiency ○ Academic Budget – ensure taking advantage of all education discounts
 - Athletic Budget - Utilize all connectivity across teams to ensure best athletics package deals
 - Special initiatives - Look for any taxation or spending inefficiencies that can be eliminated over the long-term, even if the short-term is costly
- **Legal**
 - Work with lawyers to finalize policies and procedures for Hope
 - Establish one attorney on consistent YOY retainer
 - Finalize Hope's faculty and staff handbook, updated yearly to stay up with policy

Marketing Committee

- **Materials**
 - Build Hope presentation
 - Build Hope viewbook
 - Build Hope virtual tour
 - Build Hope annual plan
- **Social Media**
 - Continue Student of the week posts
 - Continue Athlete of the week posts
 - Continue Words of Hope initiative
- **Longer reads initiative**
 - Post articles / blogs that go in a "News" section of the website
- **Enhanced Open House events**
 - Increase awareness among local middle schools and feeder schools ○ Continue outreach to local youth groups and sports teams