



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

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MISSION & VISION SUMMARY

DEAR FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS:

It is hard to fully appreciate the impact that the last three years has had on our nation, our communities and each of us individually. The COVID-19 pandemic presented our families and communities with challenges that were unimaginable only a few years ago. We also saw protesters in Rhode Island and across the nation and world take a stand against anti-Black racism. The Black Lives Matter protests of 2020 took place against a backdrop of rising political extremism that has left many in our community feeling unsafe and vulnerable.

While through it all, Inspiring Minds has weathered the storms with a steadfast commitment to our students and families – and with the generous help of thousands of volunteers, donations, and community grants - these shared hardships have presented opportunities for our organization to examine our own history and to be intentional about our future. Nearly sixty years ago, a small group of Providence residents began volunteering in neighborhood schools. Today, more than 500 volunteers touch the lives of over 3,200 students across the state and across five different programs. We have seen tremendous growth over the years, but with this growth in programming and impact comes a greater responsibility to ensure that we are also growing and improving in how we show up as a member of our community. We are proud of Inspiring Minds' legacy and the role that we have played in helping prepare students to succeed academically. We now want to take the further step and intentionally strive to be an anti-racist organization. The strategic plan that follows reflects that intention.

As the Board of Directors embarked on the strategic planning process, we recognized the inherent power dynamics involved and made the decision to prioritize the voices of community members and those most impacted by racism. We sought the input of our families, stakeholders, and other community members and collaborated closely and shared decision making with our committed Inspiring Minds staff members. We began to ask ourselves how best to use our resources, what goals we should set for ourselves, and how we would know if we were doing the right thing and doing it well.

What soon became clear is both intimidating and exciting – we don't know all the answers! We had to admit to ourselves that we don't know exactly what it will mean for us to become an anti-racist organization – and that ambiguity can be uncomfortable. A strategic plan, after all, is supposed to provide a roadmap for an organization to follow. Yet, we are leaning into this ambiguity and embarking on a growth journey together. We have much to learn, but we are confident that this challenge will only strengthen the organization and benefit our students, families, and community.

We invite you, our friends and supporters, to embark on this journey of learning with us. We want to hear from you about how we are doing, but even more so, we invite you to join us in this work. Together, we can be the village that empowers students to succeed in school and in life.



Kim Bright
Board Chair



Melissa Emidy
Executive Director

ABOUT US

Inspiring Minds delivers effective programs that build academic and social-emotional skills using a developmental relationships framework.

We serve a diverse population of students who are exceptional, intelligent, and resilient. We believe all students deserve an educational environment that fosters a sense of belonging and purpose that is shared with everyone who is part of the school community and the community at large.

We recognize the impact that systematic barriers such as racism, poverty, housing insecurity, and hunger have on learning, especially in under-resourced schools. Therefore, we work in partnership with school districts, institutions of higher education, civic groups, and the community at large to provide quality programs that empower students to succeed and thrive in school and life.

While we serve students in grades PK-12, we focus much of our efforts on our youngest students because we understand that the foundational skills learned in the early years are a crucial indicator of future success. For example, research has found that students who read by third grade are more likely to perform well in other subjects, and those who do not read at grade level in third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010)

We also recognize the importance of cultivating a diverse teacher workforce; therefore, we offer programming to aspiring educators- those young people who want to make a difference in our schools in the future. There is a large body of research that suggests there are significant benefits to a diverse teacher workforce. Teachers of color are more likely to set high expectations for students of color. (Ferguson, 2003) They bring cultural contexts when determining instructional strategies by introducing topics that students relate to while also bringing that lens to interpreting students' behavior. Further research indicates that having a BIPOC teacher increases the value students place on academic success. (Villegas, 2004) Most importantly, our participants recognize how meaningful it is.

“As a student of color myself who went to Providence Public Schools, I feel for them [students of color]. I am able to relate and I want to be there for them.- An Explorer.

We use an asset-based, developmental relationship model because it works. (Search Institute, 2020). Developmental relationships allow each person involved to experience care, challenge, support, shared power, and expanded possibilities. Developmental relationships help people grow. By nurturing self-expression, critical reflection, and social skills, they continually open up new possibilities for success and new opportunities to make a difference.

MISSION

Inspiring Minds empowers students to succeed and thrive in school and life by developing trusted relationships with community members who are knowledgeable of the culturally responsive, academic, and socio-emotional needs necessary for student success.



VISION

Inspiring Minds is an antiracist organization committed to closing equity gaps based on race, ethnicity, first language, and economic status that impact RI students and families.



OUR VALUES



STUDENT-CENTERED

Student success and well-being are the primary drivers behind our actions and decisions.



EQUITY-MOTIVATED

Racial equity is the just path forward for the organization, communities, and students we serve; therefore, we commit to antiracist practices.



ASSET-FRAMED

The diverse lived experiences of our students and their families are assets we acknowledge and promote.



RELATIONSHIP-FOCUSED

Students thrive when they are connected to and supported by caring and committed adults.



COMMUNITY-GROUNDED

Inspiring Minds values community and invites community members to help create a supportive village for schools.



EXPECTATIONS-DRIVEN

A critical strategy for closing the equity gap is to actively support a culture of high expectations, continuous growth, and improvement for students, schools, and Inspiring Minds.



EVIDENCE-BASED

We use qualitative and quantitative data and research to inform our organizational decisions and spark dynamic and innovative responses.

WHAT WE DO

Our Programs, Services & Impact

Inspiring Minds empowers students to succeed by focusing on the student first. Developmental Relationships are the key. Our programming approach aligns with the Search Institute's evidence-based Developmental Assets Framework. As a result, our programs develop close connections through which young people discover who they are, gain skills to shape their own lives, and learn how to interact and contribute to the world around them. In each of our programs, we foster academic achievement, increase student engagement in the learning process, and reduce barriers to student success.

We Foster Academic Achievement by:

- Helping students maintain or exceed expectations in reading and early math skills
- Providing individual support and extra attention and feedback that focuses on student effort and learning practices
- Developing student's self-efficacy, personal organizational skills, and time management skills
- Supporting students to manage emotions, self-regulate, and develop confidence

We increase engagement in the learning process by:

- Encouraging students to think about and demonstrate their learning
- Challenging students to articulate the way they have gone about learning
- Supporting strategy thinking for students by creating spaces for them to think about their next steps and how they are going to proceed with those next steps
- Supporting students to create goals to know they have achieved success

We reduce barriers to student success by responding to unique needs by:

- Matching children in small groups with caring adults from their community within a structured relationship
- Enhancing safe and supportive schools through mindfulness, consistency, and personalization.
- Providing our Explorers with paid internships to support their ongoing education and skill development
- Providing families with the knowledge and skills to engage in schools
- Creating a link between schools and the community

We also know that to truly make a difference in our students' lives, we need to impact the systems our students and families operate. Therefore, through our orientation, ongoing professional development, and speaking engagements, we inspire adults, too. Our goal is to inspire adults to act swiftly and justly to factors that impact our students, their families, and the schools we serve.

In-School Tutoring & Mentoring Services

Tutoring and mentoring is the largest and longest-running program at Inspiring Minds.

Our tutors/mentors work as in-class support for Providence students in grades Pre-K through 5 who have been identified as at-risk or in need of intervention by school faculty. Volunteers are matched with students 1:1 or in small groups for synchronous learning to develop a trusting relationship and engage in structured activities-classwork or personalized lessons developed by the student's teacher.

Additional support services complement our direct work with students. We leverage our volunteer support to offer door-to-door delivery of books, materials, and school supplies for students in quarantine and to help at special events.

We recruit more than 500 volunteers annually to do this work. Volunteers work with students for a minimum of one hour per week during the school year, but most work 2-4 hours per week.



79% of teachers report student academic growth with volunteer support.



The most rewarding part of the whole experience was seeing the students improve each visit. Hearing the teacher tell me that a student has moved up a level with my help is truly rewarding. I learned that teaching is the right career for me and that teaching 1st grade would be an ideal age for me as well.

-Inspiring Minds Volunteer



Explorers

Our program, Explorers, is a workforce development internship for BIPOC and multilingual youth, ages 15-24, interested in pursuing a career in education. Explorers are paid interns who receive 80 hours of hands-on classroom experience through our in-school tutoring and mentoring program or our summer learning program. In addition, our youth participate monthly in work readiness training to build essential and transferable skills needed for the workplace. We believe in supporting our Explorers' needs through 1:1 and group mentorship, and additional workshops to support them on their path to becoming educators.

Inspiring Minds' vision is to see our public school staff reflect the diversity of the students we serve. The Explorers program hopes to inspire youth to become educational leaders.



We are grateful for this program because our daughter couldn't attend Pre-K classes because of Covid-19, but at least she had this experience before entering Kindergarten.

- Summer 2021 Parent

KidsBridge

The KidsBridge Summer Learning Program provides rising kindergartners who have not yet had a high-quality early learning experience with a six-week full-day program to help them learn the norms and routines of school. The program is free of charge to students registered for Kindergarten in Providence Public Schools for the upcoming school year.

KidsBridge participants attend school for six hours per day, five days per week, and adjust to the routines and procedures of kindergarten to help them transition into school. The program is fun and engaging, and children learn through play!

Parents/family members are also supported through ongoing parent engagement events and workshops. The program is taught by certified, experienced teachers with support from Providence's high school workforce and trained community volunteers.

RESILIENTKIDS

Our pre-kindergarten through twelfth-grade mindfulness-based, social and emotional learning (SEL) program, taught by trained staff, is a tailored curriculum and online resources that empowers children and adults to manage stress, overcome obstacles, cultivate compassion and thrive through adversity – outcomes that benefit both the individual and society as a whole. Calling upon the best practices from mindfulness and SEL, with methodologies rooted in the latest research, the ResilientKids curriculum fuses a multidisciplinary approach into a year-long program designed to help students and their teachers build self-awareness, executive functioning skills, and manage stress from the inside out.

We believe that growth and learning occur when people of all ages are connected, confident, and focused. We believe mindfulness empowers us to handle adversity, manage emotions, and resolve conflicts proactively and deliberately. Resilience is essential for one to thrive in school, career, and community.



In the past ten years, ResilientKids has worked with over 10,000 Rhode Island students at over 50 different schools across the state. Our results speak for themselves: dramatic reductions in student and teacher stress, bullying, and behavior-related visits to the principal's office.

Teachers Say: “This was by far one of the best experiences I have had as a classroom teacher. It has taught me the importance of being aware of myself and helped me share this with students on a daily basis.”



Students Say: “I learned to believe in myself and to never give up.”
“During the [state testing], I used my strategies to help me refocus.”



LOGIC MODEL

For Positive Student Outcomes

Problem/Need	Assumptions	Strategy	Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-Term Outcomes	Impact
<p>Many of our students experience inequities based on race, ethnicity, first language, and economic status.</p> <p>We owe it to our children to provide a relevant and culturally responsive education.</p> <p>We need to ensure that our future leaders have the skills required to tackle the problems of tomorrow.</p> <p>The standards and tests are more rigorous for good reason: students need strong skills to graduate ready for college and a 21st-century career.</p> <p>The turnaround is a big adjustment for everyone: teachers, students, and schools.</p> <p>Everyone should have the opportunity to engage in developmental relationships, but not everyone does- Low-income families, families of color, and non-English-speaking families often face barriers to engaging with such opportunities.</p> <p>Many existing systems are structured in ways that limit the ability of adults and young people to engage in developmental relationships.</p>	<p>A whole-child approach to education focuses attention on the emotional, social, mental, physical, and cognitive development of students. At its core, the approach views the purpose of schooling as developing future citizens and providing the basis for children to fulfill their potential^{1,2}</p> <p>Search Institute research demonstrates the critical and essential role of a developmental relationship with a caring adult for students to learn, grow and thrive.</p> <p>Practice makes progress.</p> <p>All students can succeed with the culturally responsive approach, resources, and support.</p> <p>We owe it to our children to provide a relevant and culturally responsive education</p> <p>An education that acknowledges pressing real-world problems equips students with the practical skills and conceptual tools needed to address them.</p> <p>Children's home language skills fuel their learning, moving them toward bilingual fluency and academic achievement.</p>	<p>Intentionally recruit a diverse workforce and corps or volunteers.</p> <p>Provide trained volunteer tutors and mentors to support students with a strong focus on the early grades to support children acquiring critical skills.</p> <p>Teachers and schools intentionally select students who will benefit from Inspiring Minds programs and services.</p> <p>Students are served a minimum of 28 sessions per year.</p> <p>Ensure the folks who are working with youth are equipped with the knowledge of our student's and community's resilience and the history of the intentional systemic barriers that affect our students.</p> <p>Partner with other youth-serving organizations for greater impact.</p> <p>Build meaningful relationships with our community.</p> <p>Supporting bilingual fluency for children in grades K-5, especially for children whose first language is not English, boosts children's learning and establishes a strong foundation for academic success.</p>	<p>Students have individualized practice opportunities to achieve mastery of their mind and body, literacy, and numeracy.</p> <p>Students develop relationships with a caring adult to support social-emotional learning.</p> <p>Students feel more confident about their ability to learn and take charge.</p> <p>Students develop a positive academic mindset.</p> <p>Student attendance improves.</p> <p>Student horizons expand beyond their immediate environment.</p> <p>Students have an increased sense of belonging.</p> <p>Students have more coping strategies</p> <p>Students increase skills of mindfulness: observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience.</p>	<p>Students take responsibility for their learning and academic achievement.</p> <p>Students become lifelong learners.</p> <p>Students have the foundational skills to achieve better grades</p> <p>Students experience improved social and emotional well-being.</p>	<p>Greater individual and community empowerment.</p> <p>Equitable educational opportunities for all student</p> <p>Improved equity and quality of life indicators</p> <p>Students have healthy relationships with their community.</p> <p>Societal costs are reduced by reducing inequities.</p>

¹Diamond, A. (2010). The evidence base for improving school outcomes by addressing the whole child and by addressing skills and attitudes, not just content. Early education and development, 21(5), 780-793.

² Slade, S., & Griffith, D. (2013). A whole child approach to student success. KEDI Journal of Educational Policy.

LOGIC MODEL

For Individuals Serving with Inspiring Minds

Problem/Need	Assumptions	Strategy	Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-Term Outcomes	Impact
<p>As caregivers, community members, and educators, we have a responsibility to ensure each child, family, and caregiver is safe from racism and discrimination and has equitable opportunities to thrive.</p> <p>The turnaround is a big adjustment for everyone: teachers, students, and schools.</p> <p>For reform to be effective in improving the quality of education, we must make sure teachers have the support they need to meet the challenge.</p> <p>Many in our community want to help but are not sure exactly how to help.</p> <p>Many existing systems are structured in ways that limit the ability of adults and young people to engage in developmental relationships.</p> <p>Representation in the classroom matters. Having a diverse teacher workforce connects cultures, sets high expectations, and reduces implicit bias.</p> <p>Inspiring Minds needs skill-based volunteers to expand its capacity beyond its financial means.</p> <p>Our community needs to lift up our future workforce and ensure they have the skills they need to be successful in a complex world.</p>	<p>Volunteers can play a role in helping schools enhance equity of opportunity by adding their contribution to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.</p> <p>College students want/need exposure to urban classrooms.</p> <p>Volunteers and staff can be trained to make a difference for children</p> <p>Folks who work with youth need additional support to cope and persevere through the challenges today's society brings.</p> <p>Funding can be found to support volunteers through Inspiring Minds.</p> <p>Not all volunteers who care about children want to work directly with them.</p> <p>There are folks with needed skills who could volunteer at Inspiring Minds if given the opportunity, support, and awareness.</p> <p>We are not experts at everything and need partnerships and collaboration to reach our intended outcomes and impact our community.</p> <p>The only way to undo racism is to consistently identify it and describe it—and then dismantle it.</p>	<p>Analyze and address barriers to engage POC in schools.</p> <p>Intentionally recruit volunteers and staff from diverse communities.</p> <p>Provide meaningful and rewarding experiences for volunteers.</p> <p>Provide ongoing support, social connections, and professional development to retain and develop volunteers.</p> <p>Integrate racial equity discussions, reflection, cultural humility, learning, innovation, and community-mindedness in professional development.</p> <p>Develop Communities of Practice for staff and other opportunities to learn from each other by articulating their experiences around the use of a Lens and the model.</p> <p>Promote cross-sector, state, and national advocacy efforts around racial equity.</p>	<p>Develop meaningful relationships with children and other adults who serve.</p> <p>Develop the skills they need to support students, themselves, or capacity-building efforts.</p> <p>Experience purpose and meaning through their work with us.</p> <p>Gain a greater understanding of how systemic racism impacts our community, the needs of students, and their schools.</p> <p>Increased sense of pride in Inspiring Minds' goals and identity around racial equity.</p> <p>Strong understanding of the intersectionality of racism and other social oppressions.</p>	<p>Student academic and social-emotional wellbeing outcomes improve.</p> <p>Volunteers and staff have the agency to make more differences in their community.</p> <p>More aware teachers responsive to urban student development. State residents support more resources for urban schools.</p> <p>Volunteers and staff advocate for and donate to Inspiring Minds and other causes that eliminate the root causes of the inequities affecting our students.</p> <p>Explorers demonstrate growth in leadership competencies including instructional leadership, community and culture, personal leadership, and talent management and development</p>	<p>A strong, engaged, connected and resilient community supports our students</p> <p>A shared vision for systemic change and advocate for responses to social issues that our students face.</p> <p>Eliminate root causes of inequities affecting our students.</p> <p>Greater individual and community empowerment.</p> <p>A diverse teacher workforce can lead classroom students to consider becoming educators themselves.</p> <p>Schools are trusting and supportive communities that are continuously improving</p>

ANTIRACISM AT THE FOREFRONT

We are putting antiracism at the forefront of our work by:



Actively Listening and Learning to understand and uplift our communities' voices within our organization's work



Authentically Partnering with Communities



Intentionally Recruiting to Increase the Diversity of Staff & Volunteers in Order to Represent the Communities We Serve



Consistently Working Toward Equity in Distribution of Financial and Human Resources



Strategically Sustaining Educational Support Systems and Programs for Inspiring Minds Students to Thrive



Purposefully Reflecting and Adapting as we continue to learn and grow.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Developed over a 6-month process that engaged leadership, staff, and stakeholders across the organization, this plan provides a strategic road map for the organization's next three years of work. We recognize the importance of creating a strategy that empowers staff to identify and create goals that are aligned with the organization's direction; therefore, we listened to staff recommendations to ensure their voices and work were reflected in the development of the strategic plan.

JANUARY 2022

Strategic Committee Launch of Planning Process
Stakeholder Engagement (Survey, Interviews, and focus groups of internal and external stakeholders).

FEBRUARY 2022

Thematic Qualitative Analysis
Community Engagement Goal Setting & Strategy Plan

MARCH 2022

In-depth internal discussion and revision to Mission, Vision, and Values to ensure alignment to antiracist practices.
Anti-racist Goal Setting & Strategy Plan

APRIL 2022

Programmatic Analysis
Program Goal Setting & Growth Strategy Plan

MAY 2022

Financial and Executive leadership Financial Analysis Financial Goal Setting & Strategy Planning to support organizational and operational needs

JUNE 2022

Full Board Retreat to review, discuss, and vote to adopt 2022-2025 strategic plan

THREE YEAR GOALS

OBJECTIVES & SUCCESS INDICATORS

Our three-year goals, objectives, and success indicators represent our current understanding of the immediate actions necessary to strive towards our vision. We continue to ensure that we are creating metrics that will hold us accountable for meeting these goals while being transparent about our vulnerabilities, recognizing that success indicators are also measured with the support of the community.

1

Strengthen Community Engagement & Partnerships

Partner with the community to improve education through programs that address academic, social, and emotional determinants

Objective 1

Identify and prioritize strategic opportunities for authentic community engagement that promote programmatic awareness

Objective 2

Increase the diversity of staff and volunteers to improve student academic and social-emotional outcomes.

Success Indicators

Objective 1

- By June 2023, Inspiring Minds has a brand strategy and collateral to match.
- By June 2023, 100% of full-time exempt leadership staff are aware of the Government agencies and CBOs that support children and families.
- By FY24, 100% of exempt staff, board, and key volunteers are using brand strategy in daily operations, increasing brand sentiment.
- By 2024, develop strategies for collaborating with organizations whose missions are interconnected with ours to ensure we work collectively to build a just society.
- By 2025, 80% of parents return data consent forms because their connections to IM are strong.
- By 2025, 90% of teachers and administrators report they understand or fully understand Inspiring Minds' program, policies, and protocols and who to contact if they need more information.
- By 2025, increase workshops in our areas of expertise: mindfulness, youth development, developmental relationships, and kindergarten readiness, for community members and parents to participate.

Objective 2

- By June 2025, the demographic diversity of staff and volunteers will reach an all-time high.
- By June 2025, provide 125 aspiring BIPOC teachers the support they need to pursue future careers in urban public schools.

Demonstrate Commitment to Become an Antiracist Organization

Provide a clear path to put anti-racism at the center of all we do

Objective 1

Ensure our practices, policies, and programs are aligned to our revised mission and vision

Objective 2

Ensure that leadership prioritizes and models sustained engagement, learning, and commitment to this effort

Objective 3

Ensure adequate resources are committed to antiracist work

2

Success Indicators

Objective 1

- By June 2023, conduct an internal and external review of practices, policies, and programs to include:
 - listening to community members, staff, and experts in the field
 - researching best practices for antiracism accountability measures
 - and updating existing policies, procedures, and program plans.
- By June 2023, review our data practices biannually through an antiracist lens to ensure we have an asset-framed way of reporting and sharing.

Objective 2

- By December 2022, create a plan to strengthen and promote antiracism professional development opportunities for all members within the organization (i.e., staff, volunteers, executive director, board members).
- By June 2024, develop communities of practice that meet monthly to support collaboration across the team (i.e., staff, volunteers, executive team, board of directors) and disseminate best practices/problems of practice.
- By June 2025, ensure that all professional development is culturally informed in order to better understand the needs of the community we serve.

Objective 3

- By June 2024, establish a benefits and compensation package that supports the staff's professional and economic-well being that will be measured through an annual staff satisfaction survey.
- By June 2025, at least 20% of our expenses (contracting/supplies) are invested in our local communities of color.
- By June 2025, Allocate 3% of total salaries to support the ongoing antiracist professional development for the organization.

3

Create A System of Continuous Improvement to Analyze the Impact of Inspiring Minds Programs

Define immediate and long-term intended outcomes of Inspiring Minds programs that are consistent with the mission and vision of the organization

Objective 1

Identify opportunities to modify, maintain, and expand Inspiring Minds' programs to improve the quality and effectiveness of current and future programming

Objective 2

Develop clear ways to measure, evaluate, and communicate the impact of our work

Success Indicators

Objective 1

- By June 2023, ensure each program has a written plan and its operational protocols documented.
- By June 2023, create systems that enable the program directors to review and make financial decisions as needed to ensure the viability of programs.
- By June 2024, ensure that all program and operational plans are coordinated, integrated, and aligned to national standards (NQMS, SLPQA, CASEL, Developmental Relationships).
- By June 2024, ensure that all program and operational plans are in alignment with branding standards and the organization's standard operating procedures.
- By June 2025, develop and implement a plan to expand Inspiring Minds' programs to offer out-of-school time services.
- By June 2025, develop and implement a "grow your own" model that supports staff retention, professional growth, and leadership opportunities within the organization.

Objective 2

- By June 2023, Ensure the primary audience for our data reports are targeted to the community at large.
- By June 2024, engage in a process to assess our existing evaluative tools for cultural responsiveness.
- By June 2024, determine a tool for evaluating the workforce development program.
- By June 2025, develop a standardized model for gathering, analyzing, and reporting data that considers best practices and community voice.

Allocate Financial Resources to ensure the future success of the organization

Improve our organizational and operational capabilities by ensuring resources are aligned to organizational sustainability, and implementation of strategic plan goals, in alignment with our service goals

Objective 1

Leverage public and private funding sources to increase financial resources for Inspiring Minds

Objective 2

Ensure sufficient program and administrative staffing and skills to enable increased investment in outreach, partnership-building, and revenue development

Objective 3

Strategically allocate resources to invest in the governance of the Board of Directors

4

Success Indicators

Objective 1

- By December 2022, establish a clear fund development plan and clear corporate sponsorship strategy, necessary to ensure fundraising strategies are aligned to the organization's mission, vision, and values.
- By June 2023, research and apply best practices related to anti-racist fund development and nonprofits in the education sector.
- By June 2024, ensure staff and board has professional development to embrace community-centric fundraising practices.
- By June 2025, Inspiring Minds has clear performance metrics and our baseline to measure progress in alignment with community-centric fundraising practices.

Objective 2

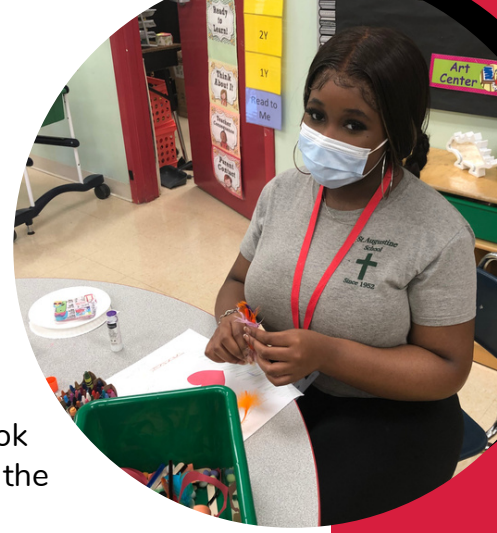
- By December 2022, examine internal staff capacity and resources to identify the staffing needs of the organization and work to fill these gaps.
- By June 2023, Strengthen staff onboarding and professional development practices to ensure the staff is accountable to the community/ engagement and expectations.
- By July 2023 implement the recommendations to support program and administrative staffing needs.
- By July 2024, ensure staffing needs align with service delivery goals.

Objective 3

- By September 2022, the board has completed a self-assessment of their needs to inform the next steps in professional development related to governance.
- By April 2023, engage in a retreat to help define board expectations, board engagement, and identify strategies to support the organization.
- By June 2025, the community understands how our board engages and leads Inspiring Minds.

SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS

We recognize that organizational change needs to involve all parts of the organization: staff, board, and the communities the organization serves. We look forward to opportunities to strengthen our engagement and partnerships with the community.



We invite you to be a part of our efforts in one or more of the following ways:

- ➔ **Connect** us to organizations and civic groups that have similar approaches to community engagement.
- ➔ **Volunteer.** We have hundreds of volunteers working in our programs and also opportunities for committee participation, board leadership, and for skill-based volunteers.
- ➔ **Provide feedback** and attend our events.
- ➔ **Invest** in the economic and professional well-being of our staff. Working equitably means having the capacity for appropriate structures, instead of one-size-fits-all solutions, general operating support makes this happen.
- ➔ **Recognize** how much work and dedication is required to create equitable policies, protocols, and practices. We hope to expand two new leadership positions - A Development Director and an Operations Director that will help us along this journey.
- ➔ **Provide** resources that allow us to:
 - Support our Professional Development Efforts
 - Hire more diverse staff and leadership
 - Provide paid internships and stipends to those whose lived experiences inform the work we do.
 - Continue to recruit, screen, orient, place, and support more volunteers In-School Tutoring & Mentoring
 - Expand ResilientKids to deliver services to districts in the urban core.
 - Expand out-of-school time programming to additional grades/districts
 - Offer more comprehensive services to our aspiring BIPOC teachers in Explorers.

APPENDICES

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACADEMIC MINDSET

Academic Mindsets are four key beliefs which deeply influence our behaviors as learners, and which enable learning success. These mindsets affect our motivation, strategies, and perseverance. They are: I belong in this learning community, I can change my abilities through effort (a growth mindset), I can succeed, This work has value and purpose for me. (Mindset Works, 2017)

ASSET-BASED APPROACH

An asset-based approach focuses on strengths. It views diversity in thought, culture, and traits as positive assets. Teachers and students alike are valued for what they bring to the classroom rather than being characterized by what they may need to work on or lack. (Thought Leadership, 2018)

ANTIRACIST ORGANIZATION

An anti-racist organization acknowledges systemic racism within the workplace. An Anti-Racist Organization helps people of color become more empowered through taking leadership, sharing in the power, transforming the organizational norms and culture, challenging white allies and other people of color, sharing in decisions about how the organizations resources will be spent, what work gets done as well as how it gets done, the setting of priorities, and allowing people of color to make the same mistakes as white people. (Liu, 2020) and (Natchipolsky, 2020)

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic and who come together to fulfill both individual and group goals. Communities of practice often focus on sharing best practices and creating new knowledge to advance a domain of professional practice. Interaction on an ongoing basis is an important part of this. (Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium, 2016)

COMMUNITY-CENTRIC FUNDRAISING

Community-Centric Fundraising is a fundraising model that is grounded in equity and social justice. We prioritize the entire community over individual organizations, foster a sense of belonging and interdependence, present our work not as individual transactions but holistically, and encourage mutual support between nonprofits. (Community Centric Funding, 2022)

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Community partners are formal and informal strategic alliances between nonprofits, corporations, funders, and civic groups that are intended to achieve a greater impact than any organization could generate on its own. (Partnerships and Collaboration, 2015)

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

A pedagogy that uses students' customs, characteristics, experiences, and perspectives as tools for better classroom instruction. Students of color see themselves and their communities as belonging in academic spaces. (Edweek, 2022)

DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

Developmental relationships are close connections through which young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them. (Search Institute, 2020)

EQUITY-MOTIVATED

Equity motivation proposes that high levels of motivation can only be achieved when each person perceives their treatment to be fair relative to others. People compare themselves to other groups. If they perceive unfairness they will adjust their behaviors to compensate, working more or working less, depending on if their situation is positive or negative relative to the group or person being compared. (Equity Theory, 2018)

GROW YOUR OWN

The process of recruiting and training staff from within the organization to support retention, personal and professional growth of the individual.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our leadership refers to the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and Leads of Departments.

MINDFULNESS

Paying full attention to something. It means slowing down to really notice what you're doing.

PROBLEM OF PRACTICE (POP)

A situation that exists in one's place of work. It revolves around a specific workplace problem. The issue is a problem because values/goals are not, or might not be entirely, met. (Problems of practice for an organizational improvement plan., 2016)

STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING (SCL)

Student-centered learning gives students the opportunity to decide two things: what material they learn and how they learn it. In contrast to teacher-centered approaches, SCL engages students as leaders and decision-makers in their own learning. (McCarthy, 2015)

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are uncompensated individuals who give their time and energy to support programs or the capacity of the organization. Inspiring Minds welcomes volunteers to support students directly or bring their talents to the organization through skill-based opportunities and board service. (Volunteers. National Council of Nonprofits., 2022)

Stakeholder Summary of Feedback

Stakeholder engagement is one of the most essential components of the strategic plan process. It is a process that allows organizations to better understand the needs and wants of the communities they serve. Furthermore, stakeholder engagement is a fundamental accountability process, ensuring that organizational goals are data-driven and that decisions are made when community voices are elevated and heard.

Process:

To ensure the aforementioned is true, the following outlines the process.

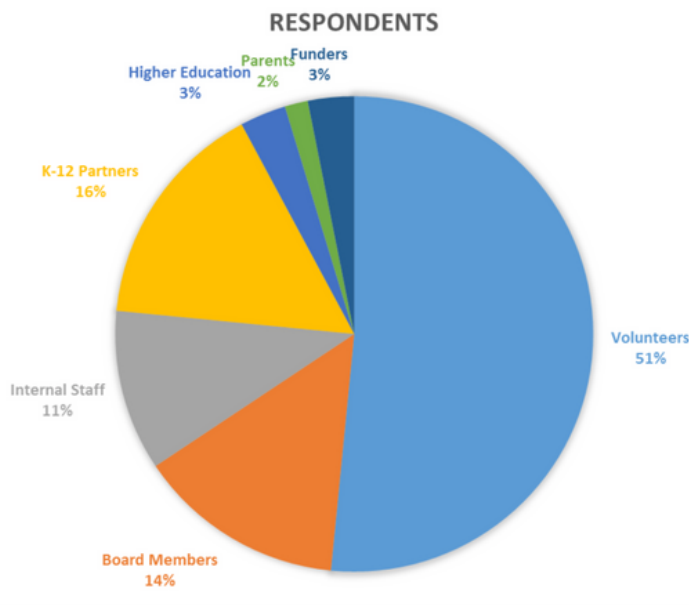
- Internal and External Surveys sent to all stakeholders
- Staff Meeting Focus Group
- 1:1 Options for Interviews
- Qualitative Thematic Analysis (Board & Staff)
- Identifying preliminary goals based on data

Current Realities:

Understanding our current realities is a process that requires evidence, analysis, and honest reflection. Being able to understand current realities allows us to envision the future. In the stakeholder engagement process, demographic and qualitative data were collected to get an understanding of the organization's current realities. Please note the low response rate among parents and that no current Inspiring Minds students completed the survey.

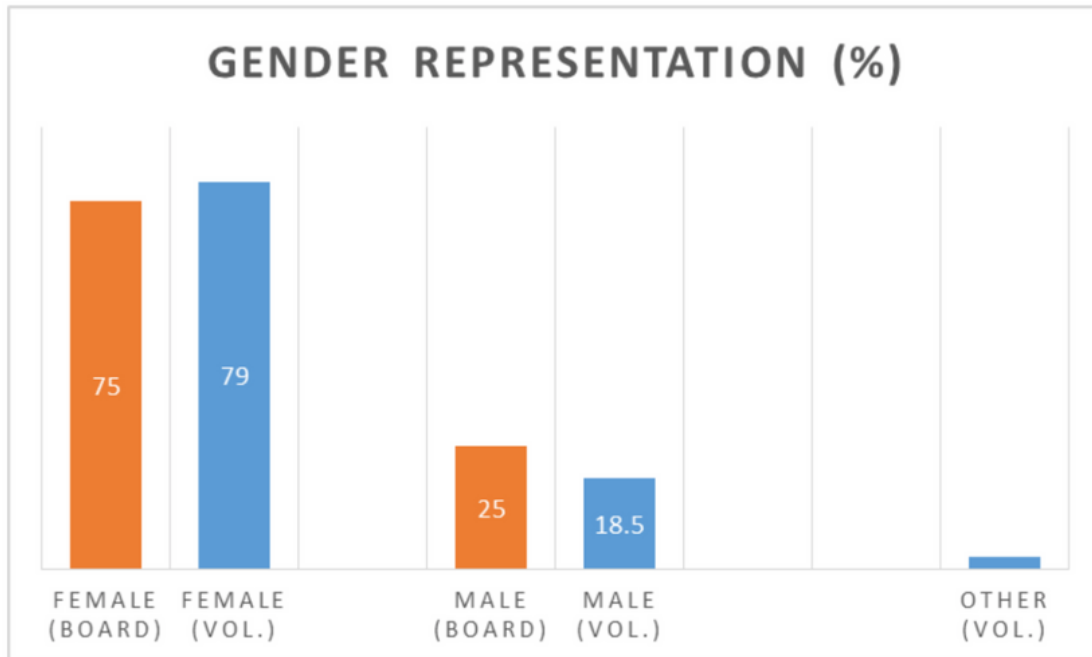
Demographic Data

Percent of Respondents who completed the survey:

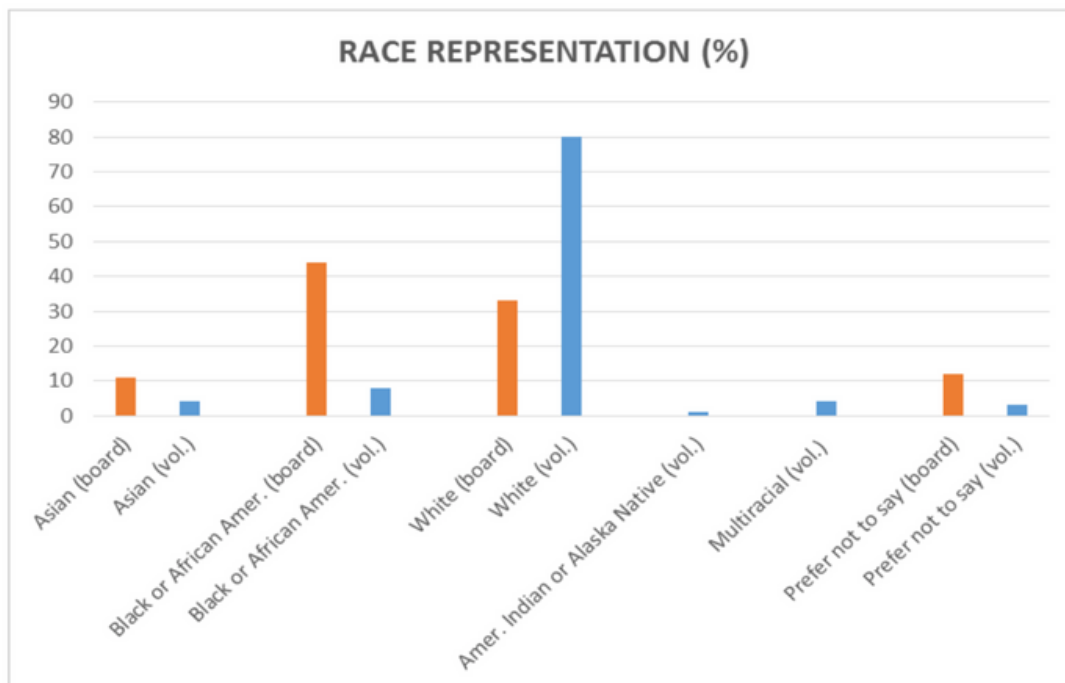


Gender & Race Demographics of Board & Volunteers:

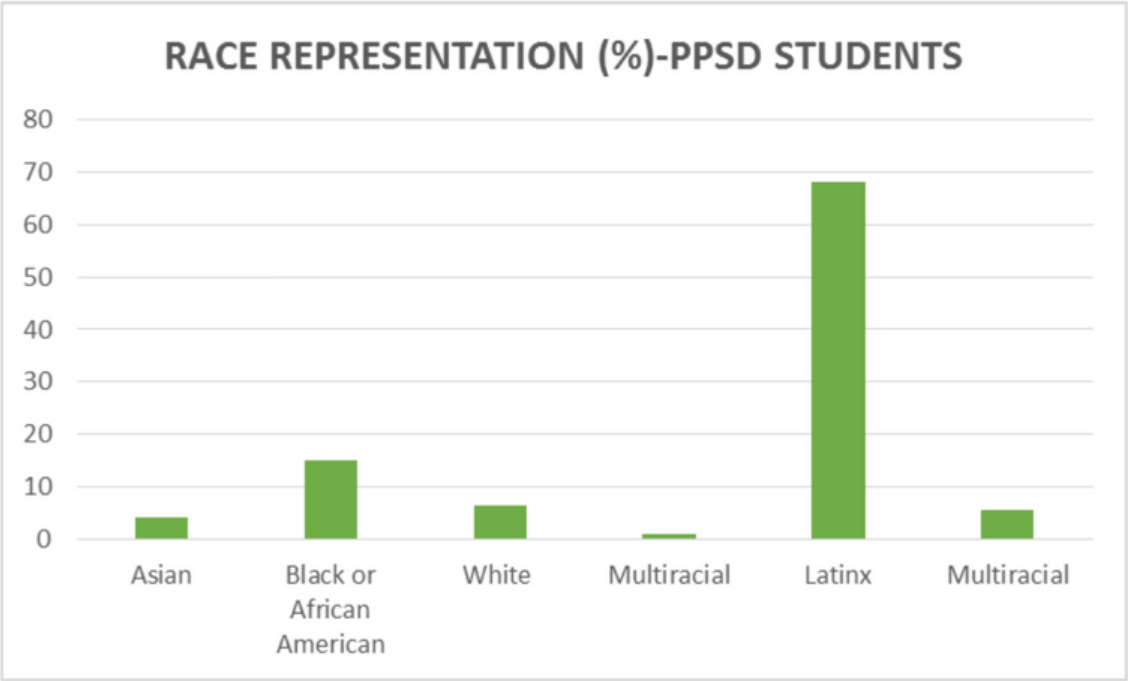
*please note that only gender and race demographics were analyzed because these were a common theme identified in the survey.



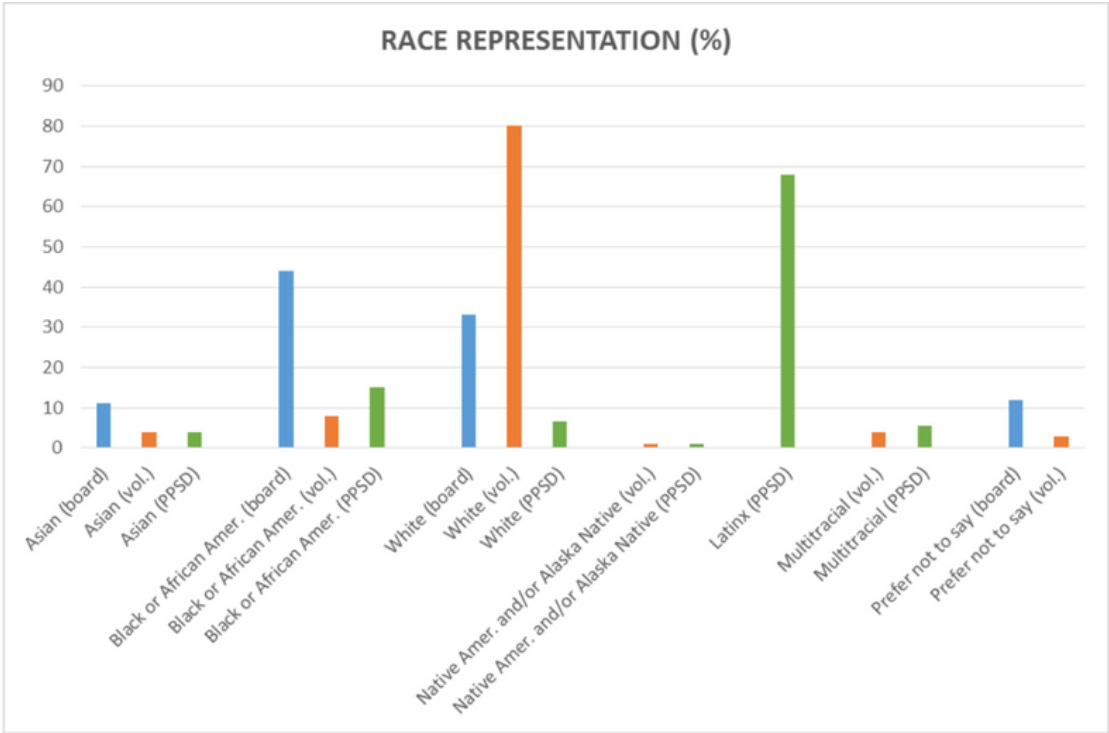
*The orange represents the percentage of board members and the blue represents the percentage of volunteers.



*The orange represents the percentage of board members and the blue represents the percentage of volunteers.



*Providence Public School District (PPSD) students (2021).



*The orange represents the percent of board members, the blue represents the percentage for volunteers and the green represents the percentage of Providence Public School District (PPSD) students.

Qualitative Data & Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that involves reading through a data set (such as transcripts from in-depth interviews or focus groups), and identifying patterns in meaning across the data(Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is the process that was used to analyze the information that came from the surveys, focus groups, and 1:1 interviews. A data spreadsheet was created and organized by strengths, opportunities, challenges, and considerations (S.O.C.C.). Emerging themes allowed both the executive strategic committee and internal staff to review, unpack, and reflect. This is a necessary process to support the development of strategic goals.

The following themes emerged amongst all respondents:

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Leadership of the Executive Director● Staff● Mission Focused● Personal & Professional Development opportunities● Program & Curriculum (Resilient Kids)● Culture of Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Expansion (services, location, sites, curriculum, partnerships)● Diversify staff, leadership, volunteers● Increase Professional Development opportunities specifically aligned to anti-racism goals● Awareness & Advocacy● Improve program services (MLL)● Enhance curriculum (culturally responsive)● Improve data systems to measure impact● Strengthen & Improve partnerships● Teacher Pipeline Development● ARPA funds● Create long term Funding Development Programs
Challenges	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Systemic & Institutional Inequities● Staff retention & sustainability● Pandemic & Learning Loss● Financial sustainability● Optics (good intentions and unintended consequences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Impact Measurement Systems● Alignment to initiatives & other Strategic Partnerships● Parent & Student stakeholder engagement● Role Clarity & Expectations of Board members

Mission & Vision Process

The mission and vision of the organization define the purpose of the organization and instill a sense of belonging and identity. Both the mission and vision help to provide a focal point that helps to align everyone to work toward a single purpose. A mission statement describes the organization's values and purpose for being. The vision statement describes the ultimate outcome and impact on those whom the organization serves. The vision statement serves as a guide toward the greater goal of the organization.

Process:

Inspiring Minds is an organization striving to become antiracist. It is important that this journey is clearly articulated and communicated to both external and internal stakeholders. Revisiting the mission and vision to ensure that it is aligned with the direction of the organization is an essential part of strategic planning.

The following outlines the process for the revised mission and vision statement which included all Board Members, Inspiring Minds Staff, and community stakeholder feedback:

Board Members Summary:

- Strategic Committee and Full Board meetings to:
 - Share their why, hopes, and fears as they individually unpacked their journey to becoming an antiracist organization
 - Discuss & document their vision for the organization
 - Revisit the current mission & vision to assess alignment and potential revisions
- Feedback from Board Members regarding mission & vision included:
 - the need to use active verbs that describes the "what" and role of IM in the work
 - the need to revisit the word "equal"
 - the need to emphasize relationship building and student-centered in the vision
 - the need to inject humanity into the statement
 - the need to articulate the antiracism journey within the mission and/or vision
 - the need to include language to address equity gaps based on race, ethnicity, first language and economic status.

Internal Staff Summary:

- The internal staff also met for several hours to:
 - Share their why, hopes, and dreams for the organization
 - Revisit the current mission & vision and discuss ways in which the organization strives to do more for the community
- Feedback from Internal Staff:
 - Ensuring that we are accountable for achieving the mission and striving for the vision in our work
 - Including and elevating the need to better support families in the work (inclusion in the vision)
 - Unpacking and defining culturally responsive

Stakeholder Summary:

- Review stakeholder qualitative surveys and interviews to ensure that stakeholder feedback is included as the strategic goals are developed.
- Feedback from Stakeholders:
 - Mission Suggestions: to improve student learning/education by involving the community,/ student focus mission./ Highly focused on need and opportunity. “we can make a difference here let’s see we get that done” approach. / Do not change the goals and vision of the organization
 - Vision Suggestions: My Vision is that we are able to demonstrate the impact of IM volunteers and that we do make a difference in the academic and social growth of our kids and classrooms./My vision is to demonstrate impact and create a replicable model for other cities/states/My vision for the future of Inspiring Minds is to have boosted the scores of public schools (compared to private) in Rhode Island
 - I think the mission to serve our most underserving populations must remain critical. /We must align our mission to current needs and trends in education.

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