



EQUIP TO ENGAGE

*Strategic Plan for Ankeny Christian Academy
2025-2030*



TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	Ankeny Christian Academy History
5	Executive Summary
6	Letter from Head of School
7	Letter from Board of Directors
8	Future Facilities
9	Current Facilities
10	Culture
11	School Management Systems
12	Finances
13	Advancement
14	Board Governance
15	Timeline





SCHOOL VERSE

“They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

Isaiah 40:31

MISSION

Equipping students to be Christ-centered disciples who engage the world with the Gospel.

VALUES

Academic Excellence
Christ-Centered Discipleship
Authentic Relationships

WHO IS ACA?

Ankeny Christian Academy (ACA) was founded in 1993 through the faithful prayers and vision of a dedicated group of believers who sought to provide Christ-centered education in the Ankeny community. For one full year prior to its opening, these prayer warriors laid the spiritual foundation for a school that would partner with families to raise up students grounded in faith, truth, and academic excellence.

When ACA first opened its doors, it welcomed 27 students and met at Ankeny E-Free Church. In its early years, the school moved through several different locations before settling into its current home in the fall of 2000. That same year marked a significant milestone—ACA’s first graduating class, made up of six students, completed their high school journey.

From those humble beginnings, the school has experienced God’s continued blessing and steady growth. Today, ACA serves over 500 students, offering education from kindergarten through 12th grade under one roof—a unique structure that fosters strong community, mentorship across age groups, and a unified school culture.

Throughout its history, Ankeny Christian Academy has remained committed to small class sizes, personalized attention, and a “family feel” that is consistently praised by students, parents, and faculty alike. The environment reflects a close-knit community where everyone seems to know each other, reinforcing the school’s mission to equip the whole child—spiritually, academically, and relationally—in a Christ-honoring atmosphere.

As ACA continues to grow, it remains deeply rooted in its founding values. With a spirit of gratitude for those who came before and a sense of responsibility for those who will come after, the school is dedicated to preserving its Christ-centered mission while preparing for the future. Every decision is made with a clear vision: to remain faithful to our foundation while equipping future generations to stand strong in faith and impact the world for Christ.

THE
S
T
O
R
Y

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ankeny Christian Academy Strategic Plan 2025-2030

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Ankeny Christian Academy's strategic plan for 2025-2030 is a faithful roadmap rooted in prayer, discernment, and stewardship. As we respond to our growth in enrollment, our plan ensures ACA remains anchored in Christ, committed to excellence, and is preparing for the generations to come.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

1. Future Facilities - Acquire additional space to meet needs of students and faculty
2. Current Facilities - Steward and enhance our existing building
3. Culture - Strengthen ACA culture through amplification of core values
4. School Management Systems - Integrate systems to 1-2 central platforms
5. Finances - Build operational reserves and fund strategic priorities
6. Advancement - Enhance philanthropic support to align with future vision
7. Board Governance - Support the Head of School and safeguard the mission



LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Ankeny Christian Academy,

The simplest of things can have such great meaning. Hebrews chapter eleven is commonly known as the faith chapter. Two simple words are repeated over and over and are such a wonderful reminder – “by faith.” Let’s not forget, it was the faith of a small group of people that began praying and asking what God could do with a Christian school in Ankeny. It’s hard to read Hebrews chapter eleven and not be inspired, but let’s also not forget how the chapter begins. It begins with the definition of faith.

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation. By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.”

As we continue to move forward, why should strategic priorities be important at ACA? Strategic priorities are identified areas that require our attention as we seek to stay on-mission and see our core values as the ethos of our school culture. These core values are Academic Excellence, Christ-centered Discipleship, and Authentic Relationships.

By faith these strategic priorities are the continued work, prayer, and commitment of our Board of Directors. These strategic priorities seek to amplify our mission of “Equipping students to be Christ-centered disciples who engage the world with the Gospel.” There are seven identified focus areas.

- Focus Area One: Future Facilities
- Focus Area Two: Current Facilities
- Focus Area Three: Culture
- Focus Area Four: School Management System
- Focus Area Five: Finances
- Focus Area Six: Advancement
- Focus Area Seven: Board Governance

These specific focus areas are the important building blocks for the next five years. The purpose is to provide direct clarity and vision. It’s a pursuit with the future in mind, and it builds on what God has faithfully accomplished at ACA.

Sincerely,



Mr. Brent Knoll
Head of School

LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Ankeny Christian Academy Association,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is both an honor and a joy to share with you the vision for ACA as we look toward the next five years. Through much prayer, thoughtful collaboration, and a clear sense of mission, we are excited to present a strategic plan that strengthens our foundation and advances our calling: equipping students to become Christ-centered disciples to engage the world with the Gospel. As we step into the future, we remain firmly anchored in the core values that define our school community. Guided by these values, we have identified several strategic priorities for the next five years:

Addressing Space Challenges — Expanding and enhancing our facilities to accommodate our recent growth and better support the needs of our students and programming.

Strengthening School Culture — Investing in a Christ-centered, relational culture where every student, family, faculty, and staff member is deeply connected to the mission and community of the school.

Practicing Good Stewardship and Fiscal Responsibility — Managing all resources entrusted to us with wisdom, transparency, and excellence to ensure the long-term sustainability and flourishing of ACA.

Enhancing Procedures and Processes — Improving the systems and structures that support our mission with a focus on operational efficiency.

We undertake this work with full dependence on God's provision and leading, trusting His promise in Proverbs 16:3: "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans." As we commit this strategic plan to Him, we ask for your continued prayers, engagement, and partnership.

Thank you for your faithful support of ACA. We eagerly anticipate all that God will accomplish in and through our school as we seek to glorify Him in the years ahead.

In Christ's service,

Jared Bogaards- Board Chairman
Malori Khalil- Board Vice Chair
Heather Dolbeare- Treasurer
Jill Hugen- Secretary

Dan Blakeslee
Seth Moore
Teri Saenz
Waleed Wadi

FOCUS AREA ONE: FUTURE FACILITIES

GOAL

Acquire additional real estate, either through the purchase or rental of land and/or building(s), within Ankeny to meet current and future space needs.

BACKGROUND

Over the last five years ACA has experienced exponential growth in the number of students seeking Christian education. ACA has maximized its current building to accommodate the 520 students that are currently enrolled. With the growth in the student population, there has been a need for additional teachers, staff, and leadership positions. All of these things have led to classroom and office space challenges that are felt by the students and staff each day. ACA desires to be able to provide more space for our students and staff to better live out our core values. We believe there is an urgency to buy and/or rent additional property either through land and/or existing buildings within the Ankeny community to meet our most immediate needs while considering the long-term facility needs.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Conduct a needs assessment for space, considering existing and desired future electives and programming
- Engage real estate consultants to identify suitable properties to address immediate and long-term needs
- Develop capital campaign goals aligned with advancement efforts
- Secure property and begin long-term campus development planning

KEY MEASURABLES

- Property identified and under contract with goal of year one
- Phased approach to increase classrooms, office, space and parking space communicated to Association
- Fundraising milestones achieved annually

FOCUS AREA TWO: CURRENT FACILITIES

GOAL

To steward the physical and digital safety of our campus while proactively planning for future infrastructure needs, including technology and security upgrades.

BACKGROUND

Over the last few years ACA has updated its facility to meet the needs of the students and staff with additional classroom and office space. Every space has been carefully adapted to support academic excellence and enhance safety. As we seek to add additional space for our students and staff, as outlined in focus area one, ACA is committed to being faithful stewards of our current facility by continuing to invest in the building and enhancing functionality and safety when appropriate.

We acknowledge that a forward-thinking approach to infrastructure must include readiness for future needs, especially in the areas of digital security, communication systems, and learning technologies. By investing in secure and adaptable facilities today, we lay a foundation that supports academic excellence, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Develop a preventative maintenance program and capital improvement plan
- Pursue grants and funding opportunities for safety and technology improvements
- Assess and implement best practices for safety and security both physically and digitally
- Annually review facility space utilization to ensure appropriate functionality

KEY MEASURABLES

- Allocate resources in the annual budget to anticipate and meet the needs of ongoing maintenance and capital improvements (ex: HVAC, roofing)
- Complete previously identified facility upgrades: vestibule, office remodels, faculty lounge and restrooms
- Regularly conduct and review: safety audits, emergency response protocols, and routine safety drills and training
- Track response time to emergency drills
- Conduct annual safety audits



FOCUS AREA THREE: CULTURE

GOAL

Strengthen and preserve ACA culture through amplification of our mission and core values.

BACKGROUND

Culture is the cumulative effect of what people see, hear, experience and believe. The goal is to create an environment where staff, students, and families are wholeheartedly committed to the mission, experience ongoing improvement, and experience success in academics, discipleship, and relationships.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Align by Design
 - Model culture values across all levels of school
 - Ensure consistent messaging about mission and values within school and greater community
- Performance with Purpose
 - Embed cultural goals into performance reviews and leadership evaluations
- Amplify the Aspiration
 - Celebrate cultural wins through internal communications and events
 - Integrate stories that link mission and values
- Adapt and Improve
 - Assess feedback loops (satisfaction surveys, focus groups) with different stakeholders (students, parents, faculty) at regular intervals with follow-up action plans
 - Invest in leadership and staff development around culture and core values
 - Encourage faculty to pursue professional development to become subject matter experts
 - Review and align curriculum with academic excellence and biblical worldview
 - Embed discipleship programs into all grade levels and extracurriculars
 - Provide staff and student formation experiences, retreats, and mentorships
 - Yearly review organizational needs and anticipate additional roles

KEY MEASURABLES

- Establish starting benchmarks for faculty/staff, academics, discipleship, and parent satisfaction surveys
- Annually monitor the percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency benchmarks on standardized tests and create action plans as appropriate
- Annually conduct and review all stakeholder satisfaction surveys, aiming to achieve 80% overall satisfaction
- Track and increase annual teacher participation in the tuition reimbursement program
- Track and sustain a teacher retention rate of 85%
- Implement an aligned K-12 curriculum

FOCUS AREA FOUR: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

GOAL

Integrate and streamline the systems used within ACA to improve efficiency, reduce manual processes, and support long-term sustainability.

BACKGROUND

Currently, Ankeny Christian Academy operates with more than five separate systems to manage key functions such as human resources, payroll, student information, food service, and more. This fragmentation leads to duplicated efforts, manual data entry, and inefficiencies that burden staff and increase the risk of errors. By moving toward a unified school management system, ACA aims to simplify operations, improve data accuracy, enhance the user experience for staff and families, and ultimately increase productivity across departments.

STRATEGIES

- Research and determine the best school management system to meet our needs; considering: (25-26)
 - Student Management (currently JMC)
 - Robust Financials
 - Tuition Assistance (currently BlackBaud)
 - Financial Assistance (currently TADs)
 - Donor Database integration (currently Little Green Light)
 - Hot Lunch
 - Enrollment
- Review resources and determine budget implications to purchase new system
- Planned implementation for approved modules to include: (to begin 26-27)
 - Budget
 - Implementation Timeline
 - Training
 - Outside resources
- Identify superusers and early adopters

KEY MEASURABLES

- Purchase new school management software
- Onsite training for all users
- Reduce systems to 1-2 central platforms
- 80% staff satisfaction with new management system(s)

FOCUS AREA FIVE: FINANCES

GOAL

Effectively steward school finances to build reserves and fund strategic priorities.

BACKGROUND

As a Christ-centered school, we are called to steward our resources faithfully, ensuring that every dollar serves our mission and core values. Sound financial management is essential not only for sustaining daily operations but also for enabling long-term impact. In an environment of rising costs and increasing demands for excellence, we must strengthen our financial foundation—building reserves, aligning budgets with strategic priorities, and investing wisely in the people and programs that shape our students' spiritual and academic growth.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Develop an action plan and timeline to achieve 6 months of operating expenses
- Align budget for the school management system and maintenance plan (Focus Area 2 and 4) and develop a plan to manage appropriately
- Optimize non-tuition streams of revenue such as philanthropic growth, grants, and auxiliary programs
- Conduct regular financial reviews and operational audits to identify cost-saving opportunities

KEY MEASURABLES

- Increase operational reserves to six month of expenses by year 2028
- +/- 10% variance on actual vs budget expenditures

FOCUS AREA SIX: ADVANCEMENT

GOAL

Strengthen advancement programming that aligns with the future facility vision and other strategic priorities.

BACKGROUND

Since reaching historic levels of enrollment at ACA the need for additional facilities has become increasingly urgent. Our future vision includes space(s) that reflect the excellence of our academic, athletic, and fine arts programs, supports Christ-centered discipleship, and fosters authentic relationships. Realizing this vision will require a significant investment in new or improved facilities—one that calls for a bold and strategic approach to fundraising.

Historically, our advancement efforts have been rooted in a strong spirit of generosity and community support. To fund the next chapter of our campus development, we must expand our fundraising capacity through a comprehensive advancement plan. This includes cultivating a broader base of donors, deepening relationships with current supporters, and preparing for a capital campaign aligned with our facility goals. By strengthening our advancement strategy, we aim to not only meet immediate funding needs but also to build a sustainable culture of philanthropy that empowers the school's mission for years to come.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Review and assess previous feasibility study
- Develop a comprehensive fundraising roadmap and identify benchmark goals to align with strategic priorities
- Expand donor engagement
- Establish baseline benchmarks and annual goals
- Strengthen advancement infrastructure (staff, technology, donor analytics)
- Form a capital campaign committee

KEY MEASURABLES

- Launch capital campaign
- Increase number of new donors
- Achieve quarterly and annual benchmarks
- Maintain a 40% year-over-year donor retention rate
- Create donor engagement touch points

FOCUS AREA SEVEN: BOARD GOVERNANCE

GOAL

Continue to transition and function as a Board of Directors that supports the Head of School and mission of ACA.

BACKGROUND

In our commitment to Christ-centered education, effective board governance is essential. Transitioning from an operational or tactical approach to a strategic governance approach allows the board to support the Head of School more effectively and uphold the school's mission. This shift enables the board to focus on long-term vision, spiritual leadership, and strategic planning, fostering a partnership that strengthens the school's impact.

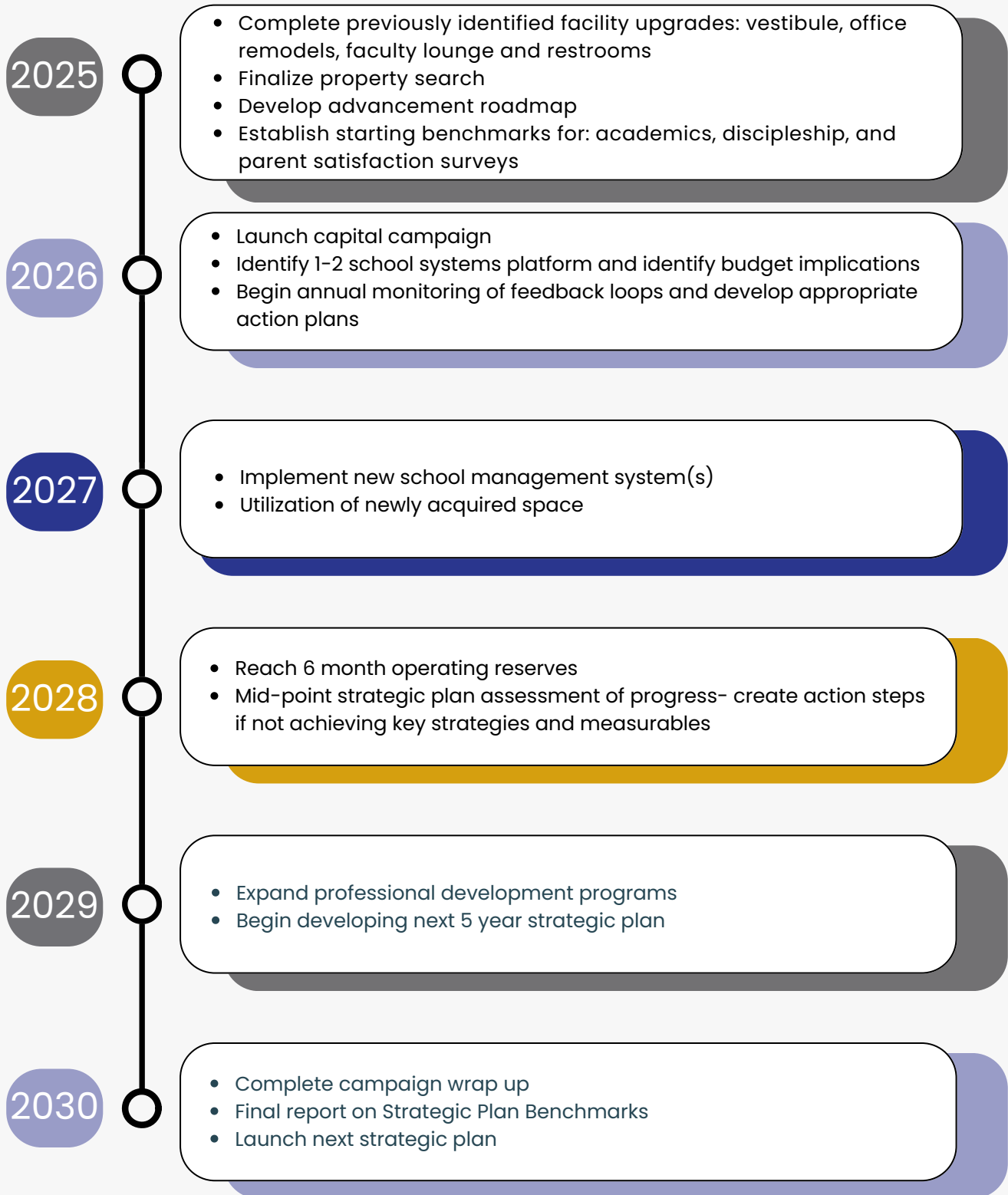
KEY STRATEGIES

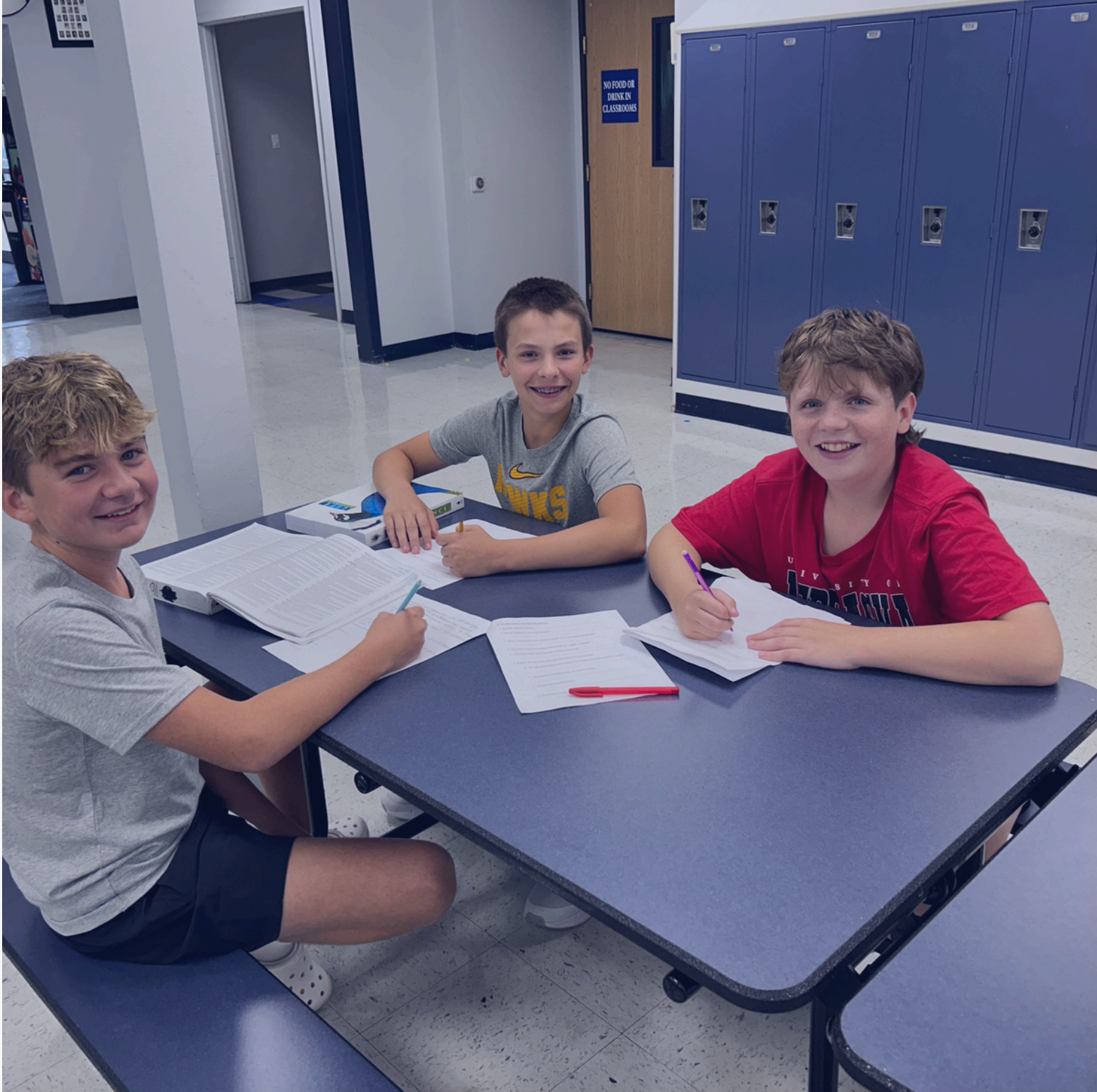
- Clearly define the roles of the Board and HOS in strategic oversight, policy-development, and operational leadership
- Develop HOS annual performance review process that focus on articulated strategic priorities and leadership effectiveness
- Foster HOS professional development
- Foster open communication between Board and Head of School
- Identify opportunities to grow spiritually together
- Develop and implement five year strategic plan
- Improve process for identifying, electing, onboarding new board members
- Review policy and by-laws on a regular schedule

KEY MEASURABLES

- Two multi-day strategic planning sessions per year
- Board members attend 75% of scheduled meetings with full engagement at all meetings
- Utilization of sub-committees with each board member serving on a minimum of one
- Annual Head of School evaluation with quarterly progress reports
- Continue with Board member led prayer and devotions prior to every board meeting
- All Board positions filled every year

TIMELINE





ANKENY CHRISTIAN
ACADEMY