



SCHOOL OF CHOICE

LAKECREST STRATEGIC PLAN 2020–2025



About Lakecrest

Established in 1993, Lakecrest, St. John's Independent School, is an incorporated non-profit entity. The Board of Directors governs the School and is composed of parents and interested community members. The Head of School, past Chair of the Board of Directors, and the President of the Home & School Association are ex officio and non-voting members of the Board. Our Faculty consists of 12 full-time teachers and one half-time teacher. There are two administrative staff (Head of School and Office Manager), a full-time Information Technology Specialist, and two maintenance staff.

Lakecrest is located on 58 Patrick Street in St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador, and we are the province's only independent school with membership in the Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), as well as the only PYP-accredited IB World School in Eastern Canada. Presently, approximately 104 families make up the Lakecrest community, with 156 students currently enrolled in the school. The average class size is 16-18 students.

Since 2006, Lakecrest has seen a steady increase in student enrolment, though the number of international students was affected by the economic downturn of the oil industry in 2015. This was balanced by positive growth in local student enrolment. The announcement of a high school program in the Fall of 2017 garnered further prospective student interest; however, this was short-lived and not sustained the following year. Lakecrest was further affected by the effects of COVID-19 from March to August 2020, which initially showed a large downturn in enrolment numbers. Through careful planning and preparation, as well as through the success of our remote learning platforms during the provincial shutdown, Lakecrest made considerable progress in restoring the number of students enrolled to a level similar to pre-COVID-19 times. This included a large number of new local families who joined the school due to its reputation as being well prepared to handle the unpredictability of the COVID-19 2020-2021 school year.

This momentum of increased name-recognition and highly-regarded reputation along with an influx of new families joining the Lakecrest community, make this an appropriate time to revisit our Strategic Plan to ensure we're well-positioned to capitalize on the forward momentum and future opportunities that are presented.

Purpose of this Document

This document outlines the strategic goals of the Lakecrest Board of Directors for the 2020-2025 academic years. The Board of Directors liaise with the Academic Faculty as needed to accomplish the tasks necessary to achieve our Strategic Priorities. All Lakecrest stakeholders will be important contributors to ensure all voices are heard, and the school continues to advance and achieve its strategic goals.

Our Mission

Lakecrest, St. John's Independent School, empowers students to be effective, independent learners who are principled and confident in their abilities and actions within the local and global community.

Our Guiding Principles

The Lakecrest community commits to demonstrating the following values as we strive to ensure:

- A safe, orderly environment is essential to learning.
- An enriched program provides for the full academic and personal development of each student.
- Expectations for students, faculty, and staff are supported to ensure full learning potential is achieved.
- Student evaluation is multifaceted, and its purpose is to inform instruction and positively motivate students.
- Parents and the extended community contribute to the learning experiences of students.



Our Vision of Education

Lakecrest develops internationally minded learners and leaders in an educational community of excellence. As an IB World School, we strive to create global citizens through the development of the IB Learner Profile. This is a list of characteristics we develop in our students, and in many ways, symbolizes the IB Mission Statement in practice.

Our school follows the IB philosophy and framework of student-centred, inquiry-based learning, with teachers acting as the facilitators of students coming to their own understanding of how and what they are learning. Student agency, and the development of skills (specifically the ATL skills: Approaches to Teaching and Learning) are at the core of IB teaching.

IB World Schools also focus on the development of international mindedness; that is, creating open-minded individuals who see the common humanity of all people, and accept and respect other cultures and beliefs.

As the only IB PYP-accredited school in Eastern Canada, Lakecrest strives to be a leader in international education for our local, national, and international communities.









Taking Stock

The Lakecrest Strategic Plan 2017–2020 set out three strategic directions for the school. Highlights of our achievements in relation to these priorities include:




Brand Development

-  Successfully engaged in a rebranding and marketing plan with DC Design House
-  Developed a communications plan
-  Raised the community profile of Lakecrest

Educational Excellence

-  External and internal review completed for IB evaluation and subsequent action plan completed
-  Upgraded technology infrastructure and tools to enhance learning experiences and key skill development for all learners
-  Professional development opportunities were provided for staff that aligned with strategic plan and personal/professional growth interests

Financial Sustainability

-  A successful Lakecrest 25th anniversary event, culminating in the building of an outdoor classroom and establishment of a \$50,000 capital fund
-  Began a database of past parents and students along with an Alumni of the Year Award to help develop future alumni relationships
-  Growth opportunities explored to lay foundation for future initiatives

Planning Context

In the fall of 2019, the Board of Directors, in cooperation with the Head of School, began the plan to conclude the current Strategic Plan and to formulate the new Strategic Plan through community meetings, workshops, input from the administrative team and brainstorming sessions with the intent to identify a clear direction forward for Lakecrest Independent School.

Through these information gathering events, it became clear that both Lakecrest's vision and mission statements remain true in the eyes of our school community and did not require updating at this time. All of this information was taken to the Lakecrest Staff and Board of Directors Strategic Planning Retreat with facilitator Tom Cooper, held in November 2019. This process focused primarily on two events: a session with Lakecrest's faculty and staff as well as combined board and staff strategic priorities discussion. Secondly, there was a separate board-only strategy planning session. Both sessions focused on the following key agenda items:



- **Review of Mission, Vision, Values** - Focus on success – what does success look like for Lakecrest? What is the school's value proposition?
- **Strategy Analysis** – What are Lakecrest's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats? Risks and issues emerging as well as resources needed for success?
- **Strategic Priorities** - What should the strategic priorities be for Lakecrest during the next three to five years?
- **Action Planning and Prioritization** – What are the specific action points emerging that can contribute to the success of the school and what should be prioritized from a strategic viewpoint by the Board and administration?

It became abundantly clear throughout various meetings that there are strong rooted beliefs that the social and emotional health of our learning community, alongside the continued development of positive relationships and a commitment to supporting each and every student as they achieve personal and academic goals and seek out new experiences, is critical to our success. Some opportunities that were presented included developing a more robust administrative structure and increased focus on organization/fund development for the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

Strategic Priorities

Lakecrest has identified four Strategic Priorities to focus on for the period of 2020-2025, which will help direct the efforts of the Board and School Operations in advancing Lakecrest Independent School. These Strategic Priorities broadly encompass the key areas of focus, building off of the momentum of our previous Strategic Plan, and laying the foundation for future, long-term Lakecrest Legacy initiatives that will ultimately benefit our students, the most important part of our community.

#1 - Strengthening Community Connections

A focus on our local and greater communities to expand opportunities for Lakecrest and its students.

#2 - Optimizing our Learning Environments

Improving and expanding our learning environments to meet the demands of 21st century learning.

#3 - Enhancing Teaching and Learning

Increasing professional development and collaboration to ensure best practices and the highest level of teaching and learning for our students.

#4 - Investing in our Financial Growth & Sustainability

Supporting new initiatives and exploring new areas of growth to drive the legacy of Lakecrest.

Strategic Priority #1

Strengthening Community Connections

At Lakecrest, we value building and maintaining meaningful connections not only with our local community of staff, parents, and students, but also extending those connections to our larger community: Alumni and partners. We plan on building on existing partnerships and exploring new ones with the IB global community, non-profit organizations, local universities, corporations and centres of innovation, as well as different levels of government.

We aim to strengthen our community connections to create rich experiences for our students, bridging opportunities that align with Lakecrest's vision of educational excellence.

It is important to foster long-standing philanthropic endeavours and maintain the sustainability and continuity to build on the longstanding legacy of Lakecrest. We will increase connections to student life by investing in our students, staff, and volunteers.



Priority	Strategic Actions	Board Committee(s) Involved
Establish and grow an alumni community that is connected, valued and celebrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate and engage with Alumni throughout the year Establish a Board-level Advancement Committee to manage alumni relations and spearhead fundraising efforts Increase alumni presence on the Board of Directors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancement Communications Governance
Collaborate with stakeholders and leaders in our community on innovation, entrepreneurship, and social change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with alumni and the parent community in school-wide events, fundraisers and leadership Identify opportunities to incorporate alumni and parents into the educational experiences of our students Increase philanthropic support and explore potential new strategic partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancement Communications School Operations
Connect with community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to advance our learning spaces Identify and build meaningful relationships with community partners to increase educational opportunities for our students Work closely with Home & School Association to integrate and communicate with our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancement Home & School Property School Operations

Strategic Priority #2

Optimising our Learning Environments



By embodying the IB philosophy, learning environments in the Lakecrest community are reflective, self- and co-regulated, energetic, creative, innovative, and inquiry-based. We emphasize the value of action-oriented learning and invest in building community understanding and engagement with the IB approaches to teaching and learning. Lakecrest strives to provide an inclusive environment where all learners are welcomed. We celebrate diversity and benefit from the unique perspectives that every member of our community brings to our school. All members of the Lakecrest community are supported in their learning; everyone is a learner.

Learning extends beyond the four walls of the classroom at Lakecrest, as we strive to provide a holistic approach to education to ensure the development of the whole child. We emphasize extra-curricular activities, social and emotional health and well-being, and creating safe and supportive learning environments where learners can take risks, practice empathy, and feel a strong sense of belonging.

Priority	Strategic Actions	Board Committee(s) Involved
Ensuring flexible learning spaces are available to all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore classroom and facility upgrades to create spaces which are more flexible, multidimensional and conducive to teaching and learning Increase in collaborative learning areas for staff and students to enhance collaboration and inclusivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Operations Property Finance
Leveraging digital technologies and tools, as well as online learning, to enhance capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Technology Master Plan to map out tech upgrades and needs Increase funding for digital and online teacher resources Increase the technological capacity of staff, students & parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Operations Home & School Finance
Continue to explore upgrades to Lakecrest's facilities and capacity to enhance teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Facilities/Campus Master Plan, including a Capital Plan Explore areas for expansion of the Lakecrest campus Identify areas of upgrade of the Lakecrest campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Operations Property Finance

Strategic Priority #3

Enhancing Teaching and Learning

Lakecrest is a community of lifelong learners, and to further develop that aim, it is essential that we provide a consistent and sustained focus on professional learning for teachers. Our educators model the skills, attitudes, and characteristics we expect to see and develop in our students.

Building off of our IB PYP 5-year Evaluation, Lakecrest will focus its efforts on enhancing the teaching and learning in our classrooms, specifically focusing on inquiry-based learning, curriculum mapping and the Approaches to Teaching and Learning (ATL) skills.



Using the IB framework, students learn how to find knowledge when it is needed, how to assimilate that knowledge, how to integrate that knowledge, and how to synthesize new ideas and solve problems. By emphasizing transdisciplinary themes, inquiry, and conceptual understandings, the IB PYP programme promotes learner agency, and values learner contribution and diversity as integral to the learning process. In a healthy, conducive learning environment where everyone has voice, choice, and ownership in the learning process, students and teachers will flourish. At Lakecrest, we recognize the need to empower students by providing them with opportunities to address local and global challenges, and to develop the skills and the confidence necessary to navigate this changing world.

Priority	Strategic Actions	Board Committee(s) Involved
A consistent and sustained focus on professional learning for teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in professional development budget and collaborative planning time for teachers • Regular participation in IB regional workshops and IB Americas conference • Increase in release time for curriculum coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Operations • Finance
An increase in the focus on the skills needed for students to be successful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create implicit & explicit opportunities to develop & assess Approaches to Teaching & Learning (ATL) skills across all grades • Curriculum mapping LA, IT & Academic Integrity skills from K-9 • Explore ways to expand our Student Support Services to better support our staff & students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Operations
Growing and enhancing the opportunities for students at Lakecrest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop explicit opportunities to explore international-mindedness from K-9 • Explore additional Grade Levels and/or IB programmes, and gauge the feasibility of introducing them • Expand opportunities for Service as Action for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Operations • Home & School

Strategic Priority #4

Investing in our Financial Growth & Sustainability

Lakecrest will continue to strive to maintain its financial sustainability by ensuring healthy enrolment numbers to adequately fund operating requirements, while exploring opportunities to enhance infrastructure. We will expand on our current revenue streams to explore new areas of growth for funding, and ensure Lakecrest remains on the cutting edge of both education and educational opportunities for its students.



Priority	Strategic Actions	Board Committee(s) Involved
Identify and expand revenue sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage alumni and school community with regular fundraising opportunities led by the Board Explore additional Grade levels and/or IB accreditations to attract new student revenue Increase our international student presence Focus on growth and management of the Lakecrest Capital Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancement Communications School Operations
Focus on increased student enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define optimal enrollment size for Lakecrest based on desired programming and student experiences Continued exposure of Lakecrest and its students in community-based media to attract new students Engage with Home & School and Lakecrest Community to increase 'word-of-mouth' marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home & School Communications
Improve ability to enhance Lakecrest's infrastructure and reinvest in its staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in professional development for staff Sustained focus on teacher recruitment and retention, including reinvestment in their well-being Finalize Lakecrest leadership structure with appropriate release time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance Property School Operations