

# REIMAGINING OUR SCHOOLS

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## The Campaign for IMS 2026

INDEPENDENCE  
**MISSION**  
SCHOOLS





**WHO WE  
SERVE**

The 14 IMS  
schools educate  
**4,000**  
students  
in grades Pre-K to 8

The population  
we serve is  
**98%** people  
of color

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Independence Mission Schools operates a network of 14 Catholic Pre-K to 8th grade schools in and near Philadelphia. Formerly run by the Archdiocese, the schools were slated to close when IMS acquired them in 2013. As independent schools combining Catholic values with academics, they now serve 4,000 of God's children who are growing up in neighborhoods where resources are severely limited.

During our first eight years, we lived our mission by providing a quality academic option for low-income families in areas where the public schools are failing. We are proud to be helping students of all faiths develop the strong minds and loving hearts that prepare them to contribute to the community and create a path to their dreams.

Over the next five years, our ambition is to become a leader in achieving positive educational results at a large scale for families that are working hard to escape the cycle of poverty. To that end, we developed a strategic plan, *Reimagining Our Schools*, to focus on academic outcomes, retention of students and teachers, and a sound financial and oversight model.

To fund the plan, we launched *The Campaign for IMS 2026*. Thanks to generous early donors in the quiet phase, we are more than halfway to the campaign's \$50 million goal.

## Now we need your help to reach our goal.

All faiths are  
welcome:  
**25% are  
Catholic**

75% of the families  
we serve have  
household incomes  
**under  
\$45,000**

All who apply  
receive  
**financial  
aid**  
without which they  
could not afford  
to enroll





## The Impact We Seek

We expect the impact of fully funding and implementing our Strategic Plan will be:

- Significant growth in **student achievement** in math and reading across all grades and all schools
  - Improved and stabilized **teacher retention** — with a focus on quality teachers
  - Increased **family satisfaction** network-wide leading to increased student retention and enrollment growth
  - Ensuring **facility quality** with a fiscally responsible schedule for ongoing maintenance across all schools
  - **Best practices** followed for board governance and management
  - Increased **financial stability** that decreases reliance on private philanthropy for operation
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# OUR CORE BELIEFS

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## LOVE

The cornerstone of a Catholic education is a culture of love that values and embraces the unique gifts of every child and that treats all people with dignity.

## HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL

We assume the best of our students; holding them to high expectations for academic achievement, behavior, and personal growth and guiding their development into respectful, confident adults.

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

It is possible to build unity in diversity, for differences neither restrain nor divide us, but allow us to look more deeply at ourselves and at our world.

## GOD-GIVEN POTENTIAL

Our students come to us full of promise and we are charged with helping them achieve their potential, so that they leave IMS having choices in the pursuit of college and career, based on confidence in their own intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aptitudes.

## STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY

Community is at the heart of our work. Our existence makes our communities stronger, the community makes our schools stronger, and we are preparing students to be contributing members of their communities.

## Progress to date makes us confident we can deepen our impact.

- Implemented **robust data analysis** so that student testing leads to rapid adjustments in classroom instruction to meet identified student needs
- Created efficiencies and **drove quality improvements** by centralizing teacher training, talent (human resources and recruiting), budgeting and accounting, facilities oversight, data analysis, and tuition assistance
- Offered low-income families an affordable, private, values-based education by providing significant **financial aid for all** who applied for it
- Invested in making urgent **facility repairs and upgrades** to improve safety and work toward making our schools inspiring places to learn
- **Raised more than \$87M** to subsidize student tuition and central office costs, as well as \$11M in Endowment funds that support tuition grants
- Helped pass state legislation that enabled **more public funding** to flow to low-income students and the private schools that serve them



# The Strategic Plan

We will overcome key challenges with focus on initiatives that drive positive change.

- **Academic progress** for our students will result from principals being instructional leaders, teachers trained in data-driven instruction and implementation of our new math and literacy curricula, and teacher leaders trained to help other teachers improve instruction.
- **Teacher retention**, a major driver of academic quality, will improve as we raise salaries and benefits to more competitive levels. Compensation that is closer to market rate will likewise help with teacher recruitment.
- **Student retention** will improve with more streamlined and transparent processes for families, greater attention to high school readiness, proactive family engagement, and upgrades to school buildings.
- **Fiscal stability** will result from centralizing and staffing a robust fundraising operation, shifting to more reliable funding streams such as tax credits and endowment income, and ensuring families pay what they can afford.
- **High-quality governance** will result from increasing the board's size and diversity, and shifting the board's focus from managing a start-up to supporting the professional management team as a strategic partner.



## OUR TOP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Best in Class Academics

- Significant increases in national achievement percentiles for math and literacy
- 85% teacher retention

### Financial Sustainability

- Raise \$17M to meet Strategic Priority program needs
- Raise \$33M in permanent scholarship and facilities support

- Double the tax credit allocation per student

### Exemplary Student & Family Experience

- 10% increase in students attending a high-quality high school
- All schools meet baseline facilities quality standards
- 85% student retention

### Model Governance

- Add 10 new board members addressing high-need areas: fundraising, diversity, advocacy, and facilities

*For details of specific initiatives to achieve these goals, see the Strategic Plan.*

*While we are incredibly proud of our achievements, it is also important to consider areas for improvement. Key existing challenges include pace of academic progress, teacher retention, student retention, balancing fiscal stability and mission, and shifting from start-up to high-quality governance.*

*These will drive our network strategy over the next five years **as we transition IMS from a solid school choice option to a top-tier academic destination for students in and near Philadelphia by 2026.***

— Bruce Robinson, President & CEO, Independence Mission Schools

# The Campaign



## Our Goal: \$50M

**\$17M**

to implement initiatives to improve literacy, math, and the retention of students and quality teachers

**\$25M**

for Endowment to support financial aid for families

**\$8M**

for Endowment to support ongoing maintenance and upgrades to aging school facilities

### Will you help us...

- Improve academic outcomes for children growing up in disadvantaged neighborhoods
- Recruit and retain high-quality teachers by offering competitive pay and benefits
- Retain more students by giving families more of what they want from a school
- Improve fiscal stability by increasing tax credit and endowment revenue

### There are many ways to donate.

To discuss the options, please contact Michelle Brown, Chief Development Officer, at **610.200.5100 opt3** or **mbrown@imspfila.org**

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