

Bylaws and Governance Structure School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh

Effective January 1, 2019

The following statement sets a tone of inclusivity and engagement at our University, generally, and within our School of Education, particularly: “The University of Pittsburgh is an institution of higher learning and research in which policy is shaped with the involvement of trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students. An environment of collegiality permits individuals and groups to share information and express views in an open and responsive manner. Consultation and consensus building are important means for approaching decisions, especially in academic matters” (<https://www.hr.pitt.edu/handbook>). Our work, as members of the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh, is guided by and grounded in our unwavering commitment to sustain academic excellence and engagement with regards to curricula, instructional programs, degree requirements, admissions, grading procedures, and research initiatives, among other related academic matters. To sustain our academic excellence and engagement, effective participation in governance, decision-making, and planning and budgeting is necessary by faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

By **shared governance**, we focus on the overall well-being of our School, knowing that its success depends on the commitment of faculty, staff, students, and administrators to collaboratively accomplish shared goals within a transparent governance structure. Thus, our governance structure operates within the framework of University policies. By **equity**, we focus on sustaining a governance structure that affords a voice to all members of our community (faculty, staff, students, and administrators), and that also recognizes, encourages, and responds to the voices and perspectives of historically marginalized and underrepresented people, including the indigenous people and first nations on whose land the University of Pittsburgh and our School of Education now stand.

By **transparency**, we focus on making decisions that are relevant and fair, and that honor, even if they differ from, the perspectives of members of our School. In order for members of our School to participate in decision-making processes, we will engage in transparent practices. By **representation**, we focus on always being accountable to the members of our School and ensuring that structures for communication are made available to all. By **efficiency**, we focus on the ways in which our governance structure must be timely in its decisions and must respect the time of those members of our School who are charged with carrying out its processes.

The prior bylaws, last updated in 2012, were intended to foster a more democratic governance system that was “transparent, accountable, efficient, equitable, community-oriented, and adequate.”¹ In implementation, however, we have come to recognize that our prior bylaws did not move us far enough toward these goals. Therefore, to engage in continual improvement of our governance structure and process, and to ensure heightened levels of engagement, transparency, accountability, efficiency, equity, community, and adequacy, our School of

¹ “SOE Governance Model and Bylaws, April 2012” document

Education community spent fifteen months (July 2017-September 2018) considering data as well as listening to and thinking with others about strategic goals, expectations, future directions, and next steps. Thus, these updated bylaws have been carefully informed by:

- School-wide faculty and staff *climate surveys*.
- An inclusive *strategic planning process* focused on educational excellence; working in and with communities; research-practice partnerships; recruiting highly effective faculty, staff, and students; and building foundational educational strengths.
- *Listening sessions* between the Dean and specific groups, including alumni, community partners, foundation funders, staff, faculty, students, and the Dean’s advisory groups—the Board of Visitors, Executive Committee, and School Council Steering Committee.
- The selection and examination of enrollment trends, programs, degree options, strategic plans, bylaws, and governance structures at *six aspirant AAU schools/colleges of education*, including three publics (University of Virginia, University of Michigan, and Michigan State University), and three privates (Teachers College, University of Pennsylvania, and Northwestern University).
- A review of current bylaws and governance structures of *other Schools at the University of Pittsburgh* (Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences; School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences; School of Pharmacy; School of Nursing; School of Social Work; Swanson School of Engineering; School of Public and International Affairs).

Also, it is important to note the intended meanings of certain terms that are frequently used in the bylaws. The term “**Department**,” when used to refer to faculty members, represents any entity in our school where SOE faculty members can have their official and primary appointment. When used to refer to staff members, the term “**Department**” represents any unit, institute, center, or department where SOE staff have their full-time affiliation. “**Faculty**” represents full-time faculty with appointments in the Tenure-Stream and full-time Non-Tenure Stream faculty with appointments as Professors of Practice or Clinical Instructors. “**Staff**” represents staff members with full-time appointments in our School. The term “**At Large**” represents full-time staff and faculty from any SOE department, center, unit, or institute. For additional definitions, see the appendix at the end of this document.

I. Advisory Groups

The School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh has three official advisory groups:

- Board of Visitors
- Executive Committee
- School of Education Council/Planning and Budget Committee

Board of Visitors

Charge: The Board of Visitors provides the Dean with valuable advice and external perspective on ways to improve the overall quality of our students’ educational experiences. The Board serves as ambassadors for the School; connects students to job and internship placements; and

supports fundraising efforts. Additionally, the Board provides advice on new education trends and strategic initiatives, alumni relations and engagement, fundraising, marketing and communications, and specific ways to better align the School's mission and vision with key education priorities regionally, nationally, and globally. The Board meets at least twice per year.

Membership: Chaired by the Dean and an Alumnus or Alumna of our School of Education, the Board includes members approved by the Chancellor and the Provost and then invited by the Dean to serve an initial 3-year term.

Executive Committee

Charge: The Executive Committee serves as the primary liaison between the Dean and the School's departments, centers, units, and laboratory school. Committee members serve as the official representative for their respective faculty, staff, and students regarding all academic matters. Members assist with the coordination and implementation of the mission, vision, cultural drivers, and strategic goals and priorities that impact every academic area of the School. The Committee convenes at least monthly.

Membership: Chaired by the Dean, the Executive Committee members include Associate and Assistant Deans, Department Chairs, Executive Director of Administration, and the Directors of major centers and/or units in the School. These have included the Center for Urban Education, Office of Child Development, and Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School. However, membership on the Executive Committee may potentially include representatives from other centers, units, and/or departments in the School as needed and determined by the Dean.

School of Education Council/Planning and Budget Committee

Charge: The School of Education Council, which also serves as our School's University-mandated Planning and Budget Committee (PBC), is an elected body of faculty, staff, and students who advises the Dean regarding strategic planning, capital improvements, spatial renovations, and major budgetary matters. Council runs elections for membership on the Council and on the School's Standing Committees, and ensures that any concerns of faculty, staff, and students are both heard and considered in important decision-making processes. Council also advises the Dean on overall strategies to enhance the professional culture and functionality of the School and to increase engagement among faculty, staff, students, and alumni. The Council and Planning and Budget Committee convenes monthly throughout the entire year, or as needed.

Membership: Chaired by a faculty member elected by Council to serve as Chair for two years and as Past Chair for one additional year, the Council is composed of one elected faculty member from each department, two staff members elected at large, and two students elected at large (graduate and/or undergraduate). Members are elected to three-year terms (1 year for student members).

Elections: By the first of March of each year, Council announces committee vacancies and solicits nominations from across the School. Council prepares and distributes election slates to all eligible voting faculty, staff, and student representatives in the School. Balloting may be

either electronic or in paper form, provided that individual votes are not identified with individual voters. The Council Chair and a designated representative from the Dean's Office will count the votes and publish the results (except if those persons are candidates for election on the current ballot). If they are, then they will not participate in the counting of the ballots and the Dean will appoint someone.

II. Standing Committees

The School of Education has the following six Standing Committees:

- Academic Programs
- Equity and Justice
- Promotion and Tenure
- Research, Teaching, and Mentoring
- Staff Engagement
- Student Engagement

Standing Committees are composed of elected members who serve two-year terms (except student members, who serve one year terms). In the event that an elected member cannot serve a full term (e.g., leaving the university, medical leave, sabbatical, etc.), the Dean will appoint a replacement to serve out the remaining term.

With the exception of Promotion and Tenure, committees are chaired by an Associate Dean, Assistant Dean, or Executive Director from the Dean's Office. Among other duties, the chairs of standing committees are responsible for setting the agenda, facilitating meetings, and ensuring that minutes are posted and action items are completed by respective committee members.

Committees have standing charges (see below), but can also, with Dean's consent and in tandem with the Committees, launch ad hoc committees² to address specific needs and opportunities as they arise. In this case, ad hoc committees are usually composed of a subset of committee members and may include additional faculty, staff, and/or students appointed by the committee chair.

Academic Programs Committee

Charge: Develop, implement, and monitor effective policies and procedures related to academic programs and curricula, including approving new programs and courses, approving major modifications to existing programs and courses, and creating and/or approving academic program policies for the catalog. The committee works with Department Chairs and School-wide Program Coordinators (this includes the Ed.D. Coordinator but can also include the Ph.D. Coordinator) to develop, maintain, and disseminate a "map" of curriculum offerings across the School, tracking what and when courses and other academic experiences may be offered for the next three years. The committee coordinates evaluation and accountability processes in order to

² Ad hoc committees are temporary, short-term committees that are formed to complete a specific objective or task.

assure program quality. Among other related duties, the committee is also charged with expanding opportunities for members of our School to participate in conversations about academic programs and curricula that center learning, collaboration, equity, justice, and innovation. In accordance with the SOE Academy Integrity Policy, members of the Academic Programs Committee may be called upon to serve as members of the Academic Integrity Hearing Board.

Membership: Chaired by the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, the committee includes one elected and voting faculty member from each department, the Executive Director of Administration or her/his appointed staff who is a non-voting member, and two students elected at large (graduate and/or undergraduate) who are voting members.

Equity and Justice Committee

Charge: Provide a transformative vision for our School community to come together around our explicit commitments to equity and justice and to make our work more collaborative, anti-racist, decolonial, and humanizing. Among other related duties, the committee is charged with the following: Creating space for dialogue and innovation on topics of equity and justice in education; partnering with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners to examine ways to support and account for the various experiences of children, families, and communities; and initiating programs across the School and within multiple communities that advance equity and justice in education and that enhance the School's efforts to recruit and retain historically diverse populations of faculty, staff, and students. The committee monitors the School's compliance with the University policy around equal opportunity, diversity, and equity. The committee chair convenes an ad hoc committee each year to review applications and make selections of nominees and candidates for Equity and Justice graduate fellowships. The members of this particular ad hoc committee are chosen by the Associate Dean for Equity and Justice and include one faculty member from each department and one graduate student.

Membership: Chaired by the Associate Dean for Equity and Justice, the committee includes four voting faculty members elected at large from full-time faculty, one elected and voting staff, one appointed and voting staff from the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Services and/or the Office of Student and Career Services, and two students (graduate and/or undergraduate) who are voting members and elected at large.

Promotion and Tenure Committee

Charge: Develop and implement effective, fair, and equitable procedures regarding faculty promotion and tenure. The committee communicates with faculty to make the tenure and promotion process as clear and transparent as possible. All promotion and tenure policies and procedures must be in compliance with guidelines established by the Chancellor and Provost of the University. After a department has voted and made a recommendation, this committee reviews the case in the School of Education and makes an independent recommendation to the Dean, thus serving as a second-tier review on all faculty tenure and promotion cases.

Membership: The committee consists of five tenured full professors, four tenured associate professors, and one professor of practice (associate or full) elected at large. Each year, the committee chooses one of the tenured full professors to be the Chair. The Associate Dean for Research and Faculty participates as an ex-officio, non-voting member.

Research, Teaching, and Mentoring Committee

Charge: Encourage, promote, and sustain a strong, active, collaborative, and highly-engaged research, teaching, and mentoring culture in the School of Education. The committee works with Department Chairs and/or Associate Department Chairs to implement and oversee consistent processes for evaluation of teaching and yearly evaluation of faculty. The committee develops and oversees School-wide strategies to foster research-practice partnerships and other forms of community-engaged research, as well as cultivates a strong culture of mentoring for faculty and for students. Each year, the committee will appoint and oversee an ad hoc committee of faculty and students to solicit and review grant proposals for internal seed funding (this includes the Faculty-Student Research Grants program).

Membership: Chaired by the Associate Dean for Research and Faculty, the committee includes one elected and voting faculty member from each department and two students (graduate and/or undergraduate) who are voting members and elected at large.

Staff Engagement Committee

Charge: Serve as advocate for the School of Education staff and act as liaison for staff to the School's administration and with the University's Staff Council. The committee is charged with proposing, developing, and monitoring effective practices and procedures in the areas of staff performance review, professional development and mentoring, professional learning, and staff satisfaction. The chair works with committee members and the Dean to devise and execute a transformative charge and agenda for the committee that aligns with the School's strategic plan and priorities.

Membership: The committee is chaired by the Executive Director of Administration and includes one elected and voting staff member from each department and two voting staff members elected at large.

Student Engagement Committee

Charge: Serve as an advocate for all students in the School of Education and identify collaborative student-led projects that contribute to the mission and vision of the School. The committee is charged with identifying and addressing issues of concern among students in relation to student recruitment, admissions, retention, diversity, equity, advising, mentoring, and wellness.

Membership: Chaired by the Associate or Assistant Dean for Students, the committee includes presidents or representatives of student organizations in the School of Education that have faculty advisors and are recognized by the Student Organization Resource Center and/or the

Dean (these include the Council of Graduate Students in Education, Kappa Delta Pi, Exercise Science Organization, Future Educators of America, and among possible others, Alliance of Urban Scholars). The committee also includes four students elected at-large from the student body, each representing students across our undergraduate, master's/certification, Ph.D., and Ed.D. areas. Faculty advisors of SOE student organizations are members of this committee in an ex-officio, non-voting capacity.



III. Governance Cycle

The Governance Cycle begins when the university's classes are back in full session, which is usually at the end of August. At the beginning of the new academic year, a School-wide meeting (now referred to as "Summit") is facilitated by the Dean and the Associate and/or Assistant Deans, who will present strategic initiatives, goals, and priorities for the current year. They will also report progress made during the last year. Members of standing committees will be announced, and the committees' charges will be shared. Summits occur at least once a semester, with the possibility of additional Summits occurring throughout any given semester as needed.

Advisory groups, standing committees, the graduate student council (CGSE), and an undergraduate student council (CUSE) will establish their meeting schedules and, for transparency, will share these dates with the School community at the beginning of each new academic semester. To ensure that committee work is recognized and that new policies and/or developments are initiated, a progress report will be made available to members of the School of Education near the end of the academic year (generally, by April 30th). The Governance Cycle can be summarized as follows:

1. School of Education's Fall Summit (September)
 - Discussion of any progress on strategic initiatives made during the last year
 - Overview of strategic initiatives, goals, and priorities for the current year
 - Announcement of new members of Advisory Groups and Standing Committees
2. Advisory Groups and Committee Work (Advisory Groups: all year; Committees: September-May, with the strong possibility of year-round when/if the need arises)
 - Regular meetings of Advisory Groups and Standing Committees to ensure goals, charges, and priorities align with the School's strategic plan and are being met
 - Ad Hoc Committees formed and appointed as needed and on a temporary basis for a specific objective or task
3. School of Education's Spring Summit (January or February)
 - Discussion of progress on current strategic initiatives, goals, and priorities
 - Overview/discussion of additional strategic work that needs to be accomplished
 - Announcement of any committee vacancies that need to be filled for the next year
4. Advisory Groups and Standing Committees' Summaries (April)
 - Summaries or progress reports are made available to the School community
 - Discussion of next steps and/or changes to consider for the following year

IV. Amending the Bylaws

Proposals to amend the bylaws must be presented to the Dean and then shared with the School's faculty, staff, administrators, CGSE and, if applicable, CUSE Executive Committees. Within a one-week period following circulation of the proposal, faculty, staff, administrators, and the CGSE and/or CUSE Executive Committee may submit written amendments and/or editing

suggestions to the Dean or designated representative. The proposed amendments and edited sections of the bylaws will be circulated to faculty, staff, administrators, and the student executive committee(s). During a School-wide meeting, the new proposal must be moved, seconded, and discussed, and a ballot for voting distributed or emailed. The voting period will follow for no more than four working days. A decision to amend or replace the bylaws will be determined by a simple majority of those who have voted from our eligible faculty, staff, and representatives of our student executive committee(s).

Appendix: Community Members of the School of Education

The governance structure is designed to represent and serve faculty, staff, and students in our School. The following describes each of these groups.

Faculty

Tenure-Stream Faculty: Tenure is intended to assure the University that there will be continuity in its faculty and in the functions for which they are responsible. The primary responsibilities of tenure-stream faculty are effective teaching, impactful research, and strong advising/mentoring of students. These full-time positions (following a University-prescribed process for appointment, promotion, and tenure) are represented under these Bylaws.

Professors of Practice: Professors of practice, generally referred to as “non-tenure-stream faculty” at the University, are full-time faculty who have as their primary responsibilities innovative teaching and/or supervision of students. Additional responsibilities can include scholarly connections of research to practice, presentations, and engaged academic, clinical, and/or field-based activities that are determined by contract. These full-time positions are represented under these Bylaws.

Clinical Instructors: Faculty whose primary responsibility is teaching. These full-time positions are represented under these Bylaws.

Visiting Faculty: Faculty whose appointments are on a temporary basis, usually for not more than one academic year. Visiting faculty do not serve on School committees and are not considered full-time faculty for the purposes of these Bylaws.

Faculty with Secondary Appointments in the School of Education: Faculty with a secondary appointment in the School who already hold a current and primary faculty appointment in another school at the University. Faculty with secondary appointments in the School of Education are not considered full-time faculty for the purposes of these Bylaws.

Part-Time Faculty, to include Adjunct Faculty: Faculty who do not hold yearly positions, but who are contracted on a limited basis to fulfill duties that full-time faculty in the School are unable to fulfill (e.g., innovative teaching, supervision of students, etc.). They do not serve on School committees and are not considered full-time faculty for the purposes of these Bylaws.

Emeritus Faculty: Faculty with emeritus status³ continue to be valued members of our School community, but do not serve on School committees and are not considered full-time faculty for the purposes of these Bylaws.

Falk School Faculty: Faculty members whose primary duties are to teach at the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School. Falk School Faculty are distinct from full-time School of Education faculty. They do not serve on School committees and are not considered full-time faculty for the purposes of these Bylaws.

Research Associates: Typically, Research Associates have full-time appointments in support of research and/or scholarship and they work under the supervision of a faculty member. They are not considered faculty members by the university.

Students

Students enrolled in our programs are part of our School of Education community. Historically, this has only included the Council of Graduate Students in Education (CGSE), representing students enrolled in our School's graduate programs. The CGSE Bylaws determine the process by which student representatives are selected for participation in the governance process. Our increasing population of undergraduate students allows for the formation of a Council of Undergraduate Students in Education (CUSE), representing students enrolled in our School's undergraduate programs. The designated executive committee members of both CGSE and CUSE are eligible to vote on behalf of students.

Staff

Staff members in the School of Education include the Executive Director of Administration, the Directors of Financial Operations, Marketing Communications, Admissions and Enrollment, Student and Career Services, and IT/Technology, as well as all full-time administrators, managers, associates, assistants, and staff support specialists in our departments, units, centers, and institutes.

³ For more information, see https://www.provost.pitt.edu/faculty-handbook/ch2_app_emeritus_pol.

The School of Education Strategic Plan, 2019-2024

“We are the ones we have been waiting for.”
(June Jordan, “Poem for South African Women, 1980)

The following strategic plan is a result of a collaborative and collegial school-wide effort by members of the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. It offers a brief overview of the University’s core goals and mission as well as a short summary of the School’s history. Then, it describes the collected and analyzed data that inform the School’s strategic plan. The School’s new mission and vision statement as well as its cultural drivers, strategic goals, and plans for implementation and sustainability are also described. The overall goal of this plan is twofold: (1) To position the School as a leading education institution that proactively responds to local, national, and global challenges and opportunities in education, health, and wellness, and (2) To ensure that the School is a critical, innovative, collaborative, and joyful place for learning, teaching, research, and engagement.

University of Pittsburgh: Core Goals

The University’s “Plan for Pitt: Making a Difference Together” is guided by six core goals:¹

- *Advance Educational Excellence:* “We aspire to be a university that prepares students to lead lives of impact through a supportive environment focused on a holistic and individualized approach to learning inside and outside the classroom.”
- *Engage in Research of Impact:* “We aspire to be a university that advances the frontiers of knowledge and makes a positive impact on the world through collaborative and multidisciplinary approaches to research that focus on areas of great societal need.”
- *Strengthen Communities:* “We aspire to be a university that strengthens our communities—from the Pitt community, to our region and the world around us—by expanding engagements, supporting collaborations, and embracing a global perspective.”
- *Promote Diversity and Inclusion:* “We aspire to be a university community that embodies diversity and inclusion as core values that enrich learning, scholarship, and the communities we serve.”
- *Embrace the World:* “We aspire to be a university community that is committed to convening bright minds to explore and address global issues that improve life in the world’s local communities. By engaging in research, policy, partnerships, and the study of language and culture, we open the door to global citizenship.”
- *Build Foundational Strength:* “We aspire to be a university that supports success through a foundation of strong internal culture, a robust capacity to partner, outstanding infrastructure, and effective operations.”

¹ For information on “The Plan for Pitt,” see <https://www.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Strategic-Plan-Presentation.pdf>.

University of Pittsburgh: Mission

The University's mission, as outlined in the "Plan for Pitt: Making a Difference Together," is to:

- Offer superior educational programs
- Advance the frontiers of knowledge and creative endeavor
- Share expertise with private, community, and public partners

School of Education: Brief Historical Overview²

The School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh was established on February 3, 1910, and its founding dean was Professor Will Grant Chambers. Just seven years after its founding and one month before World War I, the University and its various schools, including the School of Education, increased its collective efforts to prepare for the war. Samuel Black Linhart, Secretary of the University's Board of Trustees, wrote a letter to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson that stated: "Resolved, That the Board of Trustees of the University of Pittsburgh place all the available resources of the University which the Government of the United States may require, in case of threatened or actual war, at the disposal of the Government." In response to Linhart's letter, President Wilson and U.S. Secretary of War, Newton Baker, expressed gratitude and insisted, in the words of the Commissioner of Education, Philander Priestley Claxton, that "If the war should be long the country will need all the trained men and women it can get" and "when the war is over there will be made upon us such demands for men and women of knowledge and training as have never before come to any country..."³

World War I did happen. Although the School of Education faced a sharp decline in enrollment as well as financial difficulties during this time, it took the lead in creating what was first referred to as the "Pittsburgh Plan," but eventually became known as the "War Garden Movement." This movement resulted from a letter that Pitt students wrote to President Wilson. In the letter, they suggested "that students of all colleges volunteer to work on farms" as a way to provide "a robust food supply for the war and our allies." Upon this suggestion, members of the School of Education took the lead. They cultivated "small plots of gardens as well as volunteers to bring in the harvests at local farms and classes in preserving food."⁴

After the war, the School of Education sought ways to reach students and provide them with educational instruction. A partnership was formed between the School and KDKA Radio (now News Radio 1020 KDKA), and a broadcasting studio was developed on campus that aired educational instruction to students via radio. This was monumental, particularly so because "KDKA went on the air in Pittsburgh as the world's first commercially licensed station on November 2, 1920." Although "amateur ham radio operators and military communications had

² For information on the School of Education's history, see <https://www.education.pitt.edu/AboutUs/History.aspx>.

³ For more information, see "All In: The University in the Great War," <http://exhibit.library.pitt.edu/ww1/>.

⁴ The School of Education played a major role in making sure that students were involved in producing and providing people with fresh food. For more information, see "All In: The University in the Great War," <http://exhibit.library.pitt.edu/ww1/>.

been sending messages over the airwaves for several years previously,” KDKA led the way as the first radio station in the country.⁵

Overtime, the School of Education became known for its various outreach and engagement efforts (e.g., War Garden Movement; partnership with the radio station; development of The School of Childhood, which is now the Falk Laboratory School; etc.). It also became known as a place with a strong history of preparing teachers and administrators to work inside schools.

Since its earlier days, especially as marked by both World War I and World War II, the School of Education’s scope and mission have expanded. Along with preparing teachers and administrators to work inside schools, we also prepare and collaborate with education researchers, supervisors, policymakers, health and wellness professionals, families, children and young adults, community pedagogues, and other change agents and change leaders. Doing so allows us to engage learning, health, and wellness from multiple justice-driven perspectives. From our teaching, research, and engaged activities in Administrative and Policy Studies, Child Development, Health and Physical Activity, Instruction and Learning, Psychology in Education, Learning Sciences, Urban and Rural Education, and Global Studies, to our various partnerships with school districts and community organizations, we remain committed to positively impacting local, regional, national, and global communities. The following plan represents our commitment and sets the stage for the important work that our School community will participate in, collaborate on, and lead.

School of Education: Strategic Plan

“As you reach out to those for whom you will be directly responsible and those whom you love, remember to give some of your time, some of your talents, and some of your gifts to ensure that every child is given access to the best possible educational experience.”

(Helen S. Faison, “You Can Take It with You” Pitt Commencement Speech, 2005)

This strategic plan describes goals, expectations, and future directions for the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. It is informed by perspectives from internal stakeholders (School of Education students, staff, and faculty; University administrators) and external stakeholders (our Board of Visitors; alumni; school district leaders; community partners; representatives from social service organizations; leaders of local foundations).

Also important to note is that this strategic plan is heavily informed by data collected and analyzed from the following sources:

- *Climate surveys:* School-wide faculty and staff survey; COACHE survey for Pitt faculty⁶
- *Listening sessions:* These involved conversations with the Dean and specific groups, including alumni, community partners, foundation funders, staff, faculty, students, and the Dean’s advisory groups (the Board of Visitors, Executive Committee, and School Council Steering Committee)

⁵ For more information, see “Pennsylvania Center for the Book” <https://pabook.libraries.psu.edu/literary-cultural-heritage-map-pa/feature-articles/kdka-broadcastings-pioneer-station>.

⁶ See attachments, “School Survey/Results” and “COACHE Survey/Results.”

- *Series of focus groups across five areas:* The five areas that were identified from the listening sessions were educational excellence; working in and with communities; research-practice partnerships; recruiting highly effective faculty, staff, and students; and building foundational educational strengths⁷
- *Selection of six (6) aspirant AAU schools/colleges of education:* These included three publics (University of Virginia, University of Michigan, and Michigan State University), and three privates (Teachers College, University of Pennsylvania, and Northwestern University). Focus was placed on examination of these institutions' enrollment trends, programs, degree options, strategic plans, bylaws, and governance structures.
- *Review of current strategic plans, bylaws, and governance structures of other Schools at the University of Pittsburgh:* These included the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, School of Pharmacy, School of Nursing, School of Social Work, Swanson School of Engineering, and the School of Public and International Affairs.

Mission-Vision: The following statement is our new mission-vision. It encapsulates what we do, what we believe, and who we continually seek to become as members of the School community.

- We ignite learning. We strive for well-being for all. We teach. We commit to student, family, and community success. We commit to educational equity. We advocate. We work for justice. We cultivate relationships. We forge engaged partnerships. We collaborate. We learn with and from communities. We innovate and agitate. We pursue and produce knowledge. We research. We disrupt and transform inequitable educational structures. We approach learning as intertwined with health, wellness, and human development. We address how national, global, social, and technological change impacts learning. We shape practice and policy. We teach with and for dignity. We think. We dream. We lead with integrity. We are the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

Cultural Drivers: The following integrated set of cultural drivers set the stage for how we interact with, listen to, and respect each other. They represent our values, beliefs, and behaviors, and they support how we honor and enact our new mission-vision as members of the School of Education:

- *Integrity and dignity:* Our School of Education is committed to providing opportunities for everyone to learn, which we see as a moral imperative. We lead with integrity and dignity by being mindful of how we teach, conduct research, and engage with various communities. Doing these things requires that we always foster a strong ethic of justice and compassion with our students and ourselves, and with the families and communities with whom we collaborate and serve. It also requires that we take speculative stances and engage in risk-taking with integrity and for dignity.
- *Educational equity and justice:* As a School of Education that values integrity and dignity, we are also committed to educational equity and justice. This value is reflected in the multiple and humanizing ways in which we take up transformative educational

⁷ These areas were identified after conducting various listening sessions with members of our School of Education community. For more information, see "Overview of Strategic Planning Topic Areas and Focus Groups."

practices that foster a positive, collective impact in education. Our commitment to educational equity and justice is visible in how we interact with each other and in how we facilitate the development of innovative programs, policies, and practices that advance educational, social, and human rights for all.

- *A culture of respect, transparency, and accountability:* As a premier School of Education, we uphold a culture of respect that values the lives, cultural traditions, and intellectual practices of all people, especially those who have been and are historically marginalized, oppressed, and ignored by societal forces. To uphold this culture, we commit to transparent practices and high levels of accountability with regards to how we interact, operate, and function as a School of Education, on campus and across the world.
- *Educational excellence:* We value a culture of excellence, recognizing that to improve the educational landscape, conditions, and opportunities for others depends on our ongoing discovery and application of evidence and knowledge, combined with humanizing and anti-racist practices. Thus, our commitment to educational excellence materializes in the many ways we ignite learning and disrupt and transform inequitable educational structures.
- *High-quality research and engaged partnerships:* Our passion, commitment, and collaborative spirit for education research and partnerships mean that we value cutting-edge, impactful, rigorous, data- and practice- informed scholarship. Simultaneously, we value collaborative and mutually beneficial forms of engaged partnerships that serve our community, state, nation, and world. In so doing, we commit to learning with and from communities.
- *Innovation and interdisciplinarity:* We are dedicated to always questioning what education means and pushing the boundaries of what knowledge entails, as reflected in our interdisciplinary forms of teaching, scholarship, and engagement, and as embedded in the overall functionality and operationality of our School. Because we value innovation and interdisciplinarity, we are able to address how national, global, social, and technological change impacts learning.

Strategic Goals and Priorities: To fulfill our mission-vision, we will strive to accomplish four major, interconnected strategic goals and priorities. These goals are **not** listed in a hierarchical order; thus, they are unnumbered. Our work is guided by Ann Cudd’s (2018) bold goal for the University of Pittsburgh, which is “for us to be the most dynamic, engaged, urban research university in the country.”⁸

Strategic Goal: *In our unwavering commitment to equity, justice, and innovation, we will ignite learning, pursue and produce knowledge, and advance educational excellence.*

- *To meet this goal,* we will create systematic opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to ignite learning, pursue and produce knowledge, discuss and improve instruction, and advance educational excellence within and across our programs and degree options.

⁸ See the September 18, 2018 video “Meet Provost Ann Cudd,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=go-vXh8xnq0>.

Implementing the following strategies will help us meet this goal:

- Strengthen and extend opportunities for teaching and learning among faculty, staff, and students in the School, at Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School, and within various school districts. To do this, we will: (a) establish a teaching and learning forum and other collaborative professional development experiences for faculty, staff, and students to examine effective ways to enhance our practices; (b) place intentional emphasis on how our commitment to equity, justice, and innovation materializes in every aspect of our teaching and learning engagements; and (c) strive for and measure our continual improvement of instructional effectiveness.
- Connected to our teaching and learning forum, create a teaching-mentoring program for faculty, facilitated by colleagues who are recognized as innovative, engaged practitioners in our School, at the University, and in other educational spaces and places. This will necessarily require that we work to increase our use of technology as a means of connecting with innovative, engaged teachers and practitioners across the world.
- Centralize the IT/Technology Unit across our entire School and support them to: (a) work with faculty and staff to increase our use of technology and our online courses, and to market them to students across our region, the nation, and the globe; (b) provide faculty and staff with effective support for online teaching and instructional design; and (c) revolutionize our data management system and improve our access to data.
- Form a long-term, sustainable collaboration with the University Center for Teaching and Learning and with other University and Community organizations invested in igniting learning, pursuing and producing knowledge, and advancing educational excellence. These collaborations will allow us to devise joint teaching initiatives and projects on: (a) effective, innovative teaching strategies; (b) equitable, justice-driven, anti-racist teaching approaches; (c) teaching and learning in a globalized world; (d) creative, efficient, and equitable measures to evaluate teaching performance; and (e) the interconnected role of technology, personalized learning, creativity, collaboration, and engagement in the academic experiences of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in education.
- Form a long-term, sustainable collaboration with the University Center for International Studies that is invested in igniting learning, pursuing and producing knowledge, and advancing educational excellence. Enhance and expand our visiting faculty program with scholars from across the world. To do so, we will place intentional focus on teaching, learning, and instructional collaborations that attend to equity, justice, and innovation for faculty, staff, students, and partners.
- Establish clear, consistent procedures for collaborative forms of peer review of teaching and learning across our entire School. Doing so will require that we envision and engage in peer review of teaching as a humanizing practice that offers opportunities for deeper professional learning and community-building.

- *To meet this goal*, we will also create/nurture a culture of high expectations for research and engagement. Implementing the following strategies will help us meet this goal:
 - Develop clear, transparent promotion and tenure guidelines. These will fully align with University requirements and with this strategic plan. Additionally, they will include metrics for community engaged scholarship and education, health, and wellness initiatives that occur within and beyond “school” sanctioned spatial-temporal conditions (e.g., after-school and out-of-school sites and times).
 - Encourage qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods methodological rigor across our entire School and through faculty hires, course offerings, student training, and through research, grant, and other engaged activities.
 - Create internal structures that support and promote research and engagement across our departments, units, and centers, including with the Superintendents’ Forum, Tri-State Area School Study Council, Office of Child Development, Center for Urban Education, Healthy Lifestyle Institute, Falk School, and the University Child Development Center. Enhance our research and engagement partnerships with local agencies (government, non-profits, school districts, etc.).
 - Create and support improved IT/technology capacity for research and engagement by reconceptualizing and expanding the role of the IT/Technology Unit across our entire School in ways that allow us to ignite learning, pursue and produce knowledge, and advance educational excellence.
 - Form long-term, sustainable research and engaged partnerships on urban and rural education with University partners (e.g., Dean of Students; Office of the Provost; various Schools at Pitt; the Center for Rural Health Practice at Bradford; Pitt’s Community Engagement Centers; etc.) and with Community partners (Mayor’s Office; Governor’s Office; Manchester Bidwell Corporation; foundations; local, regional, national, and global education organizations; etc.).
 - Improve the management, oversight, and expertise of our Grants Office and establish faculty and staff professional development series on research and grant activities as one way to further ignite learning, pursue and produce knowledge, and advance educational excellence.
 - Create a system to promote, expand, and make visible (internally and externally) faculty achievements in research, engagement, and teaching that occur locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

Strategic Goal: *In our unwavering commitment to equity, justice, and innovation, we will forge, participate in, and/or support research-practice partnerships and community engaged initiatives.*

- ***To meet this goal***, we will intentionally promote, support, and reward research-practice partnerships and community engaged initiatives that align with the mission-vision of our School. Implementing the following strategies will help us fulfill this goal:
 - Collaborate with faculty, especially with members of our tenure and promotion committee, to determine measures by which to effectively, fairly, and equitably evaluate research-practice partnerships and community engaged scholarship.
 - Develop a comprehensive, innovative, and cutting-edge outreach and engagement unit/program that: (a) encourages and evaluates research-practice partnerships and engaged activities; (b) fosters highly-effective teacher, researcher, student, community partner, principal, superintendent learning/professional development; and (c) advances School and Community education, health, and human development initiatives.
 - Leverage funding from the University to support research-practice partnerships and community engaged initiatives that undertake local, regional, national, and global challenges with community, non-profit, and/or industry partners.
 - Increase the impact of research-practice partnerships by: (a) understanding and valuing what this work entails; (b) recognizing its significance in advancing equity, justice, and innovation (this includes attention to technological connectivity); and (c) including such partnerships as a necessary evaluative component in our faculty reward structures (e.g., tenure and promotion; annual review of faculty performance; etc.).
 - Integrate research-practice partnerships and community engaged initiatives into our School by: (a) creating an infrastructure that promotes and enables this work; (b) providing necessary support and adequate time for faculty to work in and with schools, communities, and community organizations; and (c) acknowledging and honoring how this work advances our commitment to equity, justice, and innovation.
 - Foster a cultural and structural shift toward a more explicit embrace of research-practice partnerships and collaborative, mutually beneficial forms of community engaged initiatives for faculty, staff, and students. To do this, we will explore and engage in partnerships with various school districts as well as organizations (e.g., Children’s Museum, Personalized Learning Network; Community Engagement Centers; etc.).

Strategic Goal: *In our unwavering commitment to equity, justice, and innovation, we will boldly recruit and retain highly effective and engaged students, faculty, and staff.*

- ***To meet this goal***, we will cultivate a creative, collaborative, and engaged School of Education environment for all. Implementing the following strategies will help us fulfill this goal:

- Establish and implement guidelines for creativity, collaboration, and engagement across levels, ranks, and positions for faculty, staff, and students.
 - Aggressively recruit and retain faculty, staff, and students whose stances and dispositions align with our cultural drivers, and are interwoven with a commitment to equity, justice, and innovation in education.
 - Increase the academic participation of faculty, staff, and students in our centers, institutes, departments, and other educational sites.
 - Provide effective, systematic mentoring, leadership opportunities, and professional development for faculty, staff, and students.
 - Improve equity of work expectations by promoting greater transparency of responsibilities and aligning annual performance reviews to identified guidelines for creativity, collaboration, and engagement.
 - Develop a comprehensive orientation program for all new faculty, staff, and students that: (a) promotes creativity, collaboration, and engagement; (b) examines our new mission-vision; and (c) focuses on our commitment to equity, justice, and innovations.
- **Specific to students**, we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Recognize and support our matriculated students, especially Students of Color, with graduate fellowships, assistantships, and other funding, when available.
 - Provide innovative, creative, and engaging training, support, and experiences for students to become effective professionals (teachers, researchers, non-academic professionals, etc.) in education, health, and/or human development.
 - In partnership with our School's Office of Student and Career Services, facilitate discussions on, and explorations of, diverse careers within and beyond academia for students.
 - Sponsor undergraduate and graduate professional student experiences as well as other recruitment and retention efforts to attract minoritized students into our School.
 - Identify and nominate students for School, University, and national fellowships, awards, and prizes.
 - Leverage scholarships and other resources to increase the amount, size, and duration of awarded student funds.
 - Encourage and mentor students, especially our Council of Graduate Students in Education (CGSE), to serve as Student Ambassadors who: (a) attend conferences

to network and recruit prospective students on behalf of our School; (b) meet with prospective students during recruitment and retention efforts; and (c) mentor new students, especially undergraduate and first-year minoritized graduate students.

- Support student development by: (a) increasing our recruitment and retention of prospective minoritized students who have a commitment to equity, justice, and innovation; and (b) cultivating current students who have innovative ideas and a commitment to equity and justice in education.
- **Specific to faculty**, we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Rename *non-tenure stream faculty* lines *professors of practice*.
 - Develop a comprehensive, long-term plan that supports the establishment of endowed professorships and chairs.
 - Map out a multi-year plan for hiring additional tenured professors and professors of practice based on identified priority areas of inquiry and practice, and in support of our new mission-vision.
 - Increase our nomination of faculty for teaching, research, and mentoring awards, both internal and external to the University (Provost's and Chancellor's Awards; new SOE Dean's Awards; national/professional association awards, etc.).
 - Create structured, creative, and interdisciplinary opportunities for co-teaching, for interdisciplinary research, and for courtesy appointments (the latter is for non-SOE faculty).
 - Support faculty development and promotion by: (a) increasing our recruitment and hiring of minoritized faculty members who have a commitment to equity, justice, and educational innovations; (b) cultivating current faculty who have innovative ideas and a commitment to equity, justice, and educational innovations; and (c) recruiting prospective faculty members who can contribute new, innovative ideas and who have a commitment to equity, justice, and educational innovations.
- **Specific to staff**, we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Foster an interactive and inclusive culture that supports staff leadership, staff professional development, and staff engagement across our SOE.
 - Create and identify clear, consistent, and fair classification structures and compensation levels within our SOE that better aligns with those at the University.

- Implement transparent processes, procedures, and protocols and follow best practices for recruiting, hiring, retaining, and rewarding highly effective staff, with added attention to increasing the number of minoritized staff in our SOE.
- Support staff development and promotion by: (a) increasing our recruitment and hiring of minoritized staff members who have a commitment to equity, justice, and innovation; (b) cultivating current, internal staff members who have cutting-edge ideas and a commitment to equity, justice, and innovation; and (c) recruiting prospective external staff members who can contribute new, innovative ideas and who have a commitment to equity and justice in education.

Strategic Goal: *In our unwavering commitment to equity, justice, and innovation, we will create and sustain a strong culture, infrastructure, and public identity. Doing so allows us to think, to dream, and to lead with integrity.*

- **To meet this goal,** we will devise and implement ambitious plans that support an effective SOE culture, infrastructure/operations, and public identity. Implementing the following strategies in five major areas—(a) marketing communications; (b) admissions and enrollment; (c) student and career services; (d) alumni relations and engagement; and (e) internal and external funding—will help us fulfill this goal.
 - Strengthen our culture: make it more supportive, engaging, and collaborative, and publicly recognize the contributions of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.
 - Enhance our overall infrastructure, including our operational and administrative efficiency, by improving communication within and beyond our SOE.
 - Increase our capacity and ability to collaborate with colleagues in our SOE, in other units at the University, and with external partners (locally, regionally, nationally, and globally) by making more visible our identities, stories, and work.
 - Refine administrative structures, processes, and procedures in order to: (a) streamline services; (b) avoid duplication of roles and responsibilities; and (c) reduce administrative burdens.
 - Identify students, alumni, and community partners to serve as advocates who will promote our SOE across the region, state, nation, and globe.
- **Specific to Marketing Communications,** we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan to increase our local, regional, national, and global reach/visibility with regards to our programs and departments, and our faculty and student research and engagement activities.

- Create a strategic communications platform by which to elevate, develop, and disseminate stories and other messaging to increase internal and external awareness of our various successes.
 - Build, maintain, and sustain a user-friendly SOE website, magazines, and other internal and external communications (print and online) that will further expand our reach/visibility and that communicates the powerful stories of who we are.
 - In alignment and in partnership with the University's Vice Chancellor for Strategic Communications and Marketing, improve our SOE's strategic communications, branding, name recognition, and targeted outreach efforts.
 - Promote the interconnections of education, health, and human development in all SOE messaging and communications.
- **Specific to Admissions and Enrollment**, we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive admissions and enrollment plan that: (a) has a yearly enrollment target; (b) proposes strategies for increasing our local, regional, national, and global efforts at attracting undergraduate and graduate students, particularly those who are minoritized; and (c) works with faculty to emphasize summer enrollments and offer learning institutes and certificate programs.
 - In alignment and in partnership with the University's Vice Provost for Enrollment, implement strategic efforts to: (a) increase admissions, enrollment, and retention of undergraduate students; (b) deepen connections with the University's undergraduate students who are interested in education as an area of study; and (c) enhance our student services experiences in ways that are innovative creative, collaborative, and engaging.
 - Work with the Dean's Office, SOE faculty and staff, and the Office of the Provost to create admissions projections for a four-year undergraduate degree program.
 - Leverage our alumni network in order to expand our student recruitment, retention, and mentoring efforts, especially as involves increased supports for and minoritized and/or historically marginalized students.
 - **Specific to Student and Career Services**, we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Establish annual student and career services goals and opportunities that align with our SOE's mission-vision.

- Develop a strategic plan to monitor where are graduating students and alumni work and to maintain connections with our alumni and the hiring school districts, organizations, and companies that employ them.
- Expand our student and career services by: (a) enhancing the quality of services students and alumni receive; (b) developing and sustaining strong relationships with employers; (c) increasing how we utilize our alumni networks to enhance our student and career services; and (d) improving how we coordinate with the University and with other Schools' student and career services in order to develop partnerships and shared experiences for our SOE students.
- **Specific to Alumni Relations and Engagement**, we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Establish annual fundraising goals, targets, and opportunities that align with our SOE's mission-vision.
 - Design and implement opportunities that are compelling, captivating, and relevant for alumni engagement, partnerships, mentoring, and networking.
 - Increase communications directed to our alumni and to our current students.
 - Strategically enhance and support our alumni base within departments/units by establishing connections to our SOE's Alumni Association and Board of Visitors.
 - Establish a School-wide speakers' forum that features the work of our alumni.
- **Specific to Internal and External Funding**, we will meet this goal by implementing the following strategies:
 - Increase opportunities (e.g., workshops, talks by foundation representatives, etc.) for SOE faculty to build capacity to apply for and secure internal and external grants, and to apply for and receive internal and external recognition/awards.
 - Enhance the dissemination of information from our SOE grants team to faculty regarding internal and external grant funding.
 - Improve our infrastructure in order to streamline and facilitate opportunities for faculty to successfully apply and secure internal and external grant funding.
 - Form a long-term, sustainable collaboration with the University's Office of Research that encourages entrepreneurial opportunities and cross-unit, cross-campus research and grants collaborations.

Next Steps/Implementation: To ensure effective execution of our strategic goals and priorities, the various units in our School will be charged with creating and implementing plans that align with the School of Education's strategic plan. They will outline the action steps, timeline, measures, and metrics they will use to ensure successful completion of goals and priorities. They may form working groups to support implementation and to ensure that it aligns with the mission-vision, cultural drivers, and strategic priorities. These units include:

- Academic Departments
- Centers and Institutes
- Fiscal, Grants, IT, Admissions and Enrollment, Marketing Communications, Student and Career Services, and Alumni Engagement and Relations

**School of Education Board of Visitor Members
2018**

1. **Carol McGrevin, PhD:** RETIRED; former teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent of schools. Current chairperson of ArtsNow.
2. **Rita Bean, PhD:** RETIRED; University of Pittsburgh School of Education Faculty Emeritus, Member of the Reading Hall of Fame, and reading specialist.
3. **Anthony Hamlet, PhD:** Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent.
4. **Vivian Mihalakis, PhD:** Senior Program Officer at the Gates Foundation.
5. **Jerlean Daniel, PhD:** RETIRED; School of Education Faculty Emeritus and former Executive Director of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
6. **Richard Ferguson, PhD :** Former Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Higher Education Holdings and ACT and Adjunct Professor in the University of Iowa's Department of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations.
7. **Francesca Amati, MD, PhD:** Group Leader (Research), Department of Physiology, University of Lausanne with her own clinical research cohort that studies the effects of exercise in the prevention of diabetes in senior citizens.
8. **Namgi Park, PhD:** former president and current professor of Gwangju National University of Education.
9. **Yidan Wang, PhD:** Senior Education Specialist in the World Bank's Education Global Practice
10. **John Tomayko, PhD:** founder and president of the Tomayko Group.
11. **Charlene Dukes, EdD:** President of Prince George's Community College.
12. **Alan Utter, PhD:** Texas Woman's University's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
13. **Leon Wiles, PhD:** RETIRED; former Chief Diversity Officer at Clemson University.
14. **William (Bill) Strickland:** President and Chief Executive Officer, Manchester Bidwell Training Center. WILL BEGIN TERM IN 2019.

***Did not attend 2018 sessions**