



Mission of NAES

Member Value

Leadership and
Governance

Advocacy with the
Wider Church

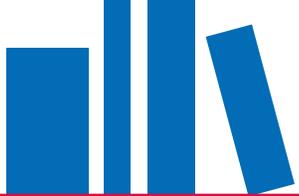
Justice and Equity

Stewardship

Conclusion

Strategic Plan 2012





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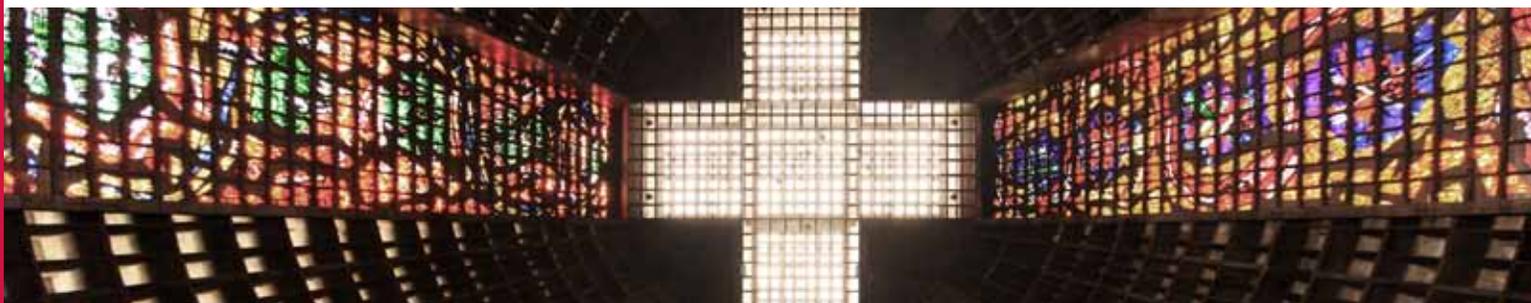
Conclusion

Our Mission and Philosophy

The mission of the National Association of Episcopal Schools (NAES) is to serve those who serve Episcopal schools. Within the Christian tradition of inclusion and open inquiry, NAES:

- **Affirms** the spiritual dimension of learning that values both faith and reason.
- **Creates and nurtures** an extended community of leaders in order to foster partnerships, unity, mutual support and professional growth.
- **Promotes** personal formation through moral, spiritual, intellectual, creative, physical and social development.
- **Assists** Episcopal schools in creating supportive communities through worship, learning, pastoral care and service.
- **Recognizes, appreciates, and supports** the diversity within and among Episcopal schools.
- **Helps** schools explore, discover and articulate their visions and ministries as Episcopal schools.

The NAES Strategic Plan 2012 reaffirms both the centrality of Episcopal identity as well as the needs schools have to embrace the realities with which they live. That centrality is rooted in the gospel understanding of love and reconciliation: we seek to model compassion, rational discourse, cross-cultural understanding, the use of language that brings people together, and the search for truth that can only be found when diverse peoples are in pursuit of common goals. In seeking to model this reconciliation, NAES aspires to lead and support this transformative model of ministry. The Christian values and tradition that bracket our mission are both time-honored and highly distinctive in our world today.





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For nearly fifty years, the National Association of Episcopal Schools has stood for what we believe lies at the heart of our Anglican tradition as well as its promise for the future—a commitment to education at its best and most compassionate, and the vital and promising ministry to schools, as embodied in the many and various ways our member schools live out their mission. NAES has sought to serve those who are making a difference in the lives of thousands of students, faculty, staff, and parents by striving to keep at the forefront of those school missions a truly complete understanding of what it means to educate “the whole child”, an education that affirms the spiritual growth of students along with their intellectual, artistic, athletic, and moral development. By virtue of our long-standing commitment to taking the spiritual side of students seriously, as exemplified in the broad and welcoming traditions of Episcopal schools, we stand for something truly crucial for our future as human beings striving for community and a longing for a transcendent purpose.

At the core of our commitment to our schools is our mission to foster an Episcopal identity that is both meaningful and transformative to our various and complex membership. Among the pillars of that Episcopal identity we would point to:

- the place of worship at the center of the life of a school;
- a commitment to high academic standards, reflecting the long-standing Anglican affinity for reason as a companion to faith;
- clear and visible statements about and programs for service, as well as the promotion of the values of justice, equity, and, in the words of the Baptismal Covenant, “respect the dignity of every human being;”
- exemplary models of leadership and governance;





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- being in relationship with another institution, be it a parish, diocese, or partner Episcopal school;
- being places of hospitality and inclusivity, honoring the creeds and convictions of all members of the community.

In one way or another, our series of *Principles of Good Practice* encompass these elements of Episcopal identity as well as promote the collective wisdom of our schools on how they can be accomplished.

To embrace these components of Episcopal identity, our schools face tremendous challenges. Current economic realities can force schools to question whether or not their missions are too focused; diverse opinions and traditions can bring into question a core identity and tradition of a school; relationships with parishes or diocese can be strained.

Our vision of the future for NAES and its member schools is one that builds upon both the compelling mission of Episcopal schools as well as the freedom they possess to respond to new challenges with both a flexibility as well as adherence to a core tradition. So, too, NAES plans for the important years ahead with a pride in the distinctive programs and resources we offer, leading the way for both the world of church and school in proclaiming and embodying the uniquely Anglican spirit. In this way we are positioned like no other association or institution to help further the work of reconciliation.

To meet the challenges ahead, NAES focuses on five principal areas of Episcopal identity: MEMBER VALUE, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE, ADVOCACY WITH THE WIDER CHURCH, JUSTICE AND EQUITY, and STEWARDSHIP. These five core components of our work, equal in value and





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complementary in importance, help shape the goals we articulate below and the possible steps to help accomplish them.

This strategic plan is the result of over a year of deliberation and discussion with the Governing Board, as well as a variety of representatives of our member schools and leaders of the Church and the world of education. It reflects both the deep regard so many have for NAES and the role we have played in our schools. Similarly, it reflects their belief in its even greater potential for the future. For all of those who have given time, attention, and care to the development of this plan, we are most grateful. We seek to honor that confidence in carrying out the vision they have helped to shape, a vision we are now proud to share with you.





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GOAL ONE: Enhance value and benefits to current and future members by providing essential programs, services, information, and resources.

NAES is distinguished by its commitment to its member schools. In our role as an organization that is both national in its scope and Episcopal in its identity, our schools rely upon NAES to have current knowledge of best practices and models programs, as well as be able to put them in touch with those who have experienced similar situations. When we serve our schools in this way, we reflect the Anglican spirit of unity and diversity, and deepen the sense of community among our schools.

Suggested steps:

1. Create benchmarks to measure member value as well as feedback mechanisms to monitor this goal;
2. Explore and develop resources, delivery systems, and member networks to enhance membership engagement;
3. Continually assess the best blend of face-to-face gatherings with virtual gatherings;
4. Highlight efforts to strengthen distinctive programs in our schools of service and attention to Episcopal identity;
5. Explore strategic collaborations with other associations and groups for the provision of resources and opportunities for spiritual and professional development.





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GOAL TWO: Provide services that promote exemplary leadership and governance in Episcopal schools.

NAES dedicates itself to helping schools build greater understanding of an Episcopal way of leading, one that reflects an ever-clearer understanding of roles, boundaries, and processes. Indeed, one of the most important ways that NAES has lived out and modeled Episcopal identity, over the years, has been through its dedicated work to promoting a spirit of servant leadership.

This goal reflects our considerable experience with helping schools develop a stronger leadership and governance culture, and our time-honored role in providing resources for understanding and promoting school ministry. It also reflects an emerging need: the challenge to meet an ever-increasing demand for the cultivation of new school leadership has never been greater, and the wellbeing of every Episcopal school depends on informed leadership and effective models of governance among boards and vestries.

Suggested steps:

1. Continue to provide resources and best practices for Episcopal school governance;
2. Develop opportunities for regional conversation and consultation on leadership and governance issues;
3. Seek to address the needs of our schools that cannot afford consultation services and determine how best to support them;
4. Build upon the distinctive work that NAES does in equipping and recruiting chaplains for our schools;
5. Promote the professional growth and spiritual development of current and aspiring school heads;
6. Model the values of exemplary governance in the leadership of NAES.





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GOAL THREE: Advance the character, values, mission and ministry of Episcopal schools to the wider Church and educational community.

NAES prides itself in serving as an interpreter between the Church and the school. As the needs of the Episcopal Church change, and new avenues of ministry become a priority for our Church, NAES has a vital and leading role to play in advocating for the place of schools in this ministry and strengthening the proven Anglican commitment to education. We seek to refine and strengthen our voice within those circles in order to deepen our sense of service and be a part of the Church's future vision of ministry.

Suggested steps:

1. Explore the opportunities for consistent representation of Episcopal schools to the Church, and develop and disseminate resources that promote the distinctive ministry of Episcopal schools;
2. Provide effective tools for use by Church groups and educational leaders on Episcopal schools to explain and promote the importance of school ministry;
3. Educate membership on potential areas of involvement and visibility with the Church;
4. Seek ways to strengthen our connection with Anglican schools in other parts of the world.





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GOAL FOUR: Articulate a core religious identity within the context of our multi-religious and inclusive Episcopal school communities by promoting values of justice, equity, service, civil discourse, and moral courage.

In a globalized world committed to building collaborative partnerships deepened by the voices of unique cultural perspectives, Episcopal schools affirm that difference is a source of strength that builds up our common life and enhances the spiritual and moral development of our students.

Likewise, our member schools have always looked to NAES to be a source of calm, focus, and conviction as the balance is worked out between core identity and the welcoming of many voices and practices. Now more than ever, our schools, and the culture in which they find themselves, need a spiritually centered and morally grounded approach both to promote that balance and address its complexities. NAES is positioned to be a leader of reasoned dialogue and mature understanding in the midst of differences, as our schools and the educational community strive to foster cross-cultural competencies and identity formation in a pluralistic society.

The 2006 Strategic Plan established a clear commitment on the part of NAES to promote the values of justice and equity in our schools and within our association. Looking forward, it is imperative that NAES strengthen that initial commitment made in 2006 to justice and equity and further the values that reflect our schools' variety and depth of religious expression and their distinctive mission. Episcopal schools are by their nature hospitable places for inclusion; so, too, NAES seeks to be a home for dialogue and enhanced understanding of what it means to be inclusive.





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Suggested steps:

1. Model gospel hospitality in our welcoming of people of all faiths and traditions in our schools;
2. Promote and highlight exemplary programs of social justice, equity, and moral leadership in our member schools;
3. Develop resources for schools that foster civic-mindedness, global citizenship, and service learning;
4. Enhance existing partnerships with our schools in Haiti and the Episcopal Urban School Alliance;
5. Develop programs and resources to assist schools as they become more religiously pluralistic while maintaining a clear Episcopal identity.





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GOAL FIVE: Ensure the financial sustainability of the organization.

NAES has been blessed with sound fiscal management, over the past few decades, allowing the association to offer an optimal level of service to our schools while accumulating a sufficient reserve in anticipation of economically stressful times. To maintain our standards of service as well as expand our opportunities for involvement, NAES needs to work toward maximum flexibility in its sources of income while insuring that membership dues are fair and represent clear value to our schools.

This final goal serves as the means through which we can accomplish all of our aspirational goals. It seeks to build upon our tradition of fiscal strength while responding to the challenge every association faces in preserving financial stability into the future.

Suggested steps:

1. Explore ways of diversifying revenue streams beyond membership dues;
2. Pursue options for an equitable dues structure that maximizes school access to NAES;
3. Continue to assess and expand fund raising programs such as the Annual Fund, the planned giving program, and the endowment for leadership development;
4. Make use of the 50th anniversary of NAES (in 2014-15) as a means of enhancing long-term financial stability;
5. Build up sources of support so to insure that NAES can continue to maintain and attract the best staff to do the work of the association;
6. Maintain a commitment to controlling and monitoring expenses as an example of good stewardship for the association.





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This plan represents our hope and our resolve:

- Leading through service;
- Furthering the work of Christ's ministry of love, reconciliation, justice, and inclusion;
- Building up the unique community that is Episcopal schools.

By following this path, we will truly embody an excellence through association.

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