

# The Indianola Academy

SNAPSHOT AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SAIS/SACS Visit  
March 29-31 2016



*"Integrity and Achievement"*

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## **STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

Chair: Charles Mason

Lori Beth Chism  
Lynn Delas  
Drew Donahoe  
Leigh Hargett  
Dr. Julia Hill

Mitchell Hill  
Kathryn Jenkins  
Maggie Jones  
Teri Manning  
Mereditih McCaskill

Tommy Nester  
Melissa Richardson  
Sylvia Spivey  
Karen Ware

## **VISION STATEMENT SUBCOMMITTEES**

### **Emotional Safety**

Chair: Rebecca Barrier

Lori Beth Chism  
Alatha Cochran  
Deborah Domino  
Camille Hairston  
Deven Hill  
Kathryn Jenkins  
Nanette Long  
Ruth Carmen Poindexter  
Jill Riddell

### **Enrichment**

Chair: Sylvia Spivey

Cindy Baird  
Jacki Burkhalter  
Rebecca Henderson  
Jennifer Horner  
Valarie Morgan  
Tommy Nester  
Lynn Schlatter  
Karen Ware  
Shan Wright

### **Financial Aid**

Chair: Mitchell Hill

Pat Chism  
Watson Cook  
Sammy Henderson  
Lewis Poindexter  
Randy Randall  
Paul Townsend  
Debbie Woodruff

### **READING**

Chair: Melissa Richardson

Susan Carmen  
Regina Gammill  
Leigh Hargett  
Carrie Hodges  
Naomi Makamson  
Teri Manning  
Elizabeth McCarty  
Emily Owen  
Clete Putnam  
Valerie Townsend

### **SPANISH**

Chair: Dr. Julia Hill

Jennifer Alford  
Drew Donahoe  
Sammy Henderson  
Allen Hill  
Candace Holland  
Tammy Page  
Jennifer Rose  
Ron Schlatter  
Sarah Smith  
Susan Zellner

### **TIME MANAGEMENT**

Chair: Maggie Jones

Ginger Berry  
Donna Britt  
Robin Davis  
Lynn Delas  
Meredith McCaskill  
Carol Ann Terrell  
Stacey Wilson

## **HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE**

Kathy Chism  
Lori Beth Chism  
Paige Daniels

Sharon Ervin  
Kathryn Jenkins  
Stephanie Stevens

Elizabeth Veazey  
Lori Williamson  
Corri Zeponi

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our Mission is to keep learning first and thus prepare all students to meet the challenges of the future.

## **OUR BELIEFS**

All students can learn.

Student learning should be the chief priority of our school.

Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.

Challenging expectations increase individual student performance.

Exceptional students at both high and low levels of ability require special services and resources.

The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if our school is going to enable students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners.

## **Indianola Academy Institutional Snapshot**

### **HISTORY:**

The 1965-66 school year was the first session of The Indianola Academy. It began with seventy students in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades, and classes met at First Baptist Church Indianola. The school soon exceeded the space available at First Baptist and for the 1966-67 and 1967-68 school years added space at First United Methodist Church in Indianola. When the 1967-68 school year started, The Indianola Academy had grown to 241 students in grades 1-9. The 1968-69 school year saw the addition of the 10th grade and the growth of enrollment to 280 students. During this session the first building was completed, and some classes began attending classes at the current Dorsett Drive location. The Indianola Academy added 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade classes for the 1969-1970 school year and started the year with an enrollment of six hundred students. This enrollment grew to fifteen hundred students by the end of the 1969-1970 school year. The class of 1970 was the first group to graduate from The Indianola Academy. During the 1970-71 school year, grades 7-12 moved to the new Dorsett Drive facilities, and grades 1-6 remained in the churches. The 1971-72 school year saw the completion of the Dorsett Drive facility, and for the first time all students in grades 1-12 attended classes together at the Dorsett Drive facility.

During the 1971-72 school year, The Indianola Academy received AA accreditation from the Mississippi Private School Accrediting Commission and the Mississippi Accrediting Commission. Over the next few years The Indianola Academy continued to build a reputation of excellence and celebrated the twenty students in the class of 1977 who had attended The Indianola Academy for all twelve years. In the 1980-81 school year, The Indianola Academy received accreditation and membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

In the middle to late 1980s through the 2004-2005 school year, The Indianola Academy experienced a gradual decrease in enrollment due to the reduction in area job opportunities and difficulties in the local agriculture industry. In the 2005-2006 school year, The Indianola Academy saw a significant increase in enrollment and began a growth trend that peaked in the 2010-2011 school year when Central Delta Academy in Inverness closed. In 2012-13 the local Methodist Church re-started a half day kindergarten program, and The Indianola Academy saw a decrease in kindergarten numbers and the overall enrollment. Almost all of the children who attend kindergarten at the Methodist Church enroll in 1<sup>st</sup> grade at The Indianola Academy.

Enrollment from 2012 to date has fallen slightly, and this year's enrollment is at 2005 levels. Enrollment issues that face The Indianola Academy today continue to be difficult economic situations in farming and a scarcity of jobs that pay a wage that would allow students to attend. The town of Indianola and the community at large continue to see no true growth because poor economic conditions do not attract new residents. One result from this lack of opportunity in the community has been a trend that many IA graduates do not return to this area after college to live, work, and raise a family. Other challenges result from a slight increase in home

schooling students, and a number of students who have not performed well academically have sought sister schools in driving distance that offer less rigorous instruction and grading policies.

Another concern involving enrollment has been the effect of necessary tuition increases in a community where growth and wages are flat. A minority scholarship fund has been in place for many years to add diversity and help minority students attend The Indianola Academy. To help with the problem of low income The Indianola Academy, for the first time, allowed all students to apply through NAIS School Scholarship Services for financial assistance awarded from a fund built through local donations, special projects, and general funds. As tuition continues to rise, the need to offer and provide financial assistance will have a great effect on enrollment.

Last year the community and school celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Indianola Academy. The Indianola Academy has a great tradition and reputation in the community and state. Over the years The Indianola Academy has become smaller, but the programs and opportunities available to IA students have remained intact. The Indianola Academy looks to the next fifty years with great optimism as it is financially sound, deeply rooted in the local community, and producing successful graduates who are well prepared for college and life.

### **LEADERSHIP**

The Headmaster of The Indianola Academy is the operational leader of the school and oversees the day to day functions of the school. The Headmaster also acts as principal for the middle school. The high school principal, under the direction and supervision of the headmaster, leads the faculty, staff, and students in grades 9-12. The elementary principal, under the direction of the headmaster, leads the faculty, staff, and students for grades k3-5.

The board of directors of The Indianola Academy consists of board members who are nominated and selected by the board to serve three year terms. Their duties include providing funds necessary to operate the school, overseeing investment of endowed funds, approving funding for large capital expenditures and adopting guidelines for the policies under which the school will operate. The board is charged with the employment of a headmaster and the approval of the headmaster's recommendation for principals. The board elects officers from among the board. These positions are president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary. These officers along with four other board members form an executive board which is charged with research and reporting to the board as a whole. The board and executive board meet every other month for regular meetings, and special meetings can be called if needed.

## **SELF STUDY**

The process of self-study began with the selection of a fifteen member steering committee. This committee includes representation from all stakeholders. The committee consists of two high school students, one elementary parent, one secondary parent, the elementary principal, the secondary principal, one high school teacher, one middle school teacher, one upper elementary school teacher, one lower elementary school teacher, two board members, the athletic director, director of development, and one staff member.

The committee began by reviewing IA's mission and belief statements. The committee decided that these statements effectively represent and communicate what The Indianola Academy strives to achieve. The committee decided to use a strategic visioning process to assure alignment of IA's effort and vision. The process took into consideration input from all stakeholder groups and the level of importance and performance these groups place on each area of the education of their young people. The committee sought answers to the following questions in the course of the self-study. What is the school doing well that is having a significant impact on student learning? In what areas is the school missing the mark and falling short of stakeholder expectations? What is the school doing that is making no impact or is of little importance to student learning and stakeholders? What is the school not doing that is important to stakeholders?

The committee evaluated the alignment of the mission and beliefs statements with all programs, initiatives, and structures of the school. The committee began with a historical review and then evaluated current trends in student performance, enrollment, faculty and administrative retention, and college enrollment. They also evaluated demographic and economic trends in the local community which have an impact on the school and stakeholders. Various instruments were used to gather input from stakeholders. These included the SAIS Values Narrative Survey, IA College Sophomore Survey, and an IA demographic survey of parents. The committee also reviewed data, trends, and demographic information on the community as a whole. The committee sought additional suggestions and ideas directly from administration, faculty, staff, and board members.

After reviewing all programs, data, and demographics available to the committee, areas which were in need of improvement were identified and debated. Institutional goals to address these areas were created in the form of vision statements. Vision statements, which represent the fulfillment of the institutional goals and the ideal of what IA would like to be in each of the areas, were written and approved by the committee. Some of the areas identified in vision statements could be accomplished in the short term and do not appear in the final plan. Other areas identified in vision statements affected a small population or part of the school and were deemed too narrow to appear in the final plan. In both of these areas, the committee recommended solutions to IA administration, solutions which could be implemented

immediately Vision statements which applied to the school as a whole and required a longer time period to accomplish were selected to appear in the plan.

Sub-committees were formed using a mix of steering committee members and stakeholders to write action plans designed to accomplish the goals used to create the vision statements. Sub-committee members were selected based on the expertise and passion in the area identified for improvement. The sub-committees created plans that identified action steps, assigned responsibility for implementation, and established a time line for implementation. In the creation of the plan the sub-committees gave consideration to the resources available and IA's financial and staffing limits. The sub-committees also sought to ensure that progress could be identified and measured over the five year improvement period. Upon completion of their work, the sub-committees submitted their plans to the steering committee.

The steering committee carefully reviewed the plans submitted to ensure that the plans were in line with IA's mission and beliefs, achievable with available resources, and capable of bringing the desired improvement. Upon completion of this review, the steering committee unanimously approved the action plans for implementation.

The steering committee presented the improvement plan to IA administration for implementation and will remain active during the five year period to evaluate and amend the plan as needed and to assist IA administration in any way possible.

## **IMPROVEMENT**

The steering committee created the following vision statements to represent the areas this plan will seek to improve.

IA students display stable emotional health. Students have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to notice and handle their emotions, feel and display empathy with others, form positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

IA students are proficient in Spanish. They use the latest technology and software to promote constant pursuit of mastery starting in Pre-K and growing each year through high school. IA graduates who complete the Spanish program are well prepared for rigorous Spanish courses in college.

IA students manage time in an effective way, thus maximizing their ability to complete multiple tasks congruently and be successful on long term assignments.

IA students benefit from enrichment programs focused on student growth and re-enforcing ethical behavior, self-control, empathy, integrity, and citizenship. These programs take the form of assemblies, service projects, outside speakers, clubs, and extra-curricular activities.

IA seeks innovative ways to maximize current and future funding of financial aid programs to assist motivated students in our area afford ever rising tuition costs.

IA students grow as readers from Pre-K through their senior year. Reading skills, strategies and techniques are taught across the curriculum. Students develop expertise in reading, processing, and responding to academic materials.

## **ACTION PLANS**

*The following action plans were created by sub-committees and approved by the steering committee to achieve improvement in the identified areas.*



## EMOTIONAL SAFETY VISION STATEMENT:

*IA students display stable emotional health. Students have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to notice and handle their emotions, feel and display empathy with others, form positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.*

### **Goal 1: IA Students recognize and process emotions effectively.**

<b><i>Action Steps</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
IA uses and students participate in the "I Can" program.	Counselor Faculty Administration	2016
IA students and parents are informed of availability and accessibility of counseling services.	Counselor	2016
IA Students show empathy towards one another in all situations.	Teachers	2016
IA teachers are aware of and understand the importance of emotional health for students.	Administration	2016
IA teachers and students understand and practice positive conflict resolution.	Administration	2016
IA teachers and staff are vigilant in observing students and refer to the the counselor any student who is having difficulty.	Administration Counselor	2016

**Goal 2: IA students form healthy positive relationships and make good decisions.**

<b><i>Action Steps</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
IA students participate in positive and constructive group work throughout the school.	Faculty Administration Counselor	2017
IA students participate in cross age mentoring and peer counseling.	Administration	2018
All Students attend enrichment assemblies on relationships.	Administration	2018

**Goal 3: Administration, faculty, and staff receive support and encouragement that promotes good emotional health.**

<b><i>Action Steps</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
IA offers in-service programs in stress management.	Administration Counselor	2016
IA faculty and staff are a part of mentor/partner groups which promote unity and teamwork and provide peer support and encouragement.	Administration Counselor	2017
IA faculty and staff participate in scheduled distress workshops.	Administration Counselor	2017

**Goal 4: Information and resources on good emotional health are available on the counselor's page of the school website.**

<b><i>Action Steps</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
The information encourages students and parents to seek help when facing emotional health issues	Administration Counselor	2016
Students have information on where to go and whom to see when they have or see a need.	Administration Counselor	2016

## Spanish Vision Statement:

*IA students are proficient in Spanish. They use the latest technology and software to promote constant pursuit of mastery starting in Pre-K and growing each year through high school. IA graduates who complete the Spanish program are well prepared for rigorous Spanish courses in college.*

### **Goal 1: Every IA student in grades Pre-K through 6 receives daily instruction in Spanish.**

<b><i>ACTION STEPS</i></b>	<b><i>RESPONSIBLE</i></b>	<b><i>TIMELINE</i></b>
A Spanish Curriculum is taught in PreK-6 and all needed materials and software are available.	Elementary Principal Middle School Principal	2016-2020
IA Elementary and Middle School faculty receive in-service training in methods and technology that will be used with students.	Elementary Principal Middle School Principal Spanish Department Head	2016-2020
PreK-6 students receive daily Spanish instruction which combines teacher led instruction with hands on technology.	Elementary Principal Middle School Principal PreK-6 Faculty Spanish Department Head	2016-2020

### **Goal 2: IA offers intensified Spanish coursework in grades 7-9.**

<b><i>ACTION STEPS</i></b>	<b><i>RESPONSIBLE</i></b>	<b><i>TIMELINE</i></b>
A full-year Pre-Spanish I class taught by a certified Spanish teacher is required for 7 <sup>th</sup> grade students.	Middle School Principal Spanish Department Head	2016-2020
Spanish I is required for 8 <sup>th</sup> grade students. (1 Carnegie unit)	Middle School Principal Spanish Department Head	2017-2020
Spanish II is encouraged for all 9 <sup>th</sup> grade students. (1 Carnegie unit)	High School Principal Spanish Department Head	2018-2020

**Goal 3: Advanced courses in Spanish are offered in high school.**

<b><u>ACTION STEPS</u></b>	<b><u>RESPONSIBLE</u></b>	<b><u>TIMELINE</u></b>
A conversation-based Spanish III where only Spanish is used is available to 10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup> grade students.	High School Principal Spanish Department Head	2019-2020
A one-semester Spanish refresher/enrichment is available to seniors to ensure college readiness.	High School Principal Spanish Department Head	2020

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## Time Management Vision Statement:

*IA students manage time in an effective way, thus maximizing their ability to complete multiple tasks congruently and be successful on long term assignments.*

### **Goal 1: IA students understand and apply good time management techniques.**

<b><i>Action Plan</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
IA students take a diagnostic test to identify level of skill and areas where improvement is needed.	Faculty Administration	2016
IA students prioritize tasks, create and use schedules, estimate time required, and eliminate wasted time.	Faculty Administration	2016
IA faculty and staff re-enforce good time management by reviewing and modeling good time management techniques daily.	Faculty Administration	2016
All IA classrooms display a poster listing important time management skills.	Administration	2016

### **Goal 2: IA students use good time management techniques to complete long term projects.**

<b><i>Action Plan</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
IA students receive long term assignments used to teach and re-enforce good time management skills.	Faculty Administration	2017
IA parents are informed of the assignments and goals, through STI and they oversee and re-enforce time management skills at home.	Faculty Parents Administration	2017
IA students are required by faculty to create a schedule that breaks the project into smaller parts with deadlines for each segment.	Faculty Administration	2017

## Enrichment Vision Statement:

*IA students benefit from enrichment programs focused on student growth and re-enforcing ethical behavior, self-control, empathy, integrity, and citizenship. These programs take the form of assemblies, service projects, outside speakers, clubs, and extra-curricular activities.*

### **Goal 1: IA provides enrichment speakers to promote ethical and moral behavior to all students.**

<b><i>Action Plan</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Frame</i></b>
IA students in grades PreK-5 and 6-12 attend a chapel assembly each month led by outside speakers covering topics which promote positive behavior.	All Principals	2016-2020
“Hope for Kids” is offered in grades 4-7 for one semester and includes the use of high school students as mentors.	All Principals	2018
The IA FCA has one after school event per quarter with speakers who teach Christian principles and values.	FCA Sponsors	2017

### **Goal 2: To promote a sense of empathy towards others and to promote citizenship, IA provides extra-curricular and co-curricular service opportunities for students.**

<b><i>Action Plan</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Frame</i></b>
IA elementary students participate in a “Make a Difference Day” where students do service work with a common theme.	Elem. Principal	2017
All students in grades 6-12 participate in annual service projects through clubs and student organizations.	Middle Principal H.S. Principal	2017

**Goal 3: Special programs take place weekly to promote desired moral and ethical behavior.**

<b><i>Action Plan</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Frame</i></b>
Quotations and verses that promote desired behavior are presented to students through a program called verse of the week.	All Principals	2016
Students who exhibit special actions or behaviors are recognized as "Courteous Colonels."	All Principals All Faculty	2017

## Financial Aid Vision Statement:

*IA seeks innovative ways to maximize current and future funding of financial aid programs to assist motivated students in our area afford ever rising tuition costs.*

**Goal 1: Each year a financial assistance fund, overseen by a permanent committee, solicits Individual donations from members of the community to provide funds for student tuition for families who have needs.**

<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Time Line</b>
A permanent Financial Assistance Committee appointed by the IA Board of Directors is responsible for raising funds.	IA Board	2016
A designated account under the IA Foundation holds donated funds until they are awarded.	IA Board	2016
The Financial Assistance Committee conducts a yearly campaign to raise funds.	Fin. Asist. Com. IA Board	2017-2020
The campaign includes several donation streams that include one time and continuing donations.	Fin. Asist. Com. IA Board	2017-2020
To the community including businesses, churches, clubs, and individuals, the Financial Assistance Committee effectively communicates the need for assistance.	Fin. Asist. Com. IA Board	2017-2020



**Goal 2: IA continuously seeks ways to add to IA's endowment fund to solidify the school's ability to offer financial assistance to families as tuition rises.**

<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Time Line</b>
Donations can be made electronically using the IA website.	Business Office Mr. Mason	2017-2020
IA uses all available methods to maximize donations. These methods include life insurance, stocks and bonds, real estate, bequests, memorials, planned giving, and single donations.	A Board Dev. Director Business Office	2017-2020
Changes made to the Fair Share Program encourage an increase in donations and expand the potential for tax deductible donations.	IA Board	2017-2018

## Reading Vision Statement:

*IA students grow as readers from Pre-K through their senior year. Reading skills, strategies and techniques are taught across the curriculum. Students develop expertise in reading, processing, and responding to academic materials.*

### **Goal 1: All students increase vocabulary and background knowledge of vocabulary.**

<b><i>Action Step</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
On smartboards, ipads, and computers IA students participate in activities that increase vocabulary and background knowledge of vocabulary.	All Faculty Administration	2016
All devices owned by the school and used by students have a dictionary application.	Administration	2017
Students create an enrichment vocabulary notebook in all subjects.	All Faculty Administration	2017

### **Goal 2: In all grades and subjects, students increase the use of reading strategies.**

<b><i>Action Step</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
IA students use a school wide coding system that is introduced in Pre-K and enlarged as the students progress through each grade.	All Faculty Administration	2018
In grades 7-12 students use annotated coding techniques.	All Faculty Administration	2018
Students read and are tested on nonfiction textbook passages in all grades.	All Faculty	2018

### **Goal 3: Through further instruction in reading in grades 7-10, students extend reading skills.**

<b><i>Action Step</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Time Line</i></b>
IA offers reading classes in grades 7 and 8.	Administration	2019
IA offers reading enrichment classes for 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> graders as one semester electives.	Administration	2019