THE MISSION

The purpose of the Corporation [Association] shall be to represent, support and strengthening member schools by developing and offering services, which include a means to standards-based accreditation for schools nursery through grade 12, professional development for school personnel, legislative updates and analyses, and promotion and advocacy locally and nationally.

THE VISION

As the primary voice for member schools, Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools will provide services pertinent to independent education, which meet the needs of its members

THE CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

PAIS is a state and region wide voluntary membership association serving independent schools; is recognized locally, regionally, nationally; is a voice for independent education; ensures excellence among member schools through the accreditation process; raises the visibility of and advocates for independent education in general and member schools in particular; collaborates and partners with other local, regional, and national organizations to best serve the needs of its members; commits to encouraging diverse leadership at all levels in member schools and within the Board; provides a resource of information and professional development to appropriate school constituencies; acknowledges, understands, and strives to hold schools accountable to the NAIS Principles of Good Practice; is an affiliate member of NAIS and a member of the NAIS Commission on Accreditation.

The PAIS Strategic Framework

Ensures the sustainability of PAIS; Sets forth a road map into the future that guides and provides direction for the Association; Moves the Association into a next phase of development; Creates a model that can be used annually, with flexibility and adaptability for change.

The PAIS Strategic Framework: Objectives | Initiatives

**ACCREDITATION**

Work with a variety of governmental and national bodies to continue the historic role as a recognized accreditation agency.

1. Ensure adequate staffing to serve the accreditation function of the Association.
   • Conduct a comprehensive staffing audit and implement the associated Board approved recommendations.
2. Provide extensive training for schools and committees.
   • Develop workshops for chairs, school leadership, and visiting team members.
   • Develop templates for visit and report to ensure consistency.
3. Promote the value of PAIS accreditation.
   • Develop and publish piece on advantages and benefits of PAIS accreditation.
   • Explore a requirement for all schools that are members to be accredited by PAIS.
4. Ensure core composition of visiting committees
   • Stipulate a requirement of member accredited schools’ participation in data base listings and service on visiting committees.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Create professional development for teachers, administrators and trustees in member schools. Where appropriate, collaborate with other organizations and electronic clearinghouses, which provide pertinent services.

1. Ensure adequate staffing to serve the professional development function of the Association.
   • Conduct a comprehensive staffing audit and implement the associated Board approved recommendations.
2. Provide the highest-quality, most user-friendly and affordable professional development for independent schools.
   • Offer a top-quality high-participation conference every other year, hosted on a member school’s campus.
   • Collaborate/partner with schools and other organizations to provide pertinent services.
   • Create an online electronic clearinghouse of webinars and video materials and scheduling available to all member schools. Provide a mechanism for feedback and ratings.

**LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

Assure a vital presence and perspective of independent schools is known and shared at all levels of State government and of member schools as appropriate.

1. Maintain and safeguard member schools’ independence.
   • Continue use of lobbyist.
   • From member schools, collect list of names with connections to the Legislature.
   • Explore the legislative needs of member Delaware schools.
2. Restructure the Legislative Affairs Committee of the Board.
   • Establish a liaison Chair to the Board.
   • When necessary create a task force of the Board.
3. Create an expanded Community Benefits statement.
   • Collect pertinent data from member schools to be included in the statement.
   • Update the Public Benefits of Non Public Schools to include current statistics and reflect current membership.

**ADVOCACY**

Create and support a marketing plan, internally with member and potential member schools, and more broadly across the State to strengthen the awareness and understanding of the work and contributions of independent schools

1. Promote the value of an independent school education to the general public.
   • Collect data on the general public’s understanding of what an independent school experience offers.
   • Develop marketing materials aimed at justifying the cost and highlighting the benefits of an independent school education, including outcomes achieved by independent school graduates.
2. Promote the value of PAIS membership to both non-member and member schools in order to increase awareness of exclusive benefits and encourage new schools to join.
   • Develop and market exclusive benefits in each of the four strategic priority areas outlined in this plan.
   • Explore exclusive member benefits among the four Strategic Initiatives.

The PAIS Strategic Framework as adopted by the Board of Directors October 3, 2012
Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) is a voluntary membership association serving not-for-profit 501(c)(3) independent private schools. Under its original incorporation in 1972 as a 501(c)(6) trade association, its stated purpose was to protect its member schools from government intrusion. To meet the expanding needs of its members, PAIS was re-incorporated as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) association in 2003.

Pennsylvania Association of Private Academic Schools (PAPAS) was founded in 1947, approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education as a not-for-profit accrediting agency in 1948, and incorporated in 1972. Its sole purpose was to provide standards and accreditation for independently governed private schools in Pennsylvania.

In July 2006, Pennsylvania Association of Private Academic Schools merged into Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools, becoming the PAIS Commission on Accreditation and forming one association that combined the existing functions of the two prior organizations. PAIS is approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education and recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to accredit schools in lieu of licensure. PAIS is a member of and approved by the NAIS Commission on Accreditation.

In October 2012, PAIS amended and restated its Bylaws to include membership of schools from within and from outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.