

TRANSFORMATION 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN





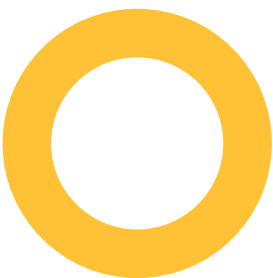
Our Next Chapter

As we enter this next chapter, it is essential for us to reflect on our lessons learned so we continue to build on our strengths and make the necessary shifts to fully realize our mission for Kindezi geniuses and families.

Kindezi was founded in 2010 on a vision of providing all students with a “genius awakening” and holistic education in family-sized classrooms. Over the past decade, this model has resulted in academic performance that outperforms the district and matches statewide results, strong waitlists at both charter schools, and a talented and committed staff.

In April 2020, we launched a strategic planning process to clarify our identity as a school community and collectively re-imagine our future. We are proud to say that nearly 250 Kindezi community members—including students, families, staff, and board members—participated in interviews, joined focus groups, completed surveys, and served on working groups throughout the process to help define our path forward.

Together we refined our mission, crafted a new set of core values, created the Kindezi Graduate Profile, and established a road map for the shifts we will make over the next three years to our academic, talent, and organizational development strategy.





STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS OUTCOMES

ENGAGEMENT

We had broad engagement and gathered lots of feedback from staff, families, and board members as part of the process

SELF REFLECTION

We reflected deeply on our values and infused these values into our mission statement, core values, equity commitments, and organizational goals

GRADUATE PROFILE

We defined the knowledge and skills our geniuses will need to thrive and shape the 21st century via a profile of a graduate, serving as our north star for all academic programming and decisions

CLASS SIZE

We decided to begin gathering community input on increasing class sizes from 8:1 to 10:1 in the elementary school to support long-term financial sustainability and 16:1 in the middle school to align with research on age appropriate class sizes for middle school

CLARIFIED VISION

We sharpened our vision for genius awakening education through designing a set of classroom look fors, and clarified our vision for Math, ELA, and core academic systems (curriculum, coaching, professional development, data use)

TALENT STRATEGY

We designed a talent philosophy and shifts to our recruitment, hiring, development, and retention practices to align with our equity commitments

OPERATIONS

We developed a clear vision for school operations excellence to inform operations coaching, professional learning, and continuous improvement

TIME & COST EFFICIENCIES

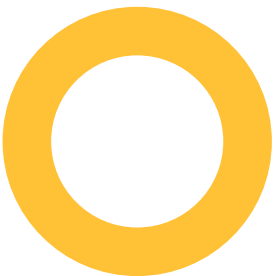
We identified several activities being done by schools to centralize at the network level to save time and costs

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

We evaluated multiple options to ensure Kindezi's long-term financial sustainability and designed a robust financial model and roadmap to continue to evaluate these options

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES ROADMAP

We developed a roadmap of strategic initiatives to prioritize over the next 3 years to accelerate our progress towards our mission





Strategic Planning Process

An intentional focus was placed on amplifying the voices of the Kindezi community.



4 stakeholder groups were engaged throughout the strategic planning process...



Geniuses

Flip grids, art work, essays, and focus groups



Guiding Team

Monthly meetings to guide the strategic planning process



Families

Surveys, focus groups



Teacher Focus Groups & Working Groups

Bi-weekly meetings: Identity/ DEI, academics, talent, finance, and operations

The strategic planning process had four phases...

01 PHASE

**Center REDI in the
strategic planning
process**

- Form a diverse guiding team of teachers, staff, board members, and families to steer the strategic planning process
- Center Race, equity, diversity, and inclusion in the planning process

02 PHASE

**Conduct current
state assessment**

- Listen and learn from Kindezi's community of stakeholders to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

03 PHASE

**Identity development
& strategic planning**

- Refresh Kindezi's mission, equity commitments, theory of action, and core values.
- Make decisions and develop a roadmap of strategic initiatives

04 PHASE

**Post-project
implementation
support**

- Develop capacity and tools to ensure the strategic plan is translated into action

CORE VALUES

Who must we be to achieve our mission?

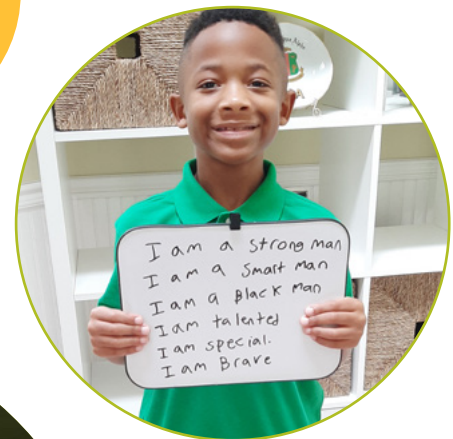
Core values are the deeply ingrained, shared principles that guide all of our organization's actions at the network, school, and classroom levels.

AUDACITY

We boldly do what's right for our geniuses, confronting oppressive mindsets head on, and standing for justice in all that we do. We are not constrained by convention or perceived limits and do whatever it takes to provide a genius-awakening education.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

We are a community sharing the responsibility and privilege of educating and empowering our children. We are accountable to one another and achieve results as an interdependent team. I am because we are, and we succeed together.



EXCELLENCE

We put forth our best effort and achieve big things. We set and pursue ambitious goals, so our community thrives and our Geniuses are on a path to choice-filled lives. We never stop learning and growing, as scholars and as people.

JOY

We find, bring, and share joy in our work every day. We practice gratitude, celebrate wins, and offer praise.

LOVE

We do everything with love and compassion. Our geniuses, colleagues, and community feel cared for, respected, and valued by our words and actions.

WHOLENESS

We understand the importance of balancing and integrating different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We provide a holistic education for our geniuses, and we support each other to be and care for our whole selves.



Equity Beliefs and Commitments

Our equity beliefs and commitments serve as our north star for our schools and organization.

"I have never encountered any children in any group who are not geniuses. There is no mystery on how to teach them. The first thing you do is treat them like human beings and the second thing you do is love them."

— Asa Hilliard

At Kindezi, we model the world we wish to see; specifically, we hold and act upon the following beliefs about our geniuses, staff, families, communities, and partners.

01 EQUITY BELIEF

We believe every child is innately gifted with genius.

Our Commitments:

1. **Culture:** We commit to ensuring every genius and staff member is seen, valued, and loved for their unique identities and experiences; identities include race, ability, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Our community is steeped in respect, trust, and love. In schools, we commit to replacing all punitive discipline practices with practices that are restorative and support social emotional growth. For staff, we commit to creating a safe environment where every individual can bring their full identity to school and work.
2. **Academic expectations:** We commit to a truly inclusive culture, holding the highest expectations for ALL of our students, regardless of their background, needs, prior education, or circumstances. Our expectations will be reflected in ensuring all geniuses access the highest-quality instructional materials, teachers, leaders, extra curriculars, and course work.
3. **Genius awakening experiences for all:** We commit to delivering genius-awakening learning experiences every day, in every school, in every classroom, for every child. This means our geniuses receive experiences that align with our graduate profile and expose them to new perspectives and possibilities.



02

EQUITY BELIEF

We believe equity and inclusion begins with staff mindsets and must translate into all of our systems.

Our Commitments:

1. Self-reflection: We commit to engaging in self-reflection, modeling equitable behavior, and operating in alignment with our beliefs, commitments, and core values. Our work together is distinguished by relationships, respect, and excellence.
2. Liberatory systems: We commit to analyzing all of our systems (e.g., hiring, coaching, performance management, decision making, behavior systems) to identify and dismantle oppression, racism, and bias that stifle the authenticity, distinctiveness, and creativity of our staff and students. We are transparent about our data and decisions. We share power and decision-making.
3. Resource allocation: We commit to ensuring our resources—talent, time, financial, material—are allocated with an equity lens, ensuring unique student and community needs are identified, centered, and acted upon. students, regardless of their background, needs, prior education, or circumstances. Our expectations will be reflected in ensuring all geniuses access the highest-quality instructional materials, teachers, leaders, extra curriculars, and course work.

03

EQUITY BELIEF

We believe our families, communities, and partners make our schools stronger.

Our Commitments:

1. Families as true partners: We commit to integrating family and community contributions, knowledge, and expertise into everything we do. We celebrate the beauty and power of our communities, including their histories and lived experiences.
2. Individualized approach: We commit to understanding and meeting the individual needs of each member of our community and remove barriers to their success. We exhaust all possibilities in service of our geniuses and their families.

Our Mission

Our refreshed mission statement defines our fundamental purpose and how we achieve it.



Our mission is to provide every child--regardless of background, need, or identity---a holistic genius-awakening education, built on family-sized classrooms, conscious diversity, and scholarly excellence.



GRADUATE PROFILE

Our graduate profile is the collective knowledge, skills, and mindsets we want our graduating 8th graders geniuses to possess in order to meet the challenges of high school, college, and the world.

EMPOWERED LEARNER

Geniuses are proficient in all academic core subjects, demonstrating high individualized growth. They apply that knowledge to real-world scenarios and challenges. Geniuses continuously seek learning opportunities and knowledge to better themselves, others, and their community.

CRITICAL THINKER

Geniuses analyze, evaluate, and reason effectively. They consider multiple perspectives, ask questions, construct arguments, and solve problems. They develop, refine, and revise ideas based on the best information available.

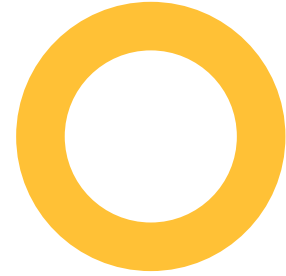


PERSISTENT PROBLEM SOLVER

Geniuses know how to take on challenges and navigate difficult situations. They are tenacious, creative, and often collaborative, when applying their holistic set of skills to find solutions to complex problems.

LEADER

Geniuses have vision and the courage to take initiative. They lead by example and by working with others to achieve a goal and/or serve their community. They are risk-takers and know how to try something new or go against the grain. Geniuses work alongside others as global citizens to pursue justice with shared respect for human dignity. Geniuses stick up for themselves and for other people -- both individuals and groups.



SAVVY

Geniuses can read the world around them and make appropriate adaptations with love and authenticity. They have proficient technology skills, awareness of the digital world, and a working knowledge of basic finance. They can make informed, strategic decisions as they mature.

SELF-CONFIDENT & SELF-LOVING

Geniuses know their voice and ideas matter. They have a strong sense of who they are, their strengths and challenges, what they can contribute to their community, and who they want to become. Geniuses ask for what they need. They practice self-compassion and self-regulation. Geniuses know they are inherently valuable and worthy of love.





ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES

We will track multiple data points aligned to the 5 questions below to evaluate our progress towards our 2025 goals.

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- 01 Who is our student community?
 - 02 Are we creating positive school cultures where students stay and thrive?
 - 03 Are our students learning and mastering Graduate Profile Outcomes?
 - 04 Are we building a diverse and inclusive talent model?
 - 05 Are we building a sustainable financial model?

Strategic Priorities

A photograph of three young Black children in green school uniforms. The child on the left is a boy, and the two on the right are girls. They are all smiling and looking at the camera. The girl on the right is making a peace sign with her hand. The background is slightly blurred, showing a classroom setting with a white table and other students.

Our Theory of Action
If... Then... By 2025...



IF WE...

THEN...

IDENTITY

Clarify who we are and what we stand for:

- Design and internalize equity commitments, core values, holistic graduate aims, and a refreshed mission statement
- Integrate our beliefs and values into all academic, cultural, talent, operational, and financial systems and processes

All geniuses, staff, and families will:

- Believe in what we stand for and how we show up for all student, staff, and families
- Our values will be evident in every classroom, school, interaction, policy, and system

ACADEMICS

Commit to genius awakening education for all:

- Design an instructional vision that aligns with our graduate aims, maximizes our small class sizes and diversity, and results in a joy filled, genius awakening education
- Ensure all geniuses have access to rich experiences, inside and outside the classroom, to spark curiosity and apply learning
- Adopt equitable curriculum and assessments where Geniuses see themselves and their interests in their learning
- Implement a system of academic support that deepens teacher content knowledge, pedagogy, and love of teaching

All geniuses will:

- Experience genius awakening education that cultivates a love & ownership over their own learning, regardless of classroom, school, or starting point
- Have unique experiences inside and outside the classroom that spark joy, curiosity, passion for learning
- Benefit from strong relationships with highly skilled teachers with deep content expertise

TALENT

Create a great place to work:

- Build opportunities for every staff member to grow and develop in the direction aligned to their personal and professional goals and to the needs of the school
- Interrogate and restructure all talent practices, systems, and policies to evaluate staff members' beliefs about equity and inclusion as a means of ensuring we are building a safe and compassionate organization for all
- Define sustainable staffing, compensation and rewards, and talent systems structures to ensure rewards and incentives are transparent, fair, and sustainable and ultimately helping us to fulfill our mission

All staff members will:

- See the targeted, personalized investment we are making in their growth, while ensuring the school is set up for success for years to come
- Aspire and work to embody our beliefs and take responsibility for their impact when they do not
- Feel understood in their roles and responsibilities, valued for their contributions, and able to balance their professional and personal lives with success

ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Design a Learning Community built to last:

- Develop and execute a financial strategy – inclusive of optimal scale, facilities, staffing, and budget – to ensure long-term sustainability
- Re-vision student recruitment and enrollment strategy and ownership
- Refresh operating model to centralize functions at the network level and clarify decision rights

All community members will:

- Feel secure in their belief that Kindezi schools are sustainable for the long-term
- Have their voices heard in the decision-making process
- Have the tools, systems, resources, and physical environments to support student learning

**BY 2025...**

*Geniuses will be better prepared for high school, college,
and choice-filled lives.*

Develop the knowledge and skills necessary
to excel in the high school of their choice and
compete globally



Make progress towards our graduate profile
outcomes: Critical Thinker, Problem Solver,
Leader, Empowered Learner, Advocate,
Confident, Self-loving & Self Aware



Earn “Proficient” or above on Georgia Milestone
assessments



Demonstrate high-levels of individual growth



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

To accelerate our progress towards our mission, we developed strategic initiatives in four key areas: Identity, Academics, Talent, and Organizational Development.

IDENTITY



VISION

Our deepest held values live in all of our systems, processes, and talent.

VISION

Our students are challenged with rigorous and relevant content in every classroom, every day. We anchor all of our work with students in trusting and caring relationships.

ACADEMICS





TALENT

VISION

We proactively recruit, intentionally develop, and deeply value all members of our diverse and highly talented staff community. Our work environment fosters inclusion and authenticity, supporting all staff to thrive in their roles and maximize their impact on our students.

VISION

Every member of our community is secure in the belief that Kindezi is sustainable for the long term and has the tools, systems, and resources to support a genius awakening educational experience.



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Identity Strategy

OUR VISION

Our deepest held values live in all of our systems, processes, and talent.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- % of equity commitments achieved annually based on audit by cross-functional Kindezi team
- % of staff that know and are committed to Kindezi's core values
- Core talent, academic, financial, and operational processes reflect updated mission, equity commitments, and core values

MISSION

Launch and internalize mission statement

- **Launch:** Update all communication materials (e.g., websites, signage, stationary, proposals) with new mission statement. Execute communication plan to launch mission statement to families, parents, and students.
- **Learn:** Lead informational sessions with families, parents, and students to unpack mission statement.
- **Leverage:** Integrate reflecting and discussing progress against mission statement into staff meetings, Senior Leadership Team meetings, satisfaction surveys, and annual strategic planning.

EQUITY COMMITMENTS

Launch and internalize equity commitments

- **Launch:** Update all communication materials (e.g., websites, proposals) with equity commitments. Execute communication plan to launch equity commitments to families, parents, and students.
- **Learn:** Develop supporting assets to unpack equity commitments (e.g., "what does it look like in action?") and launch multi-year scope and sequence with staff.
- **Leverage:** Refresh core processes through equity lens; launch annual external audit and continuous improvement process.

CORE VALUES

Launch and internalize core values

- **Launch:** Update all communication materials (e.g., websites, signage, stationary, proposals) with new core values. Execute communication plan to launch core values with families, parents, and students.
- **Learn:** Lead informational sessions with families, parents, and students to unpack core values.
- **Leverage:** Integrate core values into talent processes (hiring, onboarding, coaching, development, recognition) and staff culture (e.g., staff meetings, awards).

Academic Strategy

OUR VISION

Our students are challenged with rigorous and relevant content in every classroom, every day. We anchor all of our work with students in trusting and loving relationships.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- % of students achieving MAP Math and Reading Growth Goals
- % of students in high average or high quintile category
- % of students proficient+ on Georgia Milestones
- % of students demonstrating growth on Graduate Profile Aims

CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

- **Genius Awakening Experience:** Define the specific components that differentiate Kindezi's Genius Awakening experience that are expected across the network.
- **Curriculum:** Define high quality curricula for all academic areas, that aligns with the Instructional Vision and develop a curriculum review process for continually reviewing, assessing and adopting.
- **Assessment:** Develop a comprehensive and streamlined assessment strategy.

ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

Align Instructional Systems towards Rigor, Focus, Data, & Relationships

- **Coaching:** Define the Kindezi coaching model for the short & long term future
- **PLC:** Set the structures & foci for PLCs and train the talent that will lead them.
- **Data Use:** Analyze data weekly, monthly & quarterly through an equity lens.
- **PD:** Set the scope & sequence for the yearlong PDs.:
- **SPED Model:** Set the vision & structures for the SPED Model including staffing & budget implications.

RELATIONSHIPS

Create flourishing school communities

- **Student Culture:** Strengthen and align K-8 cultural practices to achieve grad profile outcomes and implement SEL curriculum, restorative practices and behavior management systems.
- **Family Engagement:** Develop a strategy to engage parents in academics, deepen a sense of community, and leverage parent voice.

RELEVANCE

Provide holistic and memorable learning experiences

- **Genius Awakening Experiences:** Develop a K-8 sequence of experiences aligned to grad profile outcomes and curriculum.
- **Extracurriculars:** Strengthen and align K-8 performing arts programming, athletics, and extra-curricular offerings to achieve grad profile outcomes.



Talent Strategy

OUR VISION

As the architects of awakening genius within our students, our vision is that Kindezi staff come for the mission, stay for the consistent opportunities for individualized growth and development, and meaningfully contribute to the community while maintaining their own satisfaction and balance.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- 100% of known vacancies filled with diverse, high-quality staff by May 15th
- 90% of high-performing staff retained annually, with no gaps by race/ethnicity and other demographic identities
- Disparity between staff members' overall satisfaction is neutralized, when looked at across racial/ethnic and demographic identities
- % of staff members identifying "professional growth opportunities" as an area for growth decreases by 10pp
- 80%+ of employees agree that the system for compensation and promotions is fair and equitable

DEFINE EXCELLENCE

Align on a clear, equity-centered vision of excellence

- **Competency Models:** Update competency models, aligned to talent philosophy, role responsibilities, and equity commitments, for teachers, leaders, and staff
- **Calibration:** Lead professional development with staff to unpack competencies, align on vision of excellence, and make connections to their day-to-day job functions.
- **Leadership Framework:** Create and launch leadership framework that sets expectations and principles for Kindezi leaders

STRENGTHEN SYSTEMS

Build systems and structures to ensure healthy and sustained talent operations over time

- **Systems Refresh:** Infuse talent philosophy, equity commitments, and recommendations from the strategic plan into all core talent processes (recruitment, hiring, on-boarding, development, and retention)
- **Compensation Philosophy:** Develop a compensation philosophy that ensures staff are paid competitively for their work, ensuring that roles and responsibilities are right-sized to ensure sustainability and predictability over time.
- **Data:** Build an intuitive and sustainable dashboard to house key metrics across the talent function, collecting, cutting and delivering actionable talent data explicitly to surface gaps by race/sub-group and drive equity-focused actions.; tie to org health survey

DEVELOP THE TEAM

Architect routines that ensure consistent growth for all staff

- **Culture of Feedback:** Establish a culture of consistent, relevant, and actionable feedback to ensure staff members are receiving consistent insight into their strengths and areas for growth.
- **Career Pathways:** Architect formal programs and processes for internal mobility, including leadership preparation programs and individualized coaching roadmaps.

Organizational Development Strategy

OUR VISION

Every member of our community is secure in the belief that Kindezi is sustainable for the long term and has the tools, systems, and resources to support a genius awakening educational experience.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Continued clean audits with no material deficiencies or weaknesses
- Total actual enrollment is within 3% of projected enrollment
- Gideons enrollment stays above 175
- Remain within 10% of total expense budget without going over budget
- Average cash on hand is 90 days or greater AND does not dip below 60 days

OPTIMAL SCALE

- **Execute optimal scale recommendations:** Adjust class size ratios, open separate MS campus, renegotiate Gideons contract

FINANCIAL PLANNING

- **Implement a sustainable financial model and processes:** Use 5-year financial model tool to assist with annual planning and budgeting
- **Conduct a deep dive into compensation strategy:** Work with compensation consultants, Edgility, to reset comp strategy (with focus on teacher salary)

OPERATIONS MODEL

- **Execute a comprehensive annual student enrollment strategy:** Enrollment at Charters remains at 900 cap with strong waitlist & enrollment at Gideons increases year over year
- **Implement a best in class operations model:** Use ops vision of excellence to strengthen coaching, PD, and continuous improvement systems

GRATITUDE

Executive Leadership Team

- Dr. Kelly Gunn, Executive Director
- Tricia Farquharson, Chief of Academic Programming
- Kimberly Green, Chief of Operations
- Tiambi Walker, Principal of Kindezi at Gideons
- Hyla-Monet Hardrick Penn, Principal of Kindezi West
- Ryan Free, Principal of Kindezi Old Fourth Ward
- Heidi Williams-Cooper, Sr. Director of Culture & Community Wellness
- Shannon Echols, Chief of Staff
- Drew Waddell, Chief Financial Officer
- Antoinette Guest, Data Analyst
- Elizabeth Talaska, Director of Development
- Bianca Griffin-Richards, Recruiter

Guiding Team

- Dr. Kelly Gunn, Executive Director
- Hyla-Monet Hardrick Penn, Principal of Kindezi West
- Tricia Farquharson, Chief of Academic Programming
- Martine Robinson, Hr/Talent Consultant
- Nayeede Bailey, Teacher Kindezi West
- Ryan Lisbon-,Teacher Kindezi at Gideons
- Kimberly Green, Chief of Operations
- Drew Waddell, Chief Financial Office
- Rebecca Cagle, Board Chair
- LaNiesha Cobb Sanders, Board Member

Working Groups

ED/Identity

- Dr. Kelly Gunn, Executive Director
- Heidi Williams-Cooper, Sr. Director of Culture & Com. Wellness
- Shalonda Miller, Parent
- Tiambi Walker, Principal Kindezi at Gideons
- Sophie King, Social Worker Kindezi O4W
- Andy Redman, Board Member
- Latricia Barksdale, Board Member
- Joe Loveland, Board Member
- Erika Sharp, Teacher

Academics

- Hyla-Monet Hardrick Penn, Principal Kindezi West
- Tricia Farquharson, CAP
- Colleen Bolton, Math Content Director
- Tia Jamieson, Teacher Kindezi Gideons
- Sally Westmoreland, Board Member
- Sarah Cash, Board Member

Talent

- Faith Wilbanks, ELA Content Director
- Martine Robinson, HR/Talent Consultant
- Hunter Pierson, Board Member
- Rebecca Cagle, Board Chair

Finance

- Drew Waddell, CFO
- Ashli Allen, Teacher Kindezi O4W
- Brett Lasher, Board Member
- Erick Nelson, Board Member
- Derick Schaudies, Board Member

Operations

- Ryan Free, Principal Kindezi O4W
- Kim Green, COO
- Sean McCants

Identity

- Heidi Williams-Cooper, Sr. Director of Culture & Com. Wellness
- Dr. Kelly Gunn, Executive Director





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The Kindezi School at Gideons
897 Welch St. SW Atlanta, GA 30310 | 404-802-7700



Kindezi.org