

DREAM STRATEGIC PLAN





MISSION

DREAM provides youth with opportunities to **play, learn, and grow**. Our mission is to level the field by empowering all children to recognize their potential and realize their dreams.

DREAM Maxims

- All kids can. This kid can.
- DREAM is family.
- Fun is a serious value.
- Teamwork makes the DREAM work.
- Fail. Persist. Exceed.
- DREAM big.

DREAM List

DREAM youth will be:

- College graduates
- Mentally and physically healthy
- Socially and emotionally competent
- Advocates for themselves and others

INTRODUCTION

DREAM's humble founding story starts in 1991 on a scrappy sandlot baseball field in East Harlem, New York. We taught kids how to be good teammates, how to lead and how to follow, how to win and lose, how to sacrifice for the team, and how to build resiliency and grit in a game of failure.

We brought our kids into classrooms during after-school and summer hours, and we worked on summer learning loss, high school graduation, and college matriculation. There was growth and meaningful impact. But it wasn't enough.

In 2008, we opened DREAM Charter School to further mitigate the reality of failing schools in our community. Over the past 10 years, we've built a school culture focused on high rigor, inclusion, and family support.

Today we find ourselves in a unique position. By combining all that we've learned over the past 28 years from our community-based youth development practices and school experience, we've created a new model to tackle the cycle of inequity.

This model is defined by what we've come to recognize as our non-negotiables: rigorous academics, social emotional learning, deep family and community engagement, and commitment to health and wellness. We believe that this is not just a model for DREAM, but a vision for communities everywhere. This is what it takes to elevate and empower vulnerable children and communities everywhere. This is what it takes to level the playing field so kids can recognize their potential and realize their dreams everywhere.



STRATEGIC

OBJECTIVE

DREAM's vision for youth is **bold and ambitious**. We know firsthand how hard this work is. But our children deserve our commitment and our belief in their **limitless potential**.

For the next decade, DREAM promises to work toward the following strategic objective and measure progress toward our mission.

DREAM will expand to serve at least

2,500

students in New York City through its PreK-12 schools.

DREAM students will achieve post-secondary success

EQUAL

to that of their affluent peers nationwide.

APPROACH

The components of DREAM's model are unique. While many schools emphasize academics and social-emotional learning, DREAM equally champions health and wellness along with in-depth family and community engagement. The intentional integration of these core areas of work distinguishes DREAM and drives successful outcomes for our students.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

DREAM created a set of 11 initiatives to ensure the successful realization of our strategic objective. The initiatives are organized into the following four buckets of work.

ENSURE TRANSFORMATIVE OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH

- Grow the whole child.
- College and beyond.
- Accelerate student learning.

MAKE DREAM THE BEST PLACE TO WORK

- Grow people to grow DREAMs.
- One DREAM, one purpose.
- DEI drives outcomes.

BUILD OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Data and systems to live by.
- Infrastructure to advance impact.

EXPAND TO DREAM BIG

- Place matters.
- Amplify DREAM.
- More DREAMs in more places.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ENSURE TRANSFORMATIVE OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH

1 Grow the whole child.

Combine rigorous academics with enriching extended learning opportunities and family supports to ensure the best possible future for our youth.

Outcomes

- Academic, social-emotional, health and wellness, and family engagement outcomes to increase for youth.
- Youth-facing approach and practices will be aligned across the organization to more effectively achieve strong outcomes.

2 College and beyond.

Create a post-secondary guidance and support model for DREAM Charter High School students to select the best-fit and most ambitious path for success while expanding and enhancing the existing Legends alumni program to serve both middle school and high school graduates.

Outcomes

- All students will be placed into best-fit post-secondary programs that maximize future opportunities.
- Supports and engagement provided through post-secondary experiences will ensure completion and future success.

3 Accelerate student learning.

Identify and drive instructional priorities and provide focused staff development to accelerate student achievement.

Outcomes

- Continuous improvements will be made in instructional practice to increase student achievement.

MAKE DREAM THE BEST PLACE TO WORK

4 Grow people to grow DREAMs.

Implement next generation talent processes to attract, retain, and grow a diverse group of adults who are committed to the success of our youth.

Outcomes

- Enhanced and systematized recruitment and selection practices will attract and retain diverse talent who are qualified to work at all levels of the organization.
- Redesigned core talent processes, such as performance management, compensation structure, and professional development opportunities, will ensure an internal pipeline for a growing organization.

5 One DREAM, one purpose.

Communicate and reinforce a shared vision and culture that aligns all stakeholders to our organizational maxims and strategic goals.

Outcomes

- Staff will be fully aligned to and invested in DREAM's mission and maxims shown through strong staff culture.
- Additional stakeholders, including youth, families, and supporters, will internalize and live out DREAM maxims.

6 DEI drives outcomes.

Build and cultivate a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture where all youth, families, and staff achieve at the highest levels.

Outcomes

- Diversity at the leadership levels will more closely represent the diversity of our youth and families.
- Staff will experience a culture where they feel valued, respected, and included.
- Staff and youth practices will be aligned to and model an inclusive culture where all people can thrive.

BUILD OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

7 Data and systems to live by.

Create organizational rhythms and tools that support decision-making and drive the execution of organizational priorities.

Outcomes

- An organizational dashboard will increase efficiency and allow for intentional, collaborative planning.
- Annual milestones for strategic initiatives will be successfully met and help move the organization toward the long-term vision of the Strategic Plan.
- Collaborative groups will be organized with clear purposes, along with management and accountability systems.

8 Infrastructure to advance impact.

Design and implement scalable organizational systems to support expansion, allowing us to operate more efficiently and effectively while growing multiple schools.

Outcomes

- Creation of a network infrastructure will allow for impactful sharing of key resources in network departments, including finance, fundraising, human resources, talent recruitment, and facilities.
- Roles and responsibilities will be clarified and streamlined, including school operations and student recruitment.
- Shared services agreements will be established as necessary.

EXPAND TO DREAM BIG

9 Place matters.

Determine a long-term facilities vision for current and new DREAM initiatives to ensure youth have safe and inspiring places that support their growth.

Outcomes

- Operations in current facilities will be optimized.
- Mid- and long-term solutions will be defined for current growth initiatives, including the high school and schools #2 and #3.

10 Amplify DREAM.

Maintain and develop a best-in-class nonprofit brand to attract and grow new and diverse philanthropic support.

Outcomes

- Revenue goals to support program and capital needs will be met.
- New stream of funders who align with integrated model will be engaged.
- A strong brand will highlight DREAM's model and organization leaders through external and internal communications and thought leadership opportunities.

11 More DREAMS in more places.

Execute our 10-year growth plan by identifying new communities for expansion, opening new K-8 schools, and building out extended-day and extended-year programming.

Outcomes

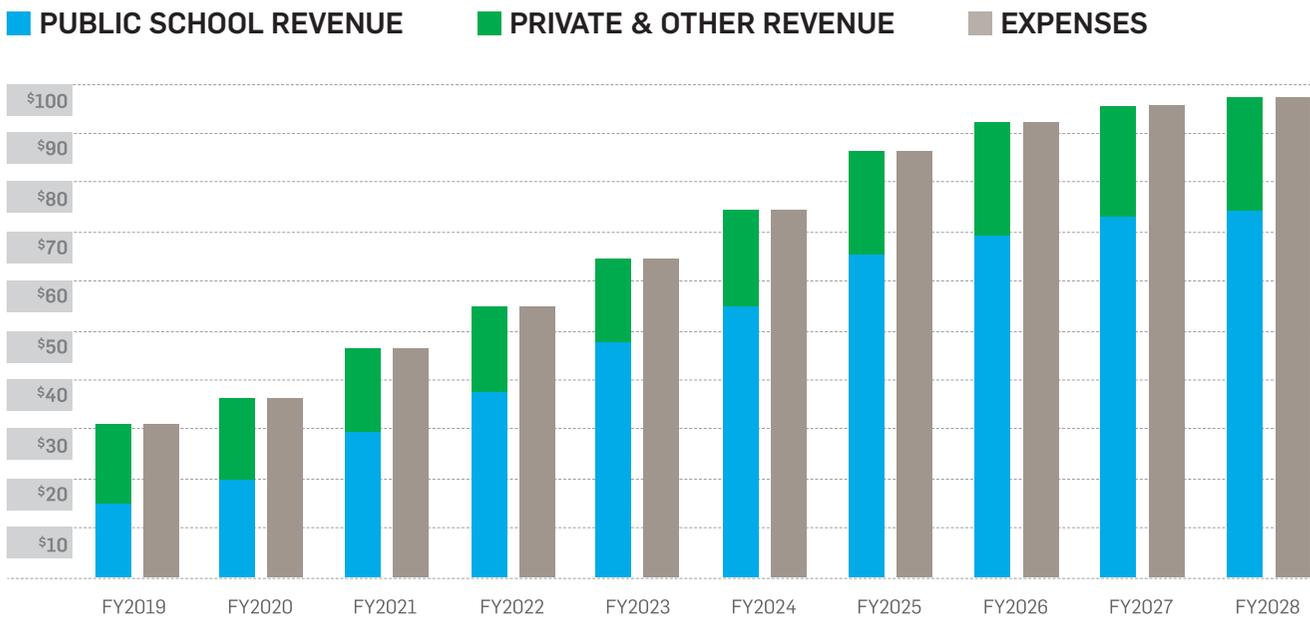
- Growth strategy for new schools and implementation plans will be defined.
- Long-term plan for school expansion will be defined, including developing future leaders, codifying consistent practices, and ensuring coherence among schools.

FINANCIALS

In order to realize our strategic objectives, DREAM's annual operating budget will grow from \$31M to \$98M over the next 10 years.

REVENUE vs. EXPENSE

IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS



PLACE MATTERS

At scale in the next decade, DREAM will operate three K-8 schools and a high school to serve 2,500 students. DREAM's current K-8 school is housed in its East Harlem headquarters, and the high school is in a temporary space. DREAM plans to secure two new private facilities: one building to house its second K-8 school and the high school, and another to house our third K-8 school. For these two new homes, DREAM projects a capital need of \$50M to meet its growth needs.



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