



# THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SOFIA

## *Shaping the Future: ACS Strategic Plan 2027*

American College of Sofia  
Bulgaria



Two years ago, before the world was transformed by an unprecedented pandemic, a core group of ACS stakeholders launched a process to imagine the future of the American College of Sofia. We felt a deep sense of appreciation and respect for our community of exceptional students, educators and families. We were inspired by the ongoing work which has made ACS a pillar of educational quality in the nearly 30 years since its 1992 reopening. But we also knew that mature educational institutions cannot stand still; they must anticipate the changing educational landscape and prepare students for lives and careers in a rapidly changing world. We envisioned that a rigorous strategic planning process – which successful educational organizations worldwide utilize regularly – would help us to clarify current obstacles, agree on key goals for development, and craft an enduring vision of excellence for the College.

The goals and focus areas presented in the enclosed ACS Strategic Plan 2027 are the product of rigorous collaboration among faculty, staff, trustees, parents, students and alumni. Over 18 months, we conducted surveys of our community; held various focus group meetings; hosted a virtual offsite with more than 60 stakeholders. Each initiative helped us to identify existing strengths and weaknesses, gather and evaluate aspirations for the future, and prioritize areas of focus for the next five years. The engagement and enthusiastic contributions of our full community led to a fruitful and all-encompassing result. We are deeply appreciative for that!

Theodora Konetsovska '97  
**Chair, Board of Trustees**

The ACS Strategic Plan 2027 is led by deep commitment to our students, focus on their happiness at school and high aspirations for their successes after ACS. The six Plan goals represent the areas fundamental to the College's operation and impact: Program; Faculty and Staff; Community; Finances; Spaces; and Networks. Each goal seeks to answer big questions like, *What kind of adults do we want our students to become? What impact do we want to have and on whom? How does the education we give stay current in the coming decade? How do we find the resources to match our aspirations?* All answers proposed by the Plan are closely linked to ACS's mission and core values.

Next steps in the strategic planning process will continue to involve community contributions and hard work. In a series of events over the coming weeks we will share highlights of the ACS Strategic Plan 2027; please join us to share your feedback and ask questions. A rigorous implementation plan addressing the six goals' specific focus areas is being developed, with a focus on priority and available resources. Implementation will begin in the current school year, followed by opportunities for ACS's next President to make her own mark on the Plan. As we have done until now, we will keep you updated on progress and will welcome your input. Community collaboration has been crucial for our success to date; it will remain key going forward. On the eve of ACS's 30-year reopening anniversary, we are thrilled to begin work with you on our ambitious Strategic Plan goals and to ensure ACS's best path forward for the next 30 years.

Strategic Plan Task Force members: Tom Marshall, Richard T. Ewing, Jr., Ed.D., Ivelina Borisova '98, Karen Collias, Katherine Georgiev, Marcie Ries, Evgenia Peeva-Kirova '04, Sam Seymour

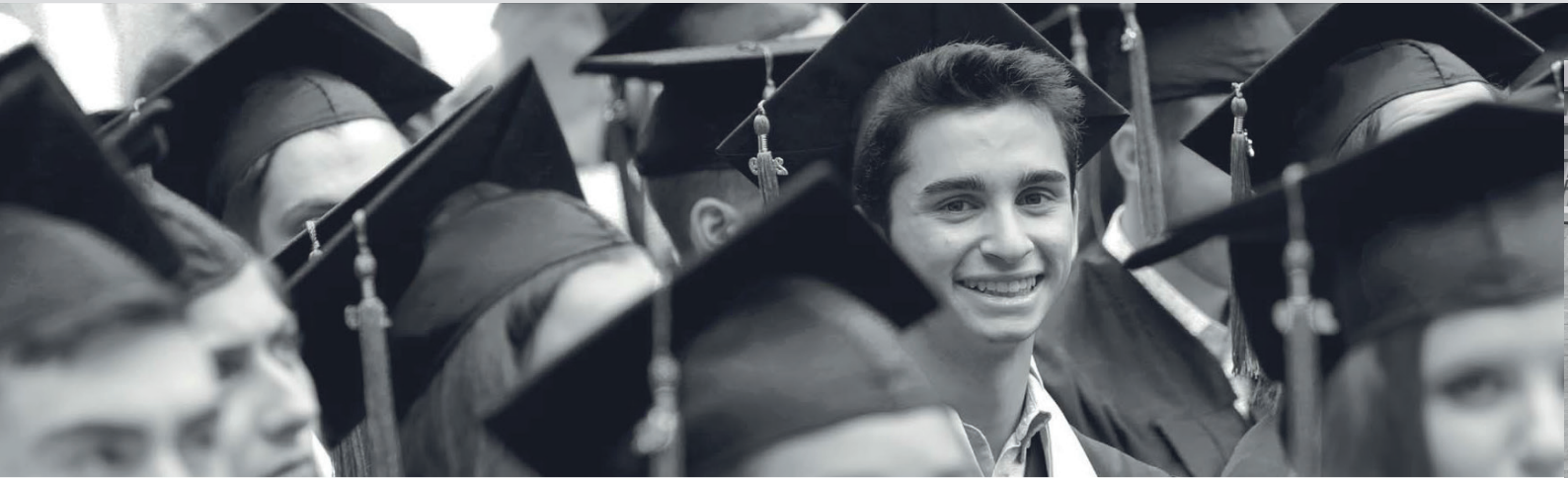
# STRATEGIC GOALS

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- 1 | Outstanding Educational Program**
- 2 | Mission-Centered Faculty and Staff**
- 3 | Diverse and Inclusive Community**
- 4 | Strong and Sustainable Finances**
- 5 | Flexible and Inspiring Spaces**
- 6 | Strong and Supportive Networks**

# Outstanding Educational Program

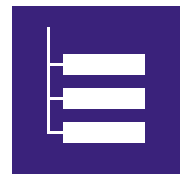
Provide a transformational education which allows students to work and explore across academic disciplines, apply their learning and prepare for fulfilling lives of contribution and service



## Focus areas:

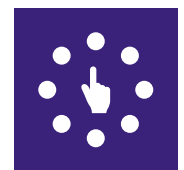
Review all elements of the curriculum (including Bulgarian, American, and International Baccalaureate components) to reinforce relevance, interdisciplinarity and a balance between breadth vs. depth

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Expand authentic service opportunities and applications of academic knowledge to real-world problems through community and alumni partnerships, co-curricular opportunities, new uses of technology and internships

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Promote health and wellness through programs and experiences that facilitate physical and emotional balance and prepare students for life after ACS



# Mission-Centered Faculty and Staff

Invest in and further develop a well-qualified, highly motivated faculty and staff which provides and supports effective, inspirational student learning experiences in pursuit of the school's mission



## Focus areas:



Assess and expand compensation packages and recruitment procedures in order to attract and retain outstanding local and international faculty, administrators and staff



Develop strategies to recruit a faculty and staff which reflects the full economic, social and cultural diversity of the world into which ACS students will graduate



Enhance the professional learning program and performance review process, helping faculty and staff to grow, learn about effective approaches and deepen their practice



Deepen faculty collaboration across departments and grades to analyze student work and performance data, reflect on feedback and design engaging learning experiences



Nurture a professional culture of innovation and collaborative leadership, embracing evidence-based advances in technology and pedagogy

# Diverse and Inclusive Community

Recruit and support a student body which increasingly reflects the full economic, social and cultural diversity of Bulgaria



## Focus areas:

Develop an increasingly diverse student body through targeted recruitment and refined admissions policies and processes



Develop support systems for all students which recognize learner variability, provide appropriate learning strategies and scaffolds, deepen a sense of belonging and inclusion, and promote personal agency to set goals and overcome challenges



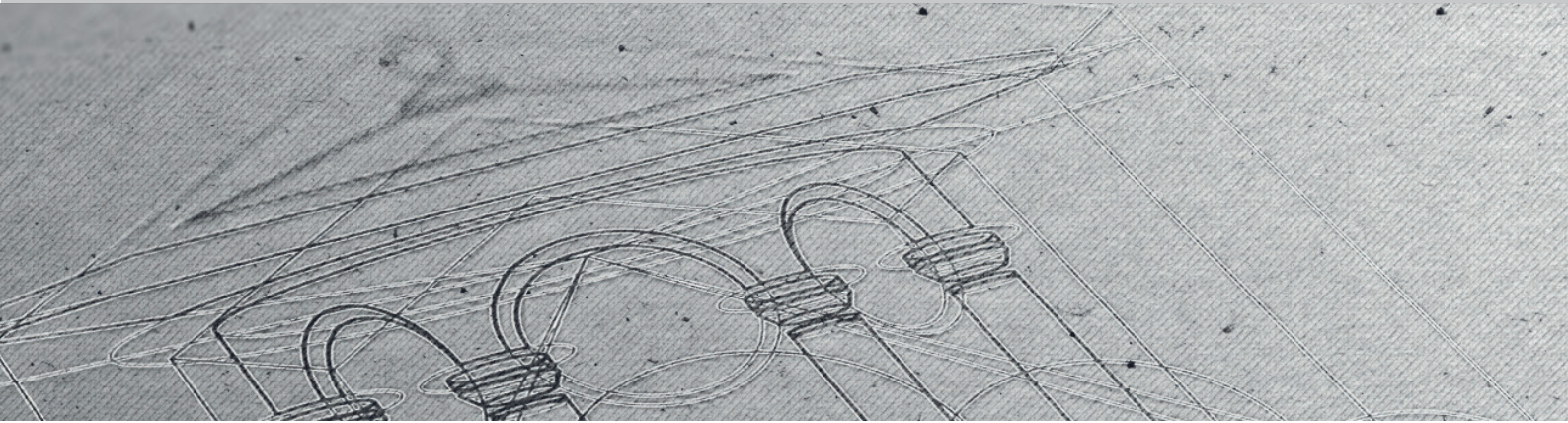
Provide sufficient financial aid to support the recruitment and retention of an increasingly socioeconomically diverse student body



Develop programming and tools to help the ACS community explore and deepen its collective understanding and appreciation for diversity in all of its forms



Cultivate the financial capital needed for the long-term sustainability of ACS



## Focus areas:

Expand fundraising efforts to strengthen existing sources, include new potential sources and visibility initiatives to consistently increase giving

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Develop a rigorous multi-year financial plan and apply it in the budgeting and long-range planning processes for both ACS and SAS; use it to forecast multi-year operating impact of annual and one-off financial decisions

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Enhance transparency and community education around ACS financial realities, challenges and opportunities

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Secure status and use of campus and facilities on a permanent basis



## Flexible and Inspiring Spaces

Preserve and promote the College's unique and historic campus through systematic, purposeful development of its learning spaces, co-curricular facilities and living areas



### Focus areas:

Update the campus master plan, including the development of flexible and inspiring community spaces

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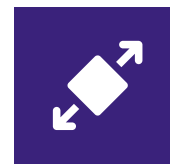
Prioritize efforts to upgrade existing buildings, including Abbott and Sanders Halls, in support of educational program goals

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Develop further an attractive boarding program which fully supports the needs of a diverse group of students coming from outside Sofia

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Improve and update science and sports facilities to support the College's learning and program aims



Strengthen the connections between ACS and its stakeholders, Bulgaria and the wider world



### Focus areas:

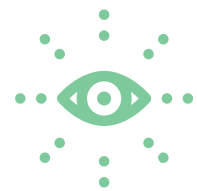
Broaden and deepen the engagement of parents and alumni in order to continue building support for the College's mission and programs

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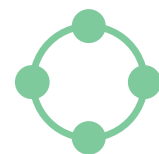
Raise awareness of ACS in the local community to deepen its relevance and public impact

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Strengthen connections to Bulgarian civil society, nongovernmental organizations and the Bulgarian government

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Expand student, faculty, and staff interactions with peers through regional and international events and affiliations, developing new connections between ACS and the European Union, United States and international organizations





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*Designed By:*

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