

BALTIMORE SCHOOL
for the **ARTS**

2015-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN



“Never underestimate kids.
Grant them a challenge and
they can meet it in creative ways.”

—Sammy Hoi,
President of Maryland Institute College of Art

*Where
the Arts
Change
Kids' Lives*

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a diverse group of students in a lecture hall. They are all looking towards the left side of the frame, presumably towards a speaker. The lighting is dramatic, with strong red and purple hues. The students are wearing white collared shirts. The overall mood is one of focused attention and intellectual engagement.

Core Values

We believe these values are critical
to the personal development of each student
and an important underlying
philosophy of the institution.

CURIOSITY

CONFIDENCE

EXPERTISE

COLLABORATION

PURPOSE

GLOBAL
PERSPECTIVE

The Path Forward

Replied the child when asked about art: "It makes me feel good...sometimes it makes my hand sore from doing it." For thirty-five years the Baltimore School for the Arts, through its nationally recognized pre-professional arts training programs, has understood that the joyful reward of art first demands the commitment to hard work. Therefore, periodically, it is appropriate to critically question the school's assumptions about the nature of our pre-professional work to train young artists in terms of current models, expectations and challenges of the professional world of Dance, Music, Theatre and the Visual Arts. To achieve this goal, a Strategic Five-Year Plan is needed to assure that our students' current preparation is relevant to the ever changing world of professional artists. In addition, the predictable retirement of current foundational department heads, whose decades of dedication and experience have shaped the core values of the school's arts programs, presents an especially delicate issue. Our goal, therefore, is by careful research and reasoning to determine the best path forward into the next decade by retaining the rock-solid wisdom on which the school was erected while wisely renovating those areas that are in need of refurbishing. Looked at it this way, it is clear that the design goal of our Strategic Five-Year Plan seeks to be as carefully and as artfully planned and executed as was the founders' vision for the Baltimore School for the Arts three and a half decades ago.

Wayne King
BSA Academic Dean 1989-2009

Strategic Planning Committee

CO-CHAIRS

Todd Harvey,
BSA '94, Board of Overseers

Li-Wen Kang,
BSA '88, Board of Overseers

Maria Broom,
Theatre Faculty

Bea Bufrahi,
Visual Arts Faculty

Marjorie Rodgers Cheshire, Chair
Emerita, Board of Overseers

Linda Denise Fisher-Harrell, BSA '88,
Dance Faculty

Chris Ford,
BSA Director

Anita Hilson,
Board of Overseers

Rachel Heavers,
Staff/Project Management

Patricia Joseph,
Chair Emerita,
Board of Overseers

Jason Kissel,
Music Faculty

Mellaseh Morris,
Dean, Peabody Institute, retired



CURIOSITY

Imani McCord, 2017
Stage Design & Production

I feel that curiosity is a main driving force to learning. If you are naturally curious about a given topic then you will naturally want to find out more. If you are being force fed information that doesn't interest you in any way, then you won't be focused and you won't absorb the information.

EXPERTISE

Haley Parsley, 2017
Visual Arts

My arts classes emphasize being able to do things well and I think they've really instilled in me a desire to be constantly improving and to work hard.



Each one-on-one conversation added
to our understanding of how to best
prepare our students.

Methodology

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee have talked to a range of experts – educators, professional artists, arts advocates and community leaders, alumni, long-time faculty and staff, and college admissions officials – to assess the current artistic and academic environment in which we are expecting our students to succeed. Each **one-on-one conversation** added to our understanding of how to best prepare our students. As each conversation was added to the mix of information, certain ideas and tenets became thematic. The resonance and clarity of these themes speak to their relevancy and importance, both to the future of our organization and to the quality of education that we are providing our students.

We have also conducted multiple **Open Forums** with community stakeholders. During these forums we introduced the mission of the committee and the basic methodology we

would be using with the intention of opening the floor for discussion and participation.

We also sent a 10 question **Survey** to all of our current Alumni. The purpose of the survey was to create an anonymous forum for graduates of the school to voice their opinions.

The information gathering stage of this project proved to be very informative and educational. Responses from each stage of the process have simultaneously confirmed some of our previous assumptions and challenged others. The members of the Strategic Planning Committee see their job as one of synthesizing the data, hoping that we can successfully design implementation tactics reflecting this new information.

Matthew Ardizzone
Associate Dean of Admission,
Eastman School of Music

Corinne Botz
Professional Photographer,
Professor

José Antonio Bowen
President,
Goucher College

Sharayna Christmas
Founder and Executive Director,
MUSE 360

Lee Cioppa
Associate Dean for Admission,
The Juilliard School

Nicole Cornell
Alumna, Manager,
George Balanchine Trust,
NYCB

Patricia Decker
Director of Recruitment at
New York University,
Tisch School of the Arts

Doug Dempster
Dean of College of Fine Arts,
UT Austin

Mellaseh Edwards
Alumna, Current BSA
Music Department Head

Katherine Helen Fisher
Alumna, Professional Dancer/
Choreographer

Jodie Gates
Dean,
USC Gloria Kaufman
School of Dance

Deana Haggag
Director,
The Contemporary Museum

Donald Hicken
Current BSA
Theatre Department Head

Sammy Hoi
President,
MICA

Tracy Inman
Co-Director,
Alvin Ailey School of Dance

Charelle James
Current BSA
Academic Dean

Stephen Kent
Current BSA
Visual Arts Department Head

Georgia King
Former TWIGS Director

Wayne King
BSA, Former Academic Dean

Errol Kolosine
Assistant Arts Professor,
Clive Davis Institute of
Recorded Music, NYU

Stephan Koplowitz
Dean of Dance,
CalArts

Kwame Kwei-Armah
Artistic Director,
Center Stage

Fred Lazarus
President Emeritus,
MICA

Liz Lerman
Choreographer,
MacArthur Genius Grant
Recipient

Jane Marsching
Professional Visual Artist

Abigail Warren McKelvey
Alumna, Current BSA
Guidance Counselor

Meghan Murphy
College Admissions Officer,
NYU

Colin Page
Alumnus, Professional
Visual Artist

Norma Pera
Current BSA
Dance Department Head

Townsend Plant
Director of Music Admission,
Ithaca College

Emily Price
Peabody Graduate,
Private Music Instructor

Christopher Llewellyn Reed
Chair of the Film/Video
Department,
Stevenson University

Susan Rome
Alumna, Professional Actress

Nadia Sirota
Alumna, Professional Violist

Michael Tabegna
Current BSA
Academic Faculty

Ian Tresselt
Former Managing Director,
Everyman Theatre

Jesse Vaughan
Designer and
Web Site Developer

Dontae and Mashica Winslow
Alumni, Professional Musicians
and Producers

A portrait of Ayana Gruber, a young woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing glasses and a pink top. She is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is a blurred indoor setting with bookshelves.

Ayana Gruber, 2017
Stage Design & Production

Everyone's perspective is different because we all have different experiences. You never know what someone else is going through so having an open mind is important. Having a global perspective is good because that means you can help more for the greater good.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

A portrait of Isagani Inocentes, a young man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a grey hooded sweater. He is smiling broadly at the camera. The background is a solid, textured red.

Isagani Inocentes, 2017
Stage Design and Production

BSA keeps me on my toes and focused and I love all the different people I can meet here. There is potential for amazing collaboration. This will be helpful in the future because I can branch out to other people in different disciplines.

COLLABORATION

Environmental Assessment

Visionary projects can be piloted, adjusted and developed with speed and flexibility.

Historically, when young artists envisioned their future, they could identify institutions that would foster their growth and ensure career opportunities. Where once the artistic world was driven by these professional institutions — orchestras, major dance companies, repertory theatre companies, managed galleries, etc. — the professional art world now is shifting to a more individually driven model. Professional artists report they have responded to this changing environment by, ironically, cultivating skills outside their core artistic training.

The individually driven artistic environment is **more dynamic**, more collaborative and team-oriented than an institutionally driven market. In the absence of widespread institutional infrastructure, artists are discovering the need to be more flexible and creative in creating successful careers. The one-job career is now an exception, not the rule, and schools should be intentional in preparing students for multi-faceted careers.

In this market, artists are discovering that they are now expected to not only execute their artistic vision – but also develop the financial resources to build it, market it and manage its dissemination. These **entrepreneurial skills** were often mentioned in our conversation as essential to current artistic practice. Economic drivers and elements of business have always played a role in the art world, but now, artists are more personally engaged in these realities.

Examples of useful entrepreneurial attitudes include:

- Ability to scan the horizon and connect one's artistic vision with audience
- Ability to conceive and develop projects
- Cultivating an open-minded and opportunistic outlook
- Developing a healthy level of risk propensity
- Effectively sharing your vision with a variety of audiences
- Managing to remain relevant in changing markets

The idea of living exclusively within a disciplinary silo is becoming obsolete. Artists who are open to borrowing and **collaborating with individuals in other fields**—artistic or not—are often able to define their own vision and careers more successfully. Collaborations open doors to new audiences and create new, unexpected artistic conversations.

Another resonant theme present in many conversations referred to **the added relevancy of technological innovations**. Artists and educators stated that access to and the use of technology is changing artistic work and its dissemination. Keeping our students up-to-date in the quickly changing landscape of technological advances will provide a foundation to use these tools effectively. Technology impacts how art is created, is delivered and how artists engage with audiences and other artists.

BSA is in an **enviable education space**. Its artistic programs are designed and developed in-house and delivered by professional artists supported by foundation employees. As such, they have the possibility of responding to changes in the creative workplace with agility and to relevant changes in their respective artistic fields. Visionary projects can be piloted, adjusted and developed with speed and flexibility.

BSA is also in an **enviable geographic space**. We are surrounded by world-class artistic organizations, all of which offer amazing learning opportunities to our students, as well as a large corps of highly-trained professional artists. Baltimore itself is emerging as a creative class hub. BSA should continue to access these community partners for collaboration, personnel and learning opportunities for our students.

While we focus on local opportunities, we cannot forget the importance of embracing a **global perspective** on learning. One element of a global perspective is geographical: encouraging exposure to artistic disciplines and sensibilities from other cultures. Another element is more philosophical: encouraging BSA students, faculty, and staff to focus beyond this community and its canon of disciplines.

Artistic professions are changing. The type and availability of artistic jobs are constantly expanding, contracting, evolving and spurting forward in new and unexpected ways. To serve its students, BSA must work to provide a relevant environment and curriculum for its students.

CONFIDENCE

Dorien Carroll, 2017
Dance

The best thing about BSA for me is doing what I love every day. Dance. It gives me confidence and confidence is something we should all have.



PURPOSE

Kory Sanders, 2017
Vocal Music

You have to understand that everything you are being taught is important for a reason. The things you learn will help to build your skill set as an artist. It's also important that your discipline matters to you. If it has no meaning to you then it will be very hard to be successful.



“Tools lead to abundance.”

—Liz Lerman

Choreographer, MacArthur Genius Grant Recipient

Vision Statement

We respect the young creative mind and exist to nurture its passion and potential. We believe that the pursuit of mastery in an artistic field, paired with a strong individual sense of purpose, leads to a wide range of positive outcomes for both the student and the community.

Mission Statement

Baltimore School for the Arts seeks to prepare the next generation of the creative workforce by providing inspiring arts and academic training to high school students as well as opportunities in the arts to younger children and the greater community.

Core Values

Curiosity

Curiosity is the engine of learning and the mother of creativity. Our goal is to systematically create, facilitate, and engage the creative mind and lay a foundation for a life-long love of learning. To inspire curiosity, we must engage students' current interests, provide novel experiences, and augment knowledge with the tools students need to fulfill their visions.

Expertise

We believe students with a high level of expertise and mastery in their artistic field have the best opportunities and experience an important sense of accomplishment. To achieve this goal, students are immersed in focused study of an artistic field, taught by experts, and held to high standards of competency and skill. Through this process, students learn how to manage a wide range of information and use it to build context, relevancy, and problem solve.

Purpose

Developing an individual voice is critical to building a sense of purpose and to creating meaningful artistic work. To develop purpose driven students, we must respect the individual, build skills that link curiosity and passion, and be open to the individual's artistic production. Our goal is to create opportunities to foster the individual's artistic and intellectual response.

Confidence

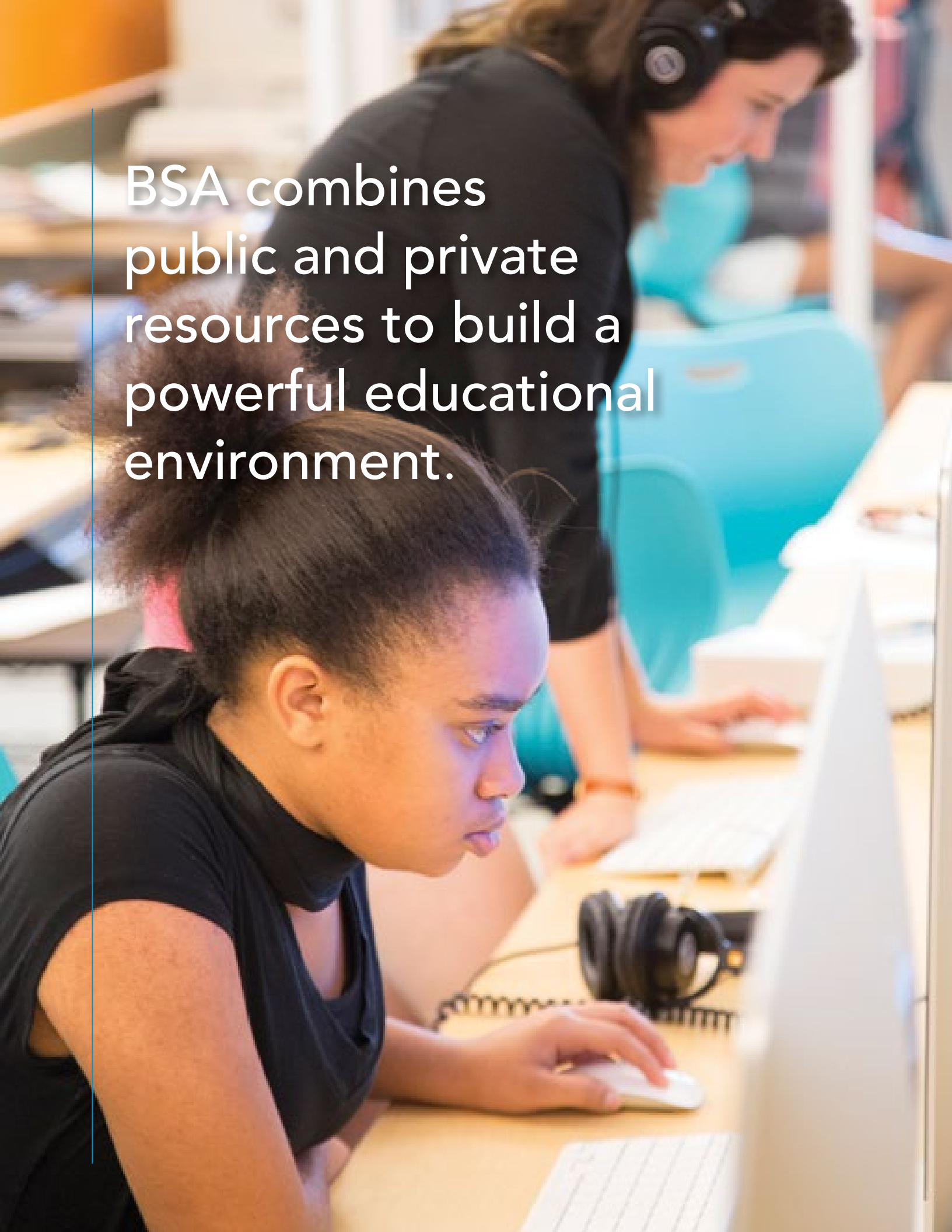
A confident individual will travel at the boundary of known and unknown, develop an appetite for intellectual and creative risk and be able to arrive at innovative solutions. We seek a community where every individual feels empowered, works step-by-step to achieve long-term goals, and successfully links passion to a meaningful purpose.

Collaboration

Working with others in collaborative projects is increasingly important, in artistic disciplines and beyond. Collaboration reinforces the idea that, while each of us is unique, we are all stronger and more powerful when we combine the skills and understandings of others; especially when they bring insight from other disciplines. To promote the collaborative initiatives, we must weave projects into the curriculum and devote staff time to facilitating and leading the effort.

Global Perspective

Thanks to a wide range of technological innovations, the people of the world are increasingly connected. To access the world's information and disseminate one's work widely, one needs to be aware of the world at large and how to engage with it. To promote students' understanding of the larger world and their place in it as citizens and as artists, we must provide opportunities to authentically connect with a wide range of people, culture, art and life experiences.

A young woman with dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a black sleeveless top, is focused on a computer screen. She is sitting at a light-colored desk, with her hand on a white mouse. In the background, another woman with long dark hair, wearing a black shirt and a large black headset, is also working at a computer. The setting appears to be a modern classroom or office with bright lighting and blue chairs. The text "BSA combines public and private resources to build a powerful educational environment." is overlaid on the left side of the image in white font.

BSA combines
public and private
resources to build a
powerful educational
environment.

Goals

Provide relevant and challenging foundational arts and academic training that supports our core values

An almost universal sentiment heard from alumni is that the foundational training, regardless of discipline, they received at BSA was excellent and allowed them to easily transition into additional artistic training. In order to continue to provide students with excellent foundational training, BSA needs to remain flexible and responsive in the assessment of what skills and competencies should be required of students at this stage in their education, but staunch in their insistence that foundational competencies be mastered.

Support innovative and pertinent educational opportunities for students and staff to inform and support their creative work

Opportunities for master classes, field trips, cultural exchanges, and summer programs expose students to new ideas and perspectives to inform their artistic vision and voice. This exposure makes our students better artists and better candidates for post-secondary educational institutions. By offering similar opportunities to our faculty and staff, we hope to enhance their effectiveness in the classroom and in their individual study.

Facilitate a culture of collaboration and interdisciplinary thinking

A key finding from our environmental assessment of the current artistic environment is the importance and value of positive collaboration in a broad range of fields. The philosophy behind a collaboration encapsulates multiple philosophical tenets that we wish to impart to our students—the value of teamwork, how to maintain your own artistic vision while encountering new and different ideas, exposure to other artistic disciplines and industries, and how to successfully negotiate unfamiliar situations and creative frameworks. Encouraging students to collaborate, under expert guidance, provides an understanding of how to interact in a professional setting and what will be expected of them in that arena.

Recruit and retain high quality arts and academic faculty and leadership

It is our belief that one of our greatest strengths is our people; retaining them and fostering their development is in the best interest of the institution. By training with working artists, students learn the fundamentals of their artistic discipline in an environment that emphasizes professionalism and scholarship. Instructors in the arts are among the region's leading visual artists, musicians, actors, and dancers. The academic faculty is a select group of certified teachers skilled at communicating knowledge and sharing the joy of learning.

Make excellent post-secondary training a viable option for every student

Our goal is to help each student identify and gain acceptance into the post-secondary educational institution that best meets their needs. Considerations for choosing post-secondary institutions include the student's artistic goals, academic capacity, financial situation, and ability to successfully matriculate and secure employment.

Access BSA alumni as professional resources for current students—both during matriculation and beyond

BSA needs to be a bridge that connects our students to the next stage of their educational pursuits and a resource for alumni looking to create connections to educational or professional resources. It is our responsibility to provide both communities the right introduction to the world for which we are training them. There is a rich and vibrant pool of resources within our BSA family that we need to share. A current and vibrant alumni network can provide advice, connections, mentorship, internships, and advocacy for the entire BSA community.

Develop and align financial resources to meet student educational needs and evolving institutional demands of physical and technological infrastructure for all members of the BSA Community.

BSA combines public and private resources to build a powerful educational environment. To do this on an ongoing basis, BSA must effectively advocate for and blend the needed resources to support the educational program and related infrastructure, both physical and technological, as it remains agile in responding to the external environment.

Maintain and grow our profile and relationships with local and national decision makers

We operate within the construct, and at the pleasure of, the Baltimore City School system. To protect our interests and our autonomy, we must create and cultivate advocates at the city, state and national level. We have an outstanding level of achievement and thousands of alumni to prove that what we do and how we do it works – unequivocally. But we must continue to create positive lines of communication between our leadership and local authorities to ensure that we will be able to continue our work.

Find opportunities for positive partnerships

The creation of mutually beneficial partnerships—artistic, educational, and beyond—increases our ability to serve our current, future, and past students. Our goal is to engage partners who enhance the BSA experience and build bridges to the external community.

CURIOSITY PURPOSE

Emeline Boehringer, 2017
Visual Arts

I think that being an artist requires a balance between curiosity and purpose. You have to have purpose and drive, but you also have to be curious and open to learning new things and doing things that you might not be comfortable with.



Thanks to photographer Joe Rubino for the student portraits.



www.bsfa.org
443-642-5165

712 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

BALTIMORE SCHOOL
for the **ARTS**