

Paul Public Charter School Strategic Plan Summer 2025 - Summer 2028

Facilitated by Lumen Impact Group

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YOUR GREATEST IMPACT**



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History and Context

Paul Public Charter School holds a unique place in the educational landscape of Washington, D.C. Originally established as Paul Junior High School, the school was transformed in 2000 through the visionary leadership of Cecile Middleton, a lifelong educator and graduate of Howard University. Refusing to accept the limitations of a traditional system, Ms. Middleton led the charge to convert Paul into the first traditional DC public school to become a charter school—a bold move that laid the groundwork for a school culture defined by high expectations, no excuses, and a relentless pursuit of excellence.

Since then, Paul has grown into a thriving 5–12 charter school serving over 700 students, primarily from Wards 4, 5, 7, and 8. It is a school community deeply committed to preparing scholars for college and life through a rich program of academics, arts, athletics, and global learning opportunities. With a student body that is predominantly Black and Latino, and a large percentage qualifying for free or reduced-price meals, Paul provides a structured, nurturing environment that supports every student in reaching their full potential.

In recent years, Paul has undergone significant transformation, implementing strategic plans that prioritized stabilization and laid the foundation for long-term success. These efforts, driven by dedicated staff and committed leadership, have strengthened both academic and operational systems. The school is now poised to align its mission, model, and public identity around a clear and compelling vision for student success—one that connects daily work with lifelong outcomes for graduates.

With work already in motion to define the Paul Merit Scholar and Paul Champ profiles and align with DC's graduate framework, the school is ready to take the next step. This strategic plan offers an opportunity to clearly articulate Paul's role in the broader education landscape and sharpen its focus around who it is and what it does best—nurturing scholars who are confident, engaged, and prepared to lead in college and beyond.

Needs Analysis

Paul Public Charter School is a respected 6–12 charter school in Washington, D.C., with a strong foundation built on academic rigor, data-informed leadership, and responsive operational systems. Stakeholders consistently praise the school's structured instructional approach, commitment to student growth, and inclusive practices. The leadership team is recognized for its strategic focus and ability to guide the school through periods of change, contributing to a stable academic foundation and ongoing improvements in student outcomes.

While the organization demonstrates strong academic structures and operational practices, feedback also highlighted opportunities for growth in cultural coherence and community engagement. Variations in how

expectations are implemented across classrooms and grade levels have sometimes led to differing understandings among staff, students, and families about what it means to be part of the Paul community. This variation has, at times, contributed to challenges related to scholar behavior, attendance, family involvement, and staff retention. Stakeholders shared that, although academic systems are well-established, greater alignment and clarity in the overall organizational culture could help strengthen long-term engagement and collective success.

At this pivotal moment, stakeholders see meaningful opportunities for Paul to build a stronger, more unified school community. There is a clear call to align adult practices around a refreshed and consistently applied vision of the Paul Way—one that reflects shared values and is relevant for today’s students and families. Stakeholders expressed enthusiasm for deepening scholar engagement by expanding extracurricular programs, reintroducing global learning experiences, and elevating student voice in shaping the school experience. These efforts are closely tied to professional development, as staff will need support and training to translate this vision into practice through relevant, responsive, and joyful instruction. Family partnerships in scholar learning also emerged as a critical lever for strengthening culture, with a desire for more inclusive communication strategies and structured opportunities for feedback and collaboration. Together, these opportunities reflect a shared commitment to making Paul a place where students, families, and staff feel connected, inspired, and invested in a common purpose.

This strategic plan outlines a path forward that builds on Paul’s strong academic and operational base while addressing the cultural and engagement challenges that limit its full potential. By aligning adult practices, cultivating a vibrant and inclusive school culture, and investing in the people who bring the work to life, Paul can position itself as a model of excellence and belonging—where scholars, families, and staff all find purpose, support, and pride in being part of the Paul community.

Strategy

Mission

The mission of Paul Public Charter School is to educate our students and develop in them the capacity to be responsible citizens, independent thinkers and leaders.

A Vision for 2035

In 2035, Paul Public Charter School is a thriving model of excellence, innovation, and community. The moment you step onto campus, you feel it—the energy, the purpose, the joy. Hallways hum with curiosity and connection, and every scholar, educator, and family member knows they are part of something bigger—a community dedicated to shaping the future.

At Paul, the transformation begins with the adults. Our educators, staff, and leaders share a deep, unwavering belief that every scholar can rise beyond their circumstances. This belief is not just

spoken—it is lived daily. Adults model positivity, consistency, and a growth mindset, creating a culture where high expectations are coupled with unwavering support. Staff are aligned on beliefs and expectations and lead with consistency and care, fostering a joyful, purposeful environment. Through collaboration, continuous learning, and collective ownership of our mission, the adult community sets the tone for everything that follows.

Our educators are more than teachers—they are mentors, innovators, and lifelong learners. A strong teacher residency program attracts top talent, while flexible scheduling options support experienced educators in the classroom. Teachers choose to stay, not just for financial reasons, but because of the deep connections, positive culture, and meaningful opportunities for professional growth. Their commitment and alignment fuel a schoolwide culture that is both stable and aspirational—laying the foundation for scholar success.

This strong adult culture has transformed scholar culture. At Paul, learning is an active, dynamic experience. Scholars don't just absorb information; they question, debate, and create. They take academic risks, think critically, and apply their learning in real-world settings. Through experiential learning, service projects, and hands-on opportunities, they connect their education to their community and the world beyond.

At Paul, we believe that developing global citizenship is essential to preparing our scholars for the world they will lead. Through cross-cultural learning experiences, global partnerships, language development, and a deepened awareness of social and environmental responsibility, scholars cultivate the skills and mindset necessary to thrive in a connected world. More than just future world leaders, they become compassionate, empathetic, and innovative changemakers. This global perspective empowers them to lead not only with knowledge, but with grace and a sense of shared humanity—ensuring that both their communities and the world are better because of their presence and their purpose.

Paul scholars graduate as confident, engaged global citizens. They understand their strengths, advocate for themselves, and navigate college, careers, and life with purpose. Whether pursuing higher education, a trade, or entrepreneurship, they leave Paul prepared, resilient, and ready to lead. Every graduate earns a scholarship—whether for academics, athletics, or leadership—ensuring 100% of our scholars have access to higher education.

Our impact extends far beyond the classroom. Alumni return, not just to visit, but to invest in the next generation—serving as mentors, guest speakers, and donors who reinforce a cycle of success. Families are active partners in their children's education, working alongside teachers to support scholar growth. A dedicated parent engagement team taps into family expertise to guide scholars in their academic and career journeys.

Paul is the standard for scholar engagement, attendance, and achievement in Washington, D.C. Enrollment is strong, and our reputation speaks for itself—families seek out Paul because they see results. Scholars don't just attend school; they want to be here. They stay late for academic support, leadership programs, and extracurriculars that fuel their passions—from competitive athletics and student government to clubs that spark creativity and purpose.

Paul's campus has grown to match its vision. State-of-the-art facilities showcase scholar work and celebrate our culture. Our self-prep kitchen serves fresh, healthy meals that scholars enjoy, reinforcing the importance of wellness and nourishment. The school is alive with joy, a place where scholars and staff feel safe, valued, and inspired.

We are more than a school—we are a force for change. Paul shapes policy and practice, influencing education beyond our walls. Our graduates hold positions of impact—attorneys, policymakers, business leaders, and entrepreneurs—driven by a commitment to making a difference.

At Paul Public Charter School, we don't just prepare scholars for life after high school—we equip them to change the world. And in 2035, the world is already seeing the results.

Strategic Priorities

- Aligned Organizational Culture
- Scholar Experience
- Staff Development
- Family and Community Engagement
- Operations

Goals, Objectives, and Metrics

Aligned Organizational Culture

It's 2028, and Paul Public Charter School is thriving. Across the District, we're known for a vibrant, mission-aligned culture rooted in CHAMPS and the development of MERIT Scholars. Each day, scholars, staff, and families engage in authentic, joyful interactions—because every member of the Paul Community not only believes in our mission, vision, and values, but lives them.

From the classroom to the leadership team, CHAMPS and the MERIT scholar attributes aren't just frameworks—they are a way of being. Scholars are proud to be MERIT scholars and understand that embodying the Paul Experience is key to their success now and in the future. Families are true partners in this work, reinforcing school expectations at home and building strong bridges between school and community.

The result? A deeply unified, purpose-driven culture where people feel seen, supported, and inspired. Satisfaction runs deep. The Paul Experience is unmistakable—and the brand speaks for itself.

The Paul brand is magnetic—people want to be part of it because it reflects a culture of alignment, excellence, and purpose. Our message is clear, consistent, and unmistakably strong across D.C., with waitlists at every grade as proof. Stakeholders don't just support Paul—they champion it, spreading our story with pride and urgency. At Paul, we believe you get one life—so we teach you how to make it count. And everyone knows it.

GOAL 1

Cultivate an aligned organizational culture for all school community members (staff, scholars, families) to build school-wide alignment around the Paul Experience.

Objectives

1. By Summer 2025, develop and implement the use of an organizational culture index using CHAMPS, MERIT and Our 10 year vision.
2. By Summer 2025, codify the implementation plan for organizational culture for each community member group i.e., staff, scholars, and families.
3. By Summer 2027, implement regular monitoring and accountability structures to ensure consistent adoption of the Paul Experience.
4. By Summer 2027, implement traditions and opportunities to develop a strong professional community among and between each member group.

GOAL 2

Grow the Paul “brand” through clear, mission and culture-aligned messaging.

Objectives

1. By winter 2026, develop and implement an internal marketing plan for the Paul Experience, inclusive of onboarding for scholars, families, and staff.
2. By winter 2026, develop and implement an external marketing plan, including recruiting for scholars, families, and staff for the Paul Experience.
3. By winter 2027, implement an annual process to evaluate the impact of marketing and refine as needed.

Metric	2025 Baseline	2026	2027	2028
Staff report being aligned with the organization's approach to the Paul Experience (CHAMPS and MERIT) as measured by staff survey.		80%	90%	95%
Increase in retainable staff retained year over year.				
Increase in staff rating “effective” on their annual Professionalism domain of their evaluation.	95%	98%	100%	
Decrease in infractions around student expectation.		-5%	-5%	-5%

Students report feeling safe and understanding their options for accessing support when needed as measured by student surveys.				
Increase in retainable students retained year over year.		+5%	+5%	+5%
Increase in the waitlist for families wanting to attend Paul.		+20	+20	+20
Increase in the number of applicants for and reduce the time to fill open staff positions.		5 apps/30 days or less	10 apps/20 days or less	
Meet annual enrollment targets.				

Scholar Experience

By 2028, all Paul Public Charter School scholars radiate joy, engagement, and purpose, a testament to the school's commitment to holistic student development over the past three years. Enhanced academic and wrap-around supports and an expanded college and career readiness program have led to significant gains in student performance, with most scholars meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations. Intentional investments in social-emotional learning have further supported scholars in building resilience, self-awareness, and positive relationships, reinforcing a school culture where every student feels seen, supported, and empowered.

Beyond academics, a thriving extracurricular ecosystem—encompassing athletics, service learning, student leadership, and diverse clubs—has fostered a strong sense of belonging. High student attendance rates reflect the excitement and commitment scholars feel toward being part of Paul's community. These experiences instill a lifelong connection to Paul, bringing alumni back as mentors, leaders, and active supporters of the school. Additionally, student voice and global perspectives are woven throughout the curriculum via student choice projects, enriched humanities courses, and expanded elective offerings, cultivating deeply engaged, critical-thinking scholars.

This work has strengthened Paul's scholar pipeline, with more middle schoolers matriculating to high school and committing to graduating from Paul than ever before. Each year, our graduates leave Paul ready for the academic rigor of college and equipped with the skills, knowledge, and passion to make a meaningful impact in their careers and communities.

GOAL 1

Increase academic and wrap-around support for scholars to continue to close gaps and promote academic excellence.

Objectives

1. By Spring 2026, identify and secure partners to support both SEL and academic services.
2. By Spring 2027, expand learning recovery supports to address performance gaps.
3. By Fall 2027, develop and implement an SEL curriculum, including a scope and sequence for all scholars.

4. By Spring 2025, develop and Implement a cohesive, standardized school counseling program to support all scholars.

GOAL 2

Expand opportunities in core academic programming to increase scholar engagement and readiness for life after Paul to become community and global leaders.

Objectives

1. By Fall 2026, expand humanities and electives curriculum to include additional global perspectives and leadership development opportunities for scholars of all ages.
2. By Winter 2027, secure partners to provide scholars with opportunities beyond campus that foster greater community and global citizenship and awareness.
3. By Fall 2027, secure partners to increase access to college and career readiness programs for all scholars, both middle and high school.

GOAL 3

Increase the diversity of extracurricular opportunities reflecting student interest including athletics, clubs, service learning, and leadership opportunities to foster lifelong connection to Paul.

Objectives

1. By Summer 2026, identify and develop consistent programming and messaging for scholars, families, and staff around expanded extracurricular offerings.
2. By Spring 2027, secure and develop the human capital (staffing) and physical capital (space, time, resources) necessary to offer high-interest extracurricular opportunities consistently.
3. By Spring 2027, develop a process to assess the viability and impact of extracurricular offerings on student engagement, alignment to mission and vision, and social development.
4. By Fall 2027, develop traditions within all extracurriculars to foster scholar connection to activities.
4. By Summer 2026, Identify opportunities and implement changes in the current curriculum and instructional design to integrate more student voice and choice in the classroom.

Metric	2025 Baseline	2026	2027	2028
Decrease in infractions around student expectations.		-5%	-5%	-5%
Increase in students meeting annual academic growth targets.				
Students report a sense of belonging as measured by student survey.				

Increase in students engaging in academic intervention and credit recovery programs.				
Decrease the number of students requiring summer school.				
Increase the number of elective and extracurricular offerings for middle school and high school.		+5 MD/+5 HS		
Increase number of opportunities and student attendance for learning experiences outside of the standard school offerings.		+3 Opps/ +10 kids per	+3 Opps/ +10 kids per	+3 Opps/ +10 kids per
Increase in students enrolled in dual-enrollment, CTE, and internship programming.				

Staff Development

In 2028, Paul Public Charter School will stand as a beacon of educational excellence, a testament to the transformative power of strategic staff development. Over the past three years, the school has cultivated a growth mindset within our culture, resulting in remarkable scholar performance, exceptional leaders, teachers, support staff, staff retention, and an unshakeable sense of stability for all Paul stakeholders. Every adult working at Paul sees themselves as educators, and we continue to grow staff from within using this philosophy.

Teachers at Paul are confident in their skills to consistently deliver engaging and effective instruction because of the robust teacher development program we provide. This program intentionally aligns with staff choice and needs identified through schoolwide and classroom-level data, ensuring that professional learning is relevant, personalized, and impactful. We continue to build leaders from within using consistent and cohesive leadership development practices like mentorship with current leaders and targeted professional development.

Paul PCS has become a sought-after institution where passionate educators, both teachers and leaders, thrive and students flourish. It embodies a vision of continuous improvement and unwavering commitment to its community.

GOAL 1

Develop and retain strong leaders and support staff by implementing a structured and consistent leadership development program.

Objectives

1. By Summer 2025, assess the organization's needs to identify the individuals and groups that will participate and the content.
2. By Fall 2025, build and implement the plan for a consistent leadership development program experience in both tactical school/organizational leaders and theoretical/pedagogical leadership.

GOAL 2

Develop a teacher residency and capacity-building program, drawing on the expertise of veteran teachers to build and retain strong educators.

Objectives

1. By Winter 2026, define the teacher residency programmatic elements and the roles and responsibilities of program participants, both residents and veterans.
2. By Spring 2026, assess teachers' needs and willingness for capacity-building to identify the individuals who will participate and the content areas to be developed.
3. By Summer 2026, build and implement the teacher residency program at Paul.

GOAL 3

Enhance teacher professional development to strengthen targeted instructional practices that meet the different learning needs of Paul scholars.

Objectives

1. By Summer 2025, identify the target populations of scholars and best practices for quality instruction to meet their needs.
2. By Fall 2025, implement a plan to provide a series of targeted professional development around instructional practices for target populations, inclusive of different modalities based on teacher need and choice.

Metric	2025 Baseline	2026	2027	2028
Staff report being aligned with the organization's approach to the Paul Experience (CHAMPS and MERIT) as measured by staff survey.				
Increase in retainable staff retained year over year.				
Increase in staff rating "effective" on their annual Professionalism domain of their evaluation.				
Meeting or exceeding strategic planning goals, objectives, and metrics.				
Increase in leadership succession pipeline for prioritized leadership positions.				
Resident teachers are hired into full-time roles at Paul as measured by teacher residency and employment records.				
Increase in first year teacher resident teachers rated as effective.				
Increase in students from key microgroups (SWIEPs, ELs, Economically Disadvantaged and students with 504 plans) showing growth toward proficiency and proficiency on internal and state-aligned assessments.				

Family and Community Engagement

At Paul Public Charter School, family and community engagement is not an add-on—it is a driving force behind student success. Over the past three years, we have reimagined what meaningful family engagement looks like by building strong, multilingual communication systems and ensuring families have consistent, accessible updates across a variety of platforms. Our robust calendar of events—from Student-Led Conferences and family meetings to social gatherings, parent orientations, awards ceremonies, and college and career nights—cultivates deep, lasting connections between home and school.

At Paul, families are true partners. They play an active role in helping the school achieve its goals, generously contributing their time, talents, and support not only to their own scholars but to the entire Paul community.

To further strengthen these bonds, we are expanding initiatives that create culturally relevant spaces for connection and celebration. Family education opportunities, such as workshops and support groups, equip caregivers with the tools and knowledge to better understand academic expectations and actively support their scholars’ growth—both at Paul and beyond. We believe our school thrives when our families thrive. That’s why we are committed to empowering, supporting, and celebrating every Paul family as they walk alongside us in shaping the future of our scholars.

GOAL 1

Increase informed family partnership and involvement in the education of their scholars.

Objectives

- 1. By Summer 2025, restructure communication systems to provide more streamlined, relevant, and targeted communication to families to meet their needs (i.e., language, mode, frequency)
- 2. By Fall 2025, provide annual family engagement events aligned to family interests, needs, and accessibility both at Paul and with external partners.
- 3. By Summer 2026, develop and implement a Family Academy to support learning around the academic program and operational processes at Paul as well as wrap-around services available and how to access them.

GOAL 2

Elevate family and community feedback and voice.

Objectives

- 1. By Winter 2027, provide more consistent, structured, and transparent opportunities for families to provide feedback to Paul staff, leadership, and the board.
- 2. By Fall 2026, expand opportunities for parents to engage other parents through school events and activities.

Metric	2025 Baseline	2026	2027	2028
Increase in grade level meeting and parent workshop participation to address scholar achievement.				

Increase parent meeting and event attendance and participation.				
Increase in family involvement as measured by family engagement event attendance.				
Increase in parent usage of PowerSchool to reach a rate of 100% by 2028				
Increase structured feedback opportunities for parents.				
Families say that they feel their voice is valued at Paul, as measured by the annual survey.				
Increase in retainable students retained year over year.				

Operations

By 2028, Paul Public Charter School operates as a seamless and well-coordinated organization where systems, resources, and infrastructure fully support its mission. Strategic budgeting, data-informed planning, and aligned resource allocation ensure that every priority, from scholar experience to staff development, is effectively resourced and sustained.

Clear and consistent communication enhances transparency and connection with all stakeholders. Streamlined tools and branding support enrollment, hiring, and visibility, while internal systems ensure that families, staff, and partners are well informed and engaged. Human resource practices have evolved to support recruitment, onboarding, and long term retention of high-quality staff.

Facilities are safe, modern, and built to support learning, community engagement, and future growth. With daily operations aligned to long term goals, Paul is positioned for lasting impact and excellence.

GOAL 1

Strengthen financial systems to equitably and effectively support key strategic priorities across the school.

Objectives

1. By Fall 2025, conduct a comprehensive review of budget alignment to strategic priorities, including funding for professional development, extracurriculars, SEL, global and college/career programs, and humanities.
2. By Winter 2026, implement a tracking and assessment process for resources related to staffing and partner costs needed to implement the scholar program and staff development work.
3. By Spring 2026, revise annual budgeting practices to ensure adequate allocations for materials and events associated with scholar experience, staff development, and family and community engagement events.

GOAL 2

Enhance internal and external communications to improve transparency, engagement, and alignment with Paul’s brand and mission.

Objectives

- 1. By Spring 2025, develop and launch a social media and newsletter strategy to improve visibility of scholar voice, family opportunities, and events.
- 2. By Summer 2025, implement a communications toolkit to support recruitment, onboarding, and visibility of wrap-around and extracurricular services.
- 3. By Winter 2026, expand marketing strategies—including signage and digital branding—to support enrollment, staff hiring, and community partnerships.
- 4. By Fall 2026, ensure all communications reflect consistent messaging across platforms and include targeted efforts for mid-year students and families.

GOAL 3

Strengthen human resource systems to support staff recruitment, onboarding, and retention.

Objectives

- 1. By Fall 2025, partner with HR to develop recruitment materials and supports aligned with Paul’s staff development and extracurricular goals.
- 2. By Spring 2026, assess current evaluation and reflection tools to identify patterns in staff needs and drive continuous improvement.

GOAL 4

Optimize facilities, systems, and schedules to improve daily operations and expand access to strategic programming.

Objectives

- 1. By Fall 2025, implement a centralized system for counseling and wrap-around services to streamline scholar support.
- 2. By Summer 2026, revise annual school calendars and planning tools to embed culture-building, professional development, and family engagement milestones.
- 3. By Summer 2026, evaluate facilities to map a 5-10 year plan for modernization of the entire building.
- 4. By Fall 2027, establish systems to monitor and maintain day-to-day operational effectiveness in alignment with strategic plan goals.

Metric	2025 Baseline	2026	2027	2028
Meeting our strategic goals, objectives, and metrics.				
Increase in family involvement as measured by family engagement event attendance.				
Increase in retainable students retained year over year.				

Increase in the waitlist for families wanting to attend Paul.				
Increase in the number of applicants for and reduce the time to fill open staff positions.		5 apps/30 days or less	10 apps/ 20 days or less	
Staff report being aligned with the organization's approach to the Paul Experience (CHAMPS and MERIT) as measured by staff survey.				

Appendix A- Governance

Current Board of Directors:

Kemba Hedrix, J.D. – Board Chair
 Shamera Wilkins, M. Ed. – Vice Chair
 Schuyler Malachi, D.V.M – School Performance Chair
 Terri Sallay, B.S. – Finance Chair
 Jennifer Ubiera, J.D. – Governance Chair
 Pamela Taylor, B.A. – PR/Marketing Chair
 Erin Albright, M.A.T. – Trustee
 Laurie Anderson-Smith, M.S. – Trustee
 Sterling Ward, M.S. – Trustee
 LaTonia Winston, B.S. – Parent Trustee
 Brittany Wood, M.S. – Parent Trustee

Appendix B- Methodology

The strategic planning process, which kicked off in winter of 2025, began with the synthesis of stakeholder feedback collected by Lumen Impact Group as well as publicly available data and performance data provided by Paul Public Charter School. This data helped to drive the Strategic Planning process and grounded the Strategy Development Team in understanding the current state and the school's position within the sector. The resulting 3-year strategic plan is designed around that current state and the school's vision for success and growth, as refined and articulated during the initial strategic planning sessions.

Following the initial Strategic Plan draft creation, Lumen Impact Group conducted stakeholder interviews with external stakeholders and focus groups with staff and students from the middle and high school. This feedback was used to help test foundational strategy elements and provide greater insight into perceptions and potential options for the path forward. Lumen asked stakeholders questions around their experience with or desires for initiatives associated with Paul's planned strategic priorities to help provide additional insight into its future direction.

The Strategy Development Team, comprised of Paul leadership, was recruited by Paul's CEO in consultation with Lumen. The resulting team engaged in two facilitated in-person sessions and strategic priority work group sessions. After the second full team session, board and leadership follow-up meetings advanced the strategic discussions and refinement of tracking processes.