

2021-2022 School Year Plans

My name is Jordan Krause, and I have the honor of serving Tucson Country Day School as Principal and Chief Operations Officer. Thanks for checking us out!

Coming off of a previous school year unlike any other, at TCDS we are ready to tackle the future and apply what we have learned from the COVID school year.

For the upcoming year starting August 4th, we plan to be 100% on campus! Masks will be optional both indoors and outdoors for students, staff, and visitors while on campus for the upcoming school year.

Did you know?...

The vast majority of schools in our country and community are operating largely using 19th century school models, with 20th century teachers, teaching 21st century students. The education industry is at a crossroads. We know our schools need to change and keep up with the demands of an ever-changing world, but how?

We have a Vision!

Our Tucson Country Day School Vision Team has taken the past two years to develop a Growth Plan designed to ensure our Champions are provided with a learning experience that will prepare them for an unknown future.

At the core of our Growth Plan is a focus on serving the individual. Modern science has proven that people learn and develop their talents in unique and distinctive ways, yet the vast majority of schools see students as numbers and provide a one-size-fits all education designed for the “average” student. These systems may have made sense 100 years ago in the industrial age, but in today's rapidly changing world of work, they are simply inadequate. We can do better. We must do better. And at TCDS, we WILL do better.

The TCDS Growth Plan

In today's world, the majority of companies organize the majority of their work in the form of projects, where collaboration is key in finding solutions to a variety of challenges, ranging from food security and distribution to public health to wildlife conservation. Along with the working world, the majority of family life revolves around projects, big and small. Meal planning and making dinner each night, budgeting, planning a family vacation, building a treehouse, fixing a car, these are all projects that often require using a set of skills and knowledge, collaboration with others, and result in some sort of tangible product.

Our Growth Plan, centered on providing for the uniqueness of each individual student,

involves the following:

Project Based Learning, a SEAL Team, a Personalized Learning Pathway, and Facilities Upgrades.

What is Project Based Learning?

Project-Based Learning, or (PBL) as it is often referred, is a teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects.

These are just three reasons why PBL is great for learners:

1. Goes beyond a Google search

If what students are learning at school can be googled or answered by Alexa or Siri, then the student's time is being wasted. PBL focuses on information and concepts that go beyond the superficialities of a Google search, and require thought and analysis. In PBL students aren't just gaining knowledge in order to remember it; they're gaining knowledge in order to **use** it in meaningful and tangible ways.

2. Students create products and make them public

Most school work typically ends up on a teacher's desk, in an online folder, or squashed at the bottom of a backpack. PBL provides the opportunity for students to create a product and share it with an audience beyond the classroom. Students creating products and making them public not only can increase student engagement, but allows the learning to be perceived as more real and consequential than school work graded by the teacher and returned to a notebook.

3. Collaboration and Community

PBL fosters an environment of collaboration and builds community. A key component to the PBL process is to partner with local experts and businesses, inviting these professionals to work with and inspire our students on campus, and for our students to routinely take field trips in order to learn something they can apply to their own project.

On our website, you can access links to videos of Project Based Learning in action. Check them out!

Collaborative Teaching Model

In our Collaborative Teaching Model, students will benefit from the skills, background and expertise of more than just one teacher. Kindergarten and 1st grade students will have one primary teacher, while also working with other kindergarten teachers and specials teachers

each week. Our K-5 specials include Art, Music, Spanish, and P.E. 2nd-5th grade students will have three grade level teachers who share the responsibility of providing a caring, and academically rigorous learning environment. These three teachers will collaboratively plan and execute daily instruction, and students will work with all three teachers in various capacities throughout the day. In 6th-8th grades, students will continue to receive instruction in all of their subjects from different teachers, the difference moving forward is that their teachers will be collaborating on designing projects that incorporate multiple subjects, providing a greater opportunity for learning to be more connected.

SEAL Team

Part of our Growth Plan involves the deployment of our Social Emotional Academic Learning Team, or SEAL Team. This team will be made up of specialists in the areas of Math, Literacy, and Social Emotional Learning whose sole purpose is to provide students with one-on-one and small group support where they need it most.

Personalized Learning Pathway

Students learn in different ways and at different paces. It is this fact that is driving the creation of a Personalized Learning Pathway for each student. Instead of driving all students through the same set of skills, standards, and learning concepts in the same way and same time frame, Our Personalized Learning Pathway will allow a student to learn and demonstrate mastery of important grade level material at their own pace and in a manner that fits their learning style.

Upgrading Facilities

Finally, we will be upgrading many of our facilities over the next few years as part of our Growth Plan. Our beautiful, outdoor, 11-acre campus will see awnings placed outside all buildings currently without this important shade and rain protection. We'll be doubling the size of our library to create more space for students to access more high quality literature, we're resurfacing our two pools and surrounding deck, upgrading our "Green Hill" gathering space with high quality artificial grass, we are planning to convert our MultiPurpose Room into a maker space where students will have access to tools and resources ranging from hammers and screwdrivers, to bandsaws, to 3D printers, all to support the creation of student projects. And lastly, we'll be piloting an open classroom concept in our 5th grade for the 2021-2022 school year that will establish three distinct learning areas for the entire grade level: One large learning space that will double the size of a current TCDS classroom, one regular size classroom, and the outdoor campus will serve as the third learning zone for students. This open classroom concept will provide a more flexible and varied learning environment for students and teachers.

Join us on this journey!

We couldn't be more excited about the unique and personalized learning environments that we are building for our student Champions. If you're tired of your child being seen as a data point, as in most schools, and not as the unique individual that they are; If you're tired of the late-night homework battles and one-size-fits all environment that your child is either bored within, or being left behind in; If you're looking for a hands-on, minds on, rigorous, relevant, and personalized learning environment, then look no further. Join our award winning TCDS learning community today, by visiting the Enrollment Information page on our website.