

# **What (and who) now?**

## Identity, mission, & values

*Shelly Peters, principal*

October 18, 2021



CRANE

# Session agenda

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Positioning metaphor

Fundamental concepts

Essential questions

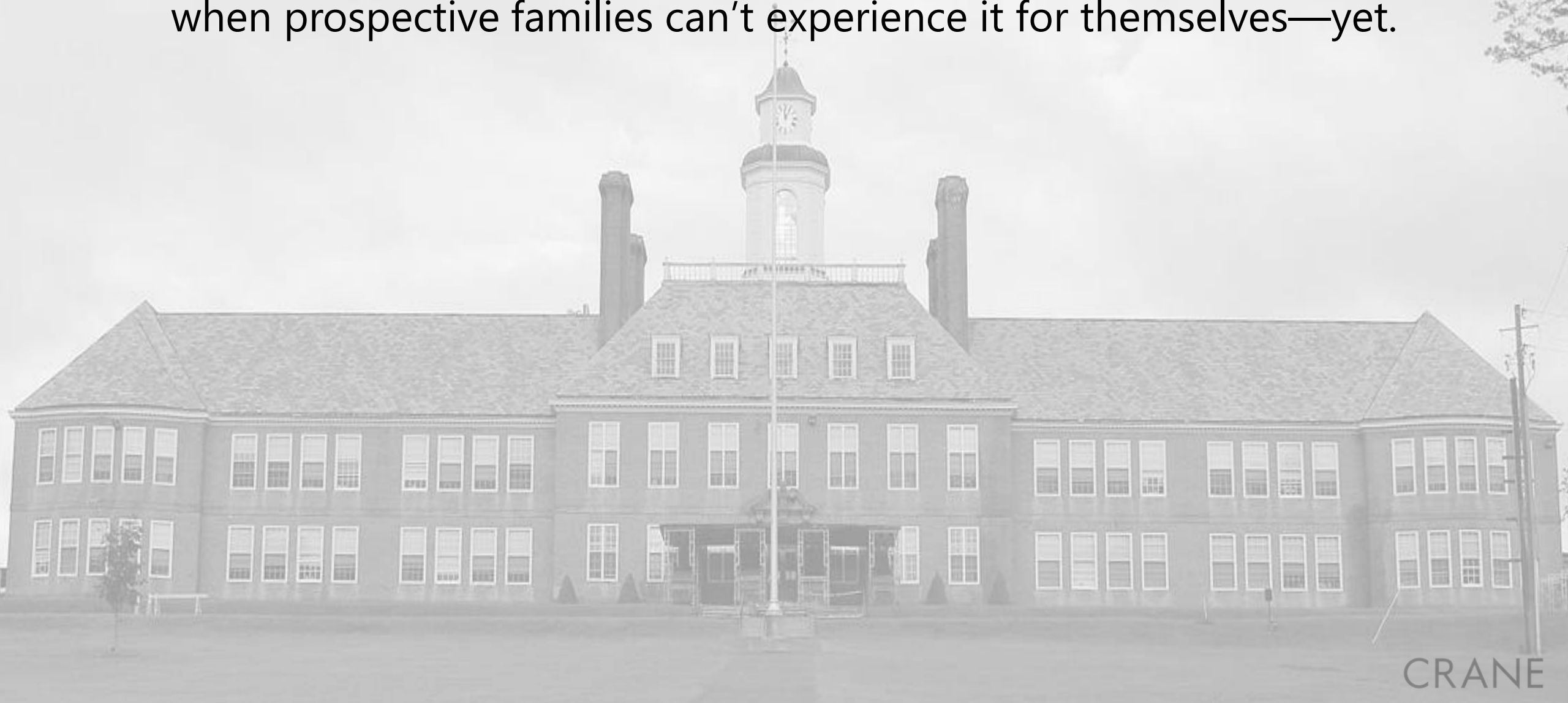
Micro-case studies

Closing thoughts

Take-home exercise

Messaging through change and challenge is often pushed to the side.

But the right message is *more important than ever* as a window into your school when prospective families can't experience it for themselves—yet.



The spring was not the time to question our values, mission statements, and instructional practices. We did our best. **But now we need clarity.** Do our values align with what is necessary now? Does our mission statement lead us to correct, decisive action? What instructional practices have to change for us to prepare students for the future?

Pandemics, like survival situations, reveal; they uncover who we are, how our institutions work. We are exposed right now, and that presents a great opportunity.

NAIS Blog Post (July 2020)

*Beyond Survival: Reimagining Why Independent Schools Exist*  
by Brent Kaneft and Nolan R. LaVoie



**Knowing what to do starts with  
knowing who you are.**

# Questions for consideration

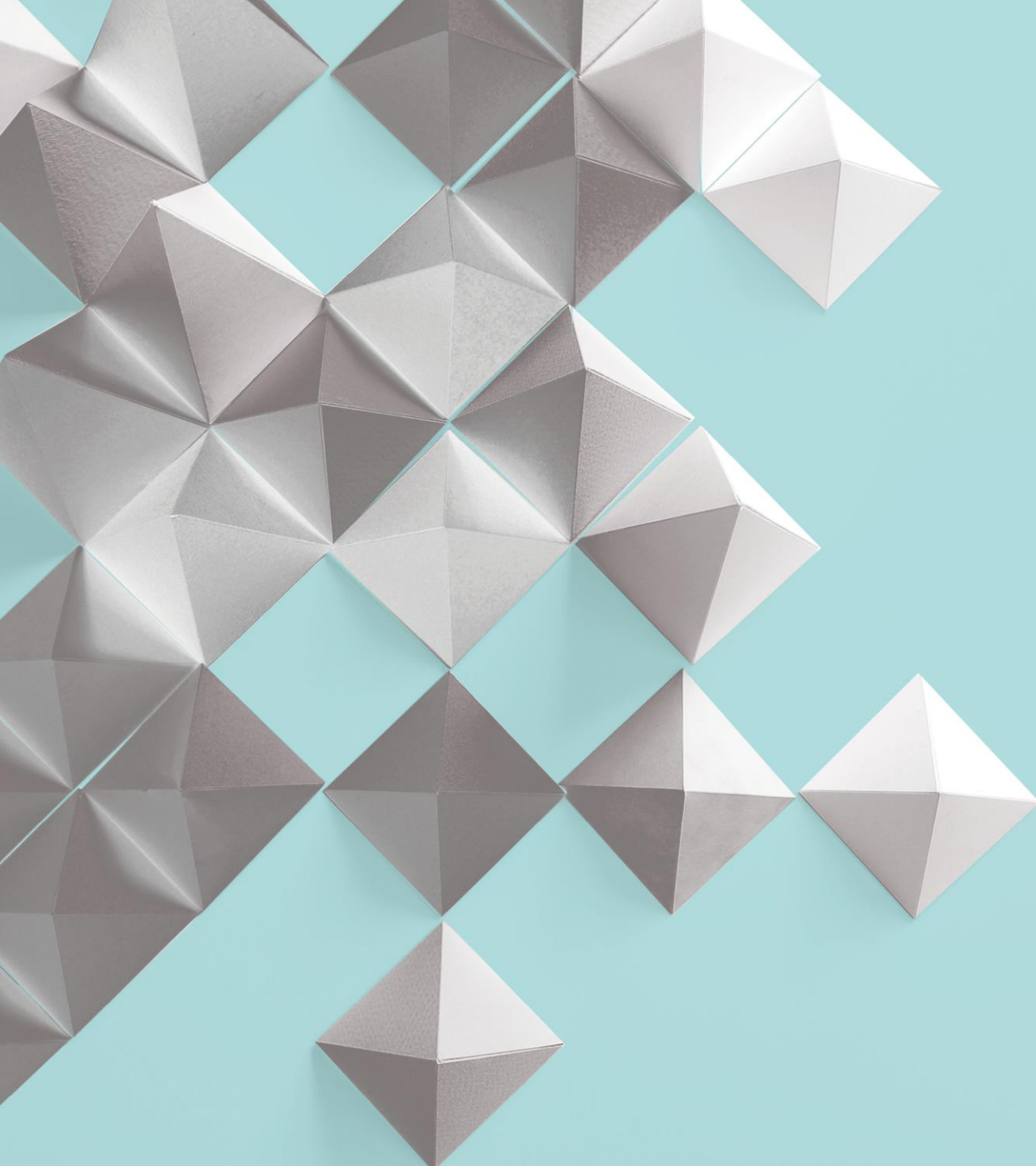
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*What have we learned from the past 18 months that will remain relevant for all the years ahead?*

*Which messaging strategies can we carry forward on the path past COVID-19 to our “next normal?”*

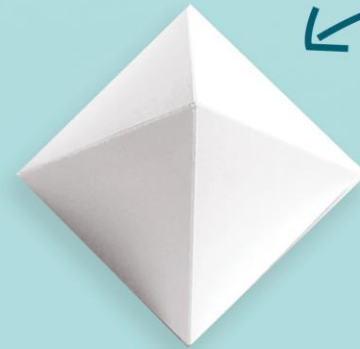
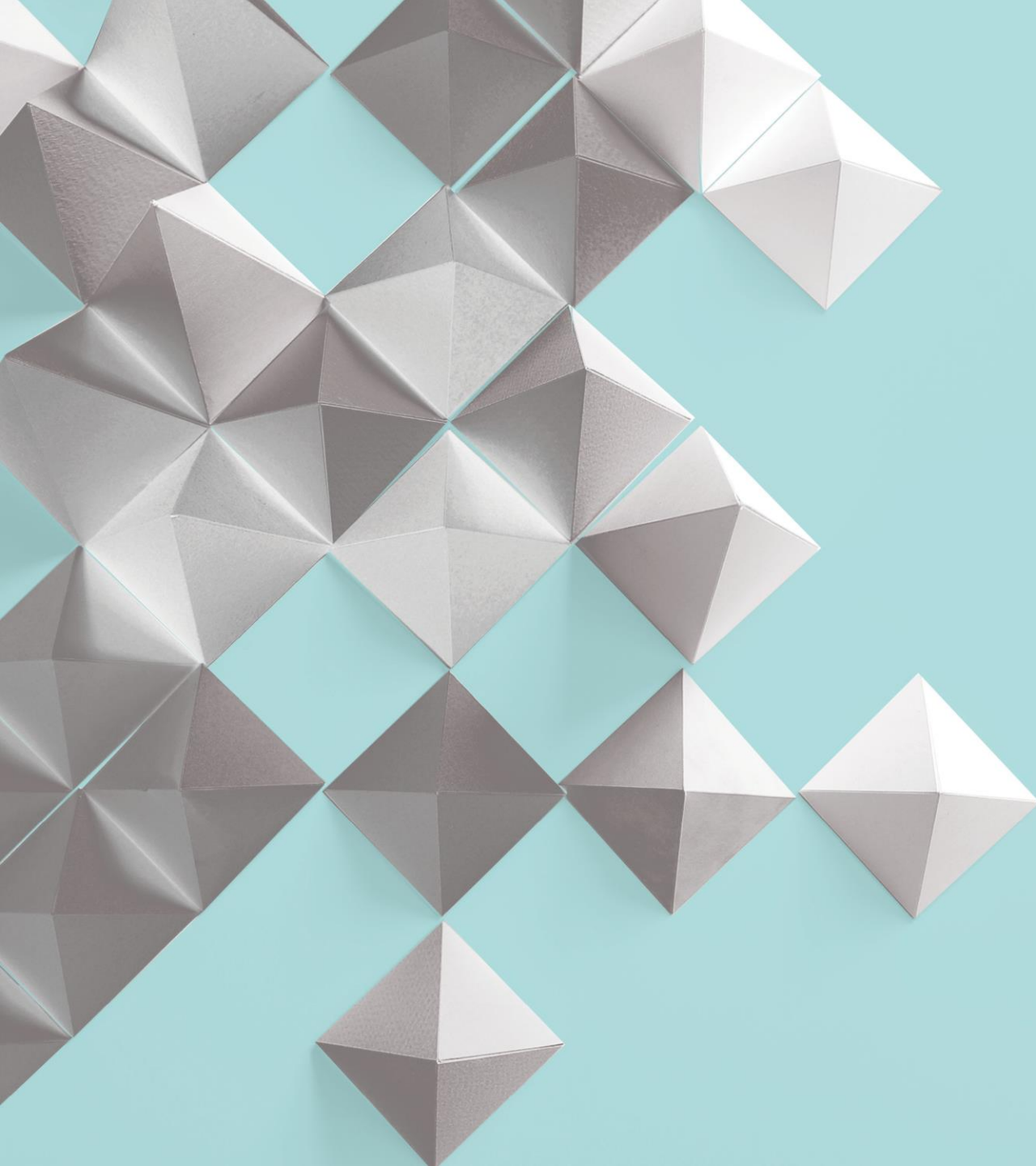
*And how can we use what we know to be better prepared for any future disruptions?*

# Positioning metaphor

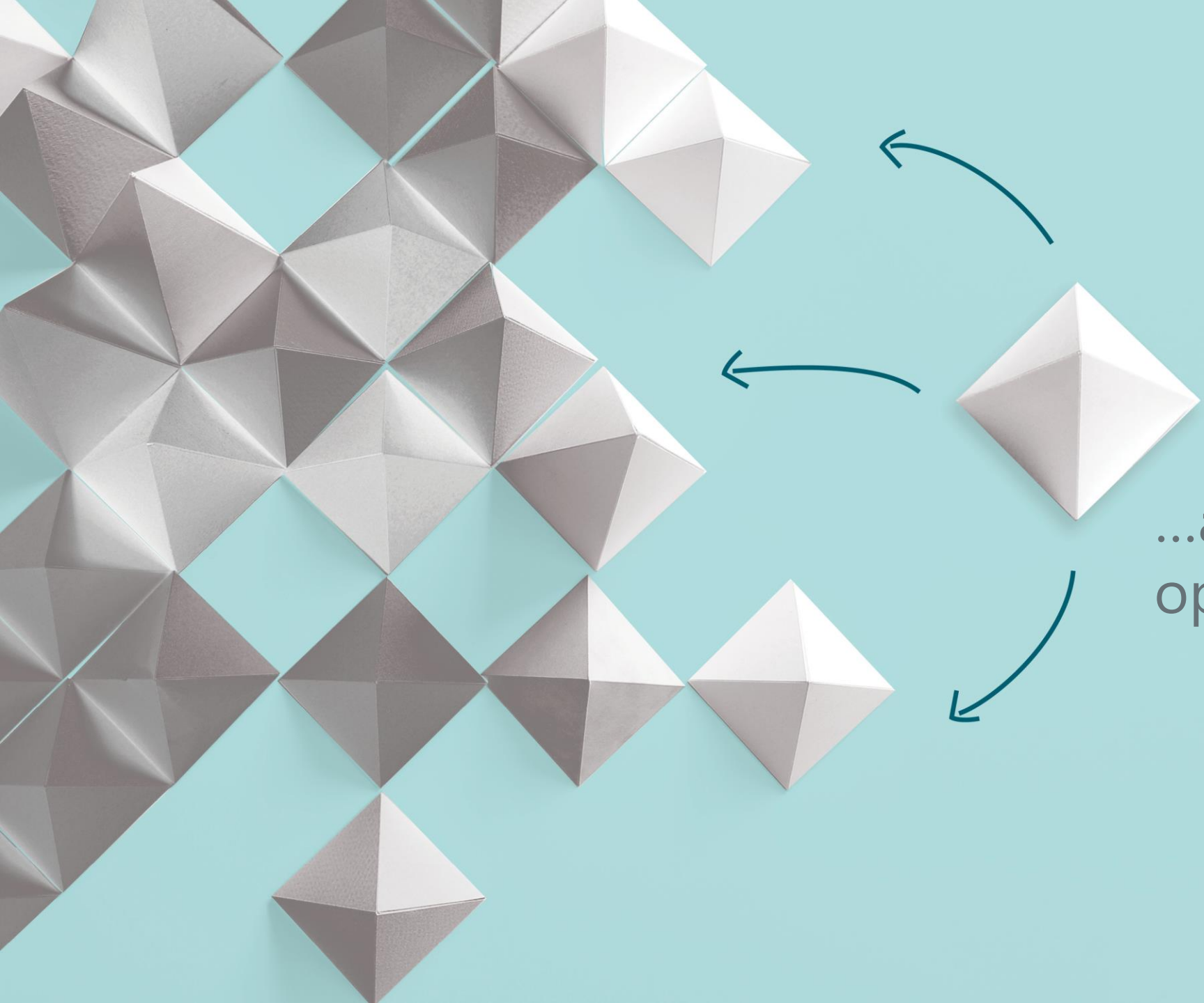


This is your market.

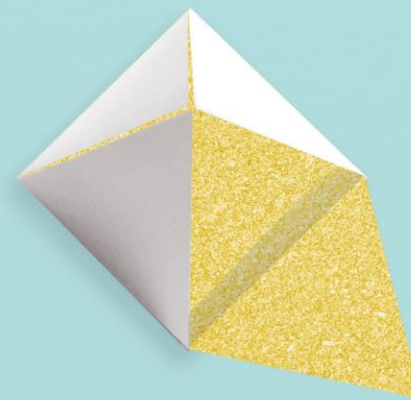
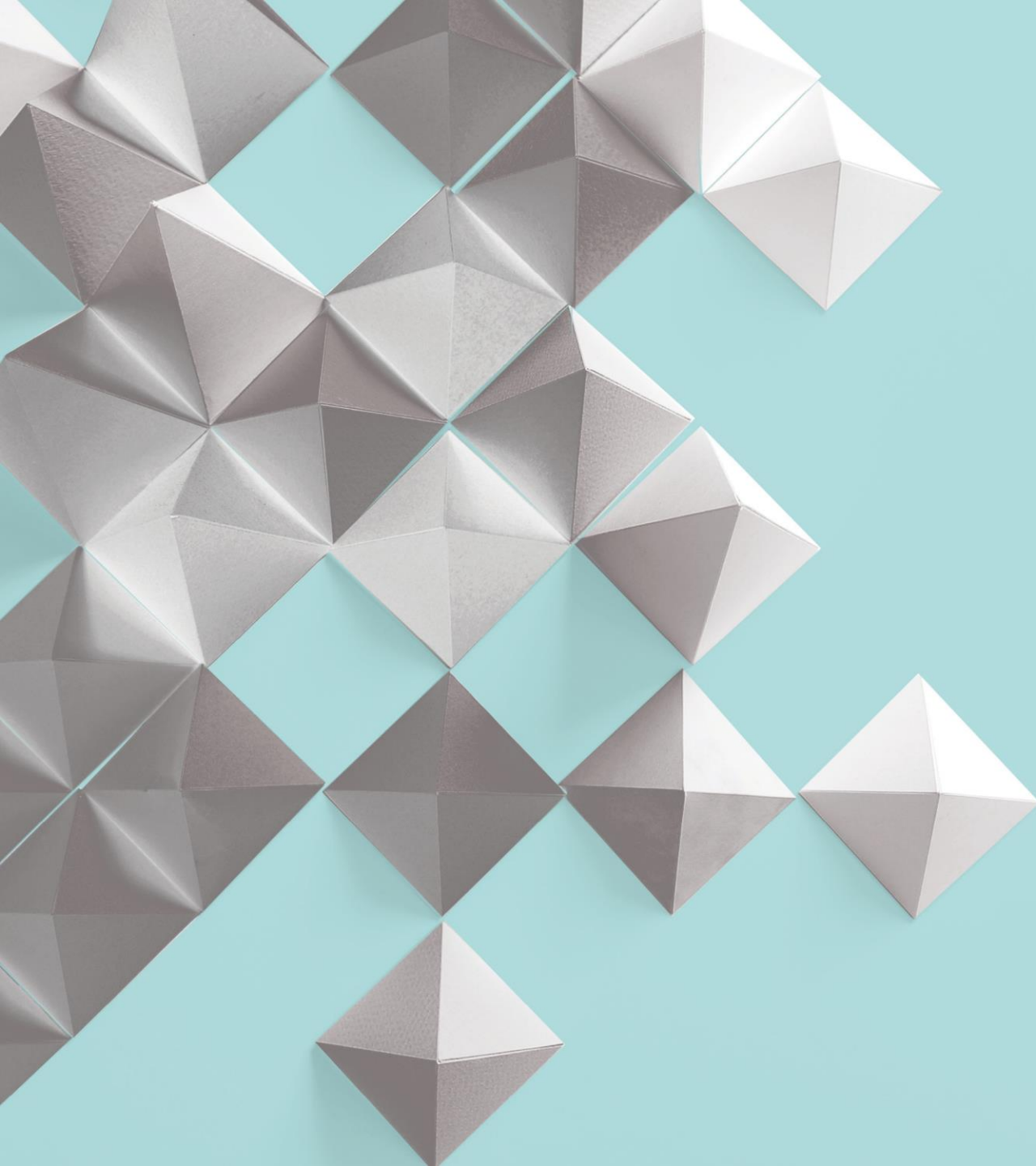




This little box  
represents your  
school...

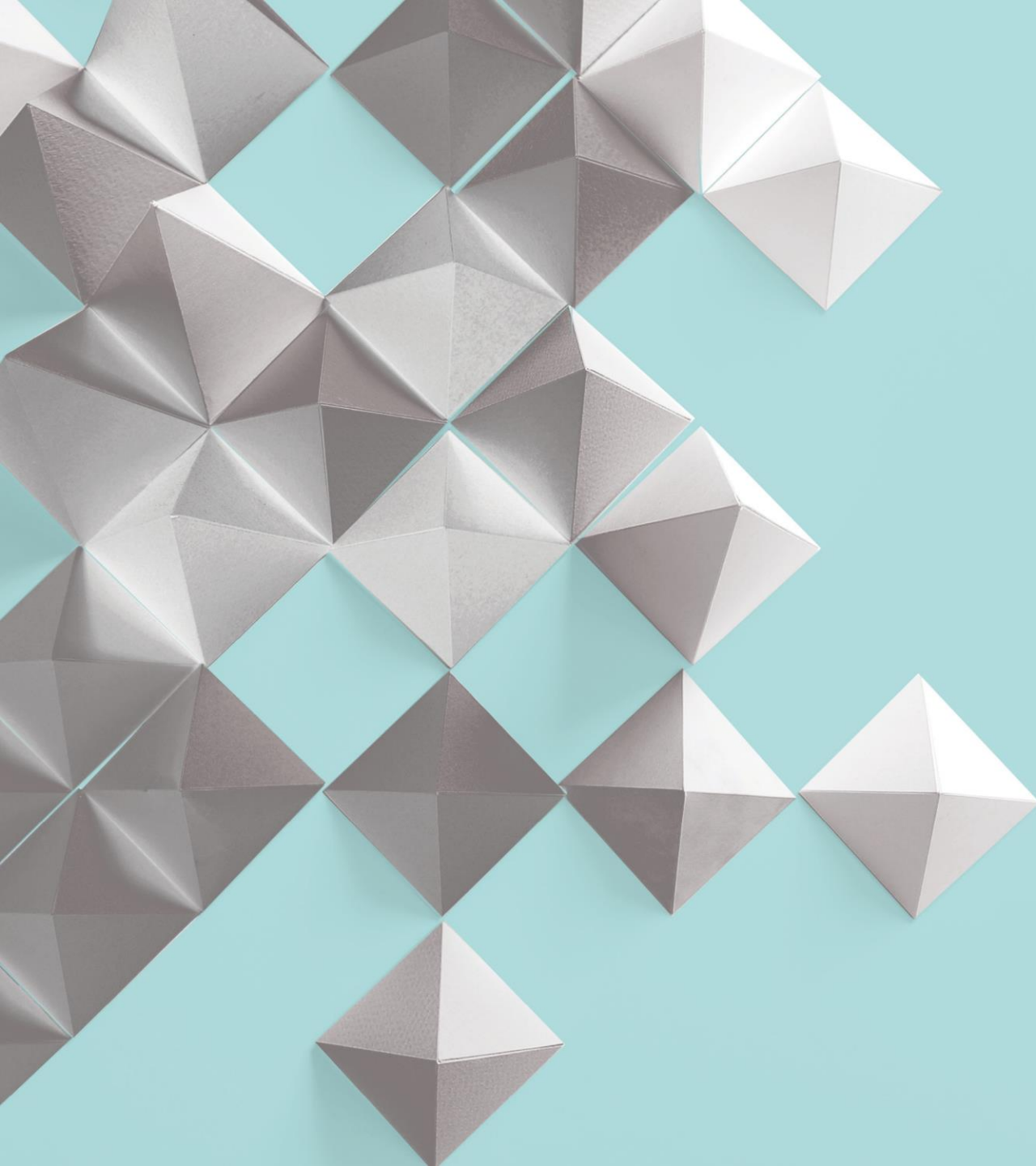


...among all the other  
options out there.



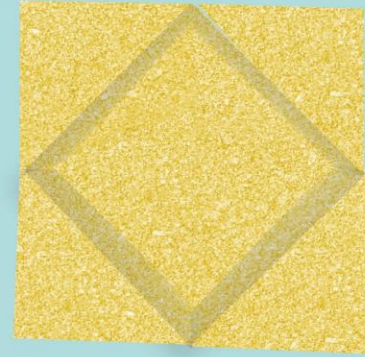
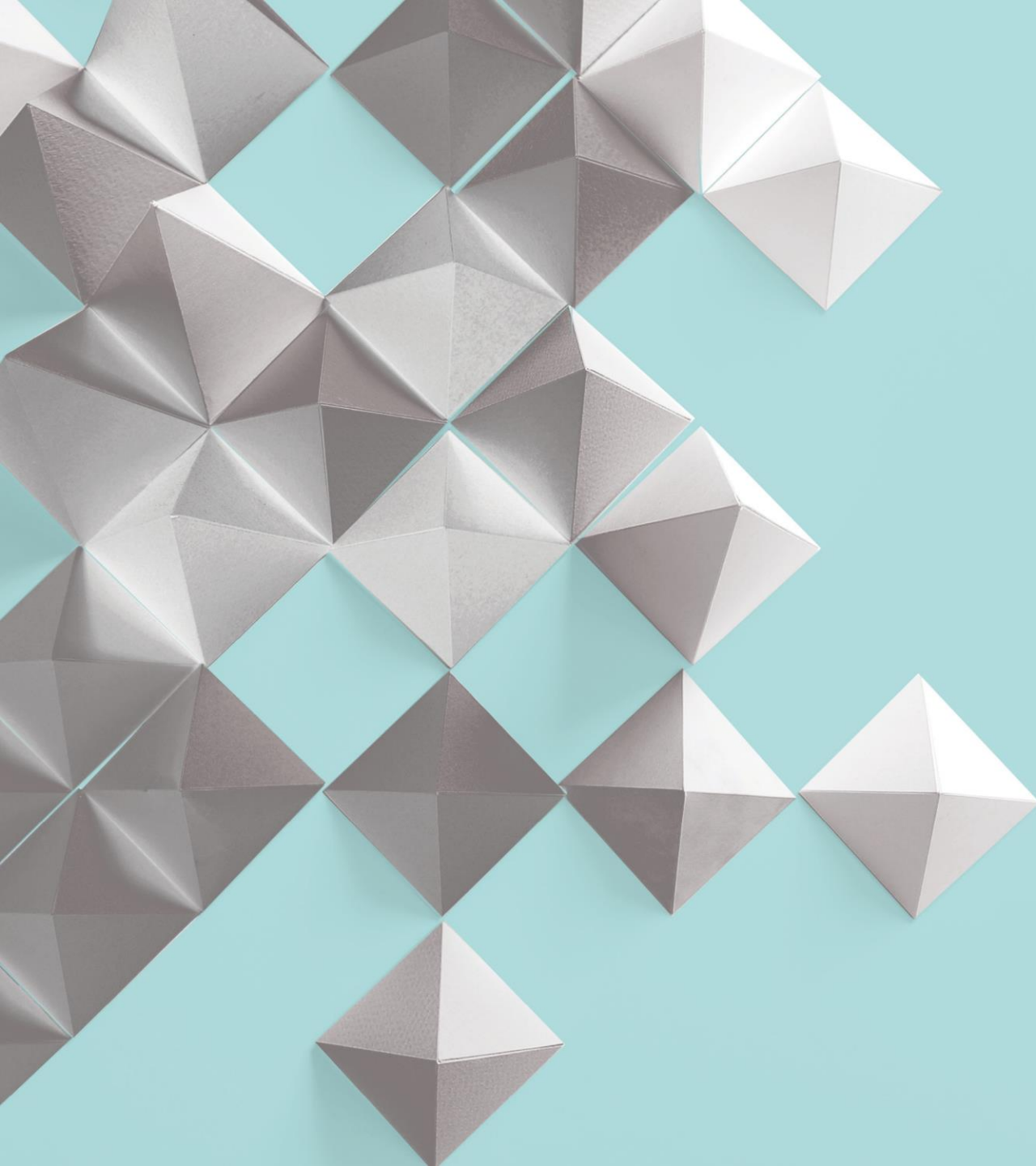
On the inside,  
magical things  
are taking place.



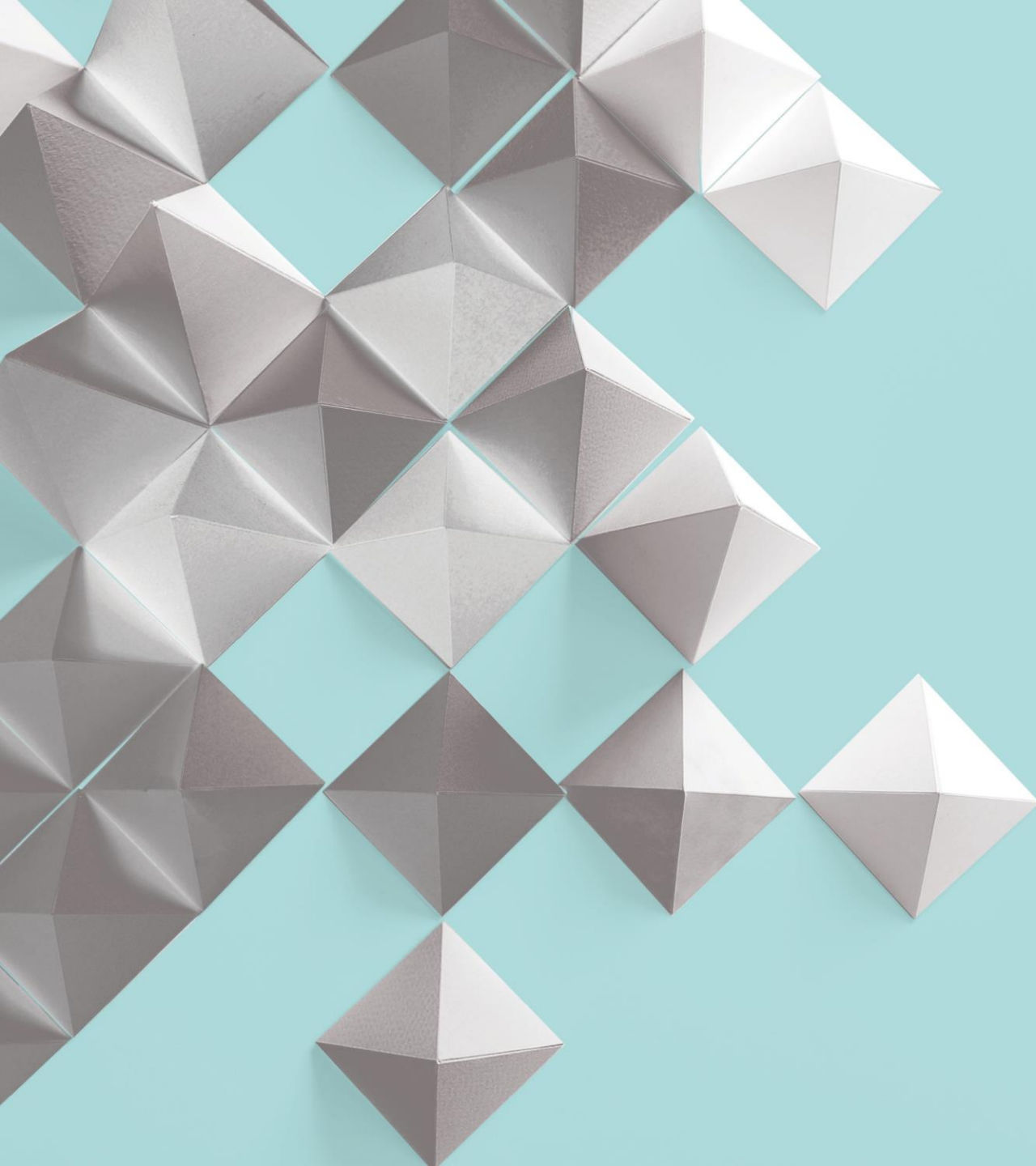


But if you don't  
reveal that magic,  
you're just another  
option on the list.

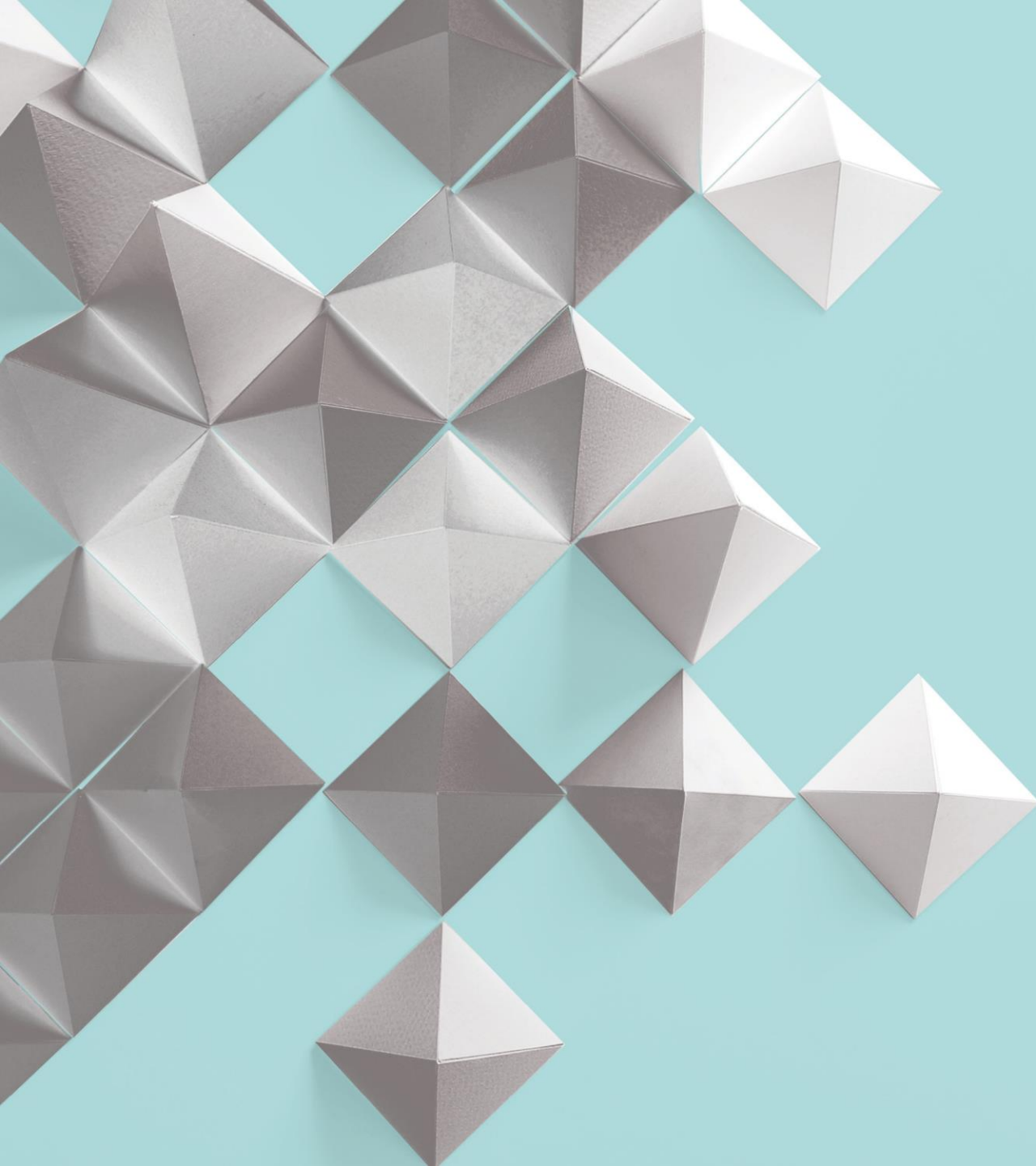




If you flip  
the inside out,  
however...

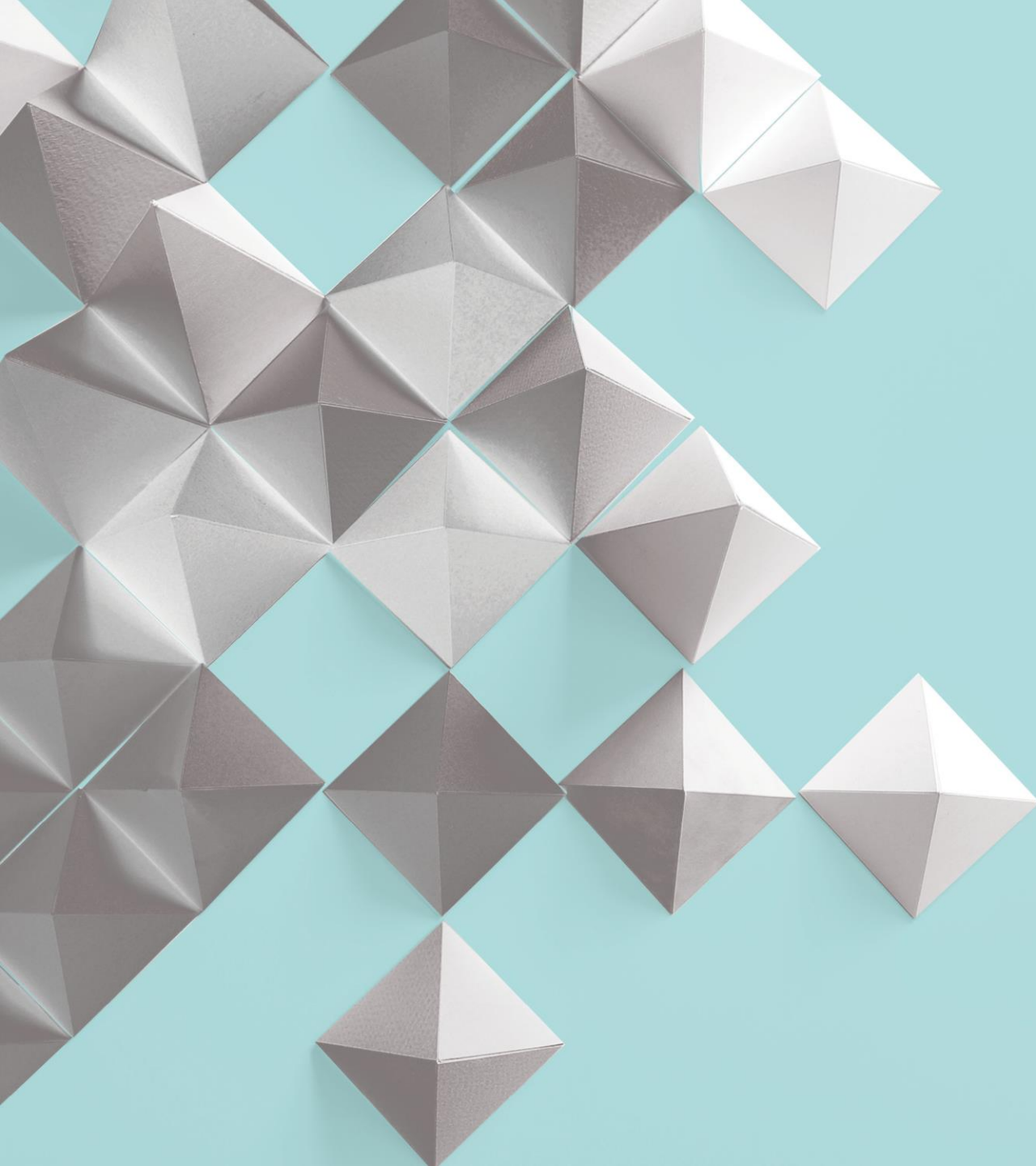


Then you begin  
to stand out in  
the market.



And your  
audiences can  
discern right away  
if they are a values  
match.





In the absence  
of differentiation,  
you put prospects  
in the position of  
weighing *whats*  
instead of *whys*.



# Fundamental concepts

# Fundamental concepts

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1. Know who you are.
2. Own who you are.
3. Spread the word.

# Fundamental concepts



# Fundamental concepts





# Fundamental concepts



# 1. Know who you are.

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## **Know your unchanging truths.**

Good communications start with clarity about who you really are, what you really do, and the mission and values that drive you to do it.

## 2. Own who you are.

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### **Build your brand around those unchanging truths.**

Mission and values serve as a foundation for your messaging that you can build on even as trends, markets, and contexts shift and change.

### 3. Spread the word.

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**Lean into these enduring values and mission, even—and especially—in rapidly evolving moments.**

Show your community how you will deploy your existing strengths and defining values to solve new problems and rise to unexpected challenges.

# Essential questions

# Essential questions

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1. Does your messaging tell your **changeless story**?
2. Does your messaging meet this **changing moment**?

# 1. Does your messaging tell your changeless story?

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- Is your messaging conveying a **real, true grasp** of your curriculum, your pedagogy, and your culture?
- Does it offer an **authentic sense** of how your school looks, sounds, and most of all, makes children feel?
- And is it **grounded in the mission and values** that undergird everything you do, and which will never change—even in rapidly shifting situations?

## 2. Does your messaging meet this changing moment?

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- Does your messaging highlight the **strengths and values that differentiate and elevate** your school?
- And **does it explicitly help both current and prospective families understand** how you will use these strengths and values to solve new problems and rise to unexpected challenges?



# Micro-case studies

IS THE MESSAGE ACCURATE?	DOES THE MESSAGE MEET THE MOMENT?	RESPONSE

IS THE MESSAGE ACCURATE?	DOES THE MESSAGE MEET THE MOMENT?	RESPONSE
YES	YES	<b>REPEAT</b> amplify <i>existing</i> messages

Yes & yes?

**Repeat.**

Augusta University  
Augusta, Georgia

# Augusta University

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The result of a series of mergers, Augusta University is a wide-ranging, comprehensive research university with hundreds of programs across ten colleges, and a number of distinctive and differentiating features.

# Augusta University's differentiating features

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- home to Georgia's only public medical school
- site of the Dental College of Georgia, a well-established College of Nursing, and a prestigious college of Allied Health
- officially designated by the Georgia Board of Regents as the state's center of health sciences

*However, Augusta University hasn't always branded with that designation nor with those differentiators front and center.*

# Augusta University

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The university's brand needed to

- **acknowledge the strength** of AU's healthcare programming
- **avoid diminishing the importance** of other types of programs
- **lean into the common commitment** to wellness (broadly defined) and to extending and enriching human life.

Augusta University prepares some students to **save lives**.

It equips others to **change lives** in a multitude of ways.

And Augusta University empowers all to **build better lives**—  
lives of great meaning, consequence, and fulfillment.



**Education for**

you

others

today

tomorrow

a world in need

a time of change

challenges

opportunities

possibilities

**life**



AUGUSTA  
UNIVERSITY

Education for life

It's your life. What will it *mean*?

*How AU defines...*

**vital signs** (noun phrase)

1. clinical measurements taken in our teaching hospital
2. economic indicators and market trends tracked  
on a white board in our business college
3. developmental milestones noted by a teacher  
in a second-grade classroom

# Augusta University

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As a health sciences hub, Augusta University was inherently well-positioned to address the disruptions of the pandemic.

An authentic, differentiating branding program already highlighted these strengths, allowing AU to confidently lean into and amplify these messages.

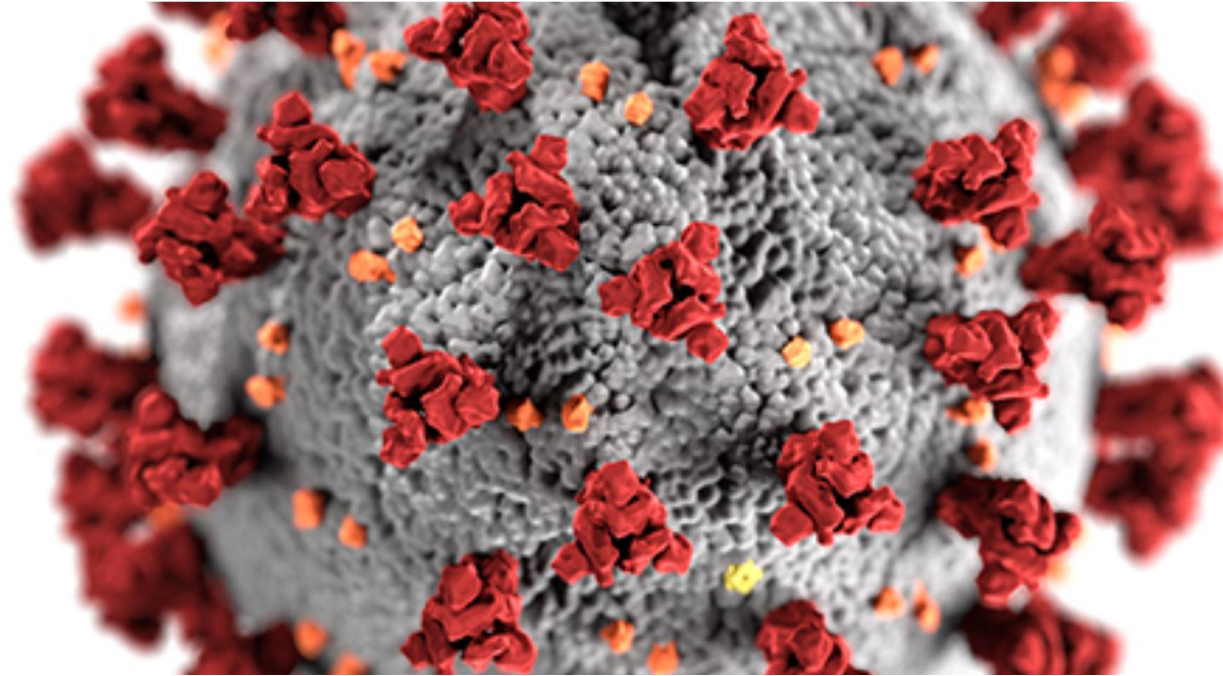


	REFRAIN	tone	INTENT
PRIMARY TAGLINE	Education for life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Accessible</li> <li>– Aspirational</li> </ul>	Speaks across all communications for all constituencies and anchors the rotator mechanism
SECONDARY TAGLINE	Life-changing, life-saving education at Augusta University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Elevated</li> <li>– Inspiring</li> </ul>	Supplements primary tagline, adding a touch of gravitas to communications across all audiences, including graduate students, faculty members, and for development and alumni initiatives
STUDENT RECRUITMENT REFRAIN	Education for <i>your</i> life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Personal</li> <li>– Conversational</li> </ul>	Complements the Augusta University voice in communications for prospective undergraduates and anchors the definition mechanism

**Life-changing, life-saving education  
at Augusta University**

# THE IMAGE SEEN ROUND THE WORLD

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IT'S EARLY APRIL  
2020...

*...and you could easily say that Alissa Eckert (MSM '06) is the most famous medical illustrator in the world. Not only has her iconic image of the coronavirus captured the world's imagination, but the media's hunger for any COVID-19-related news has made her a celebrity.*

# Augusta University

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In most cases, your institution's mission won't slot up as effortlessly with the parameters of an unexpected crisis.

However, a messaging platform built on your authentic story and enduring values will provide a stable foundation for crisis communications in any situation.

IS THE MESSAGE ACCURATE?	DOES THE MESSAGE MEET THE MOMENT?	RESPONSE
YES	NO	<b>REDEFINE</b> calibrate messaging <i>language</i>



Yes & no?

**Redefine.**

Campus School of Smith College  
Northampton, Massachusetts

# Campus School

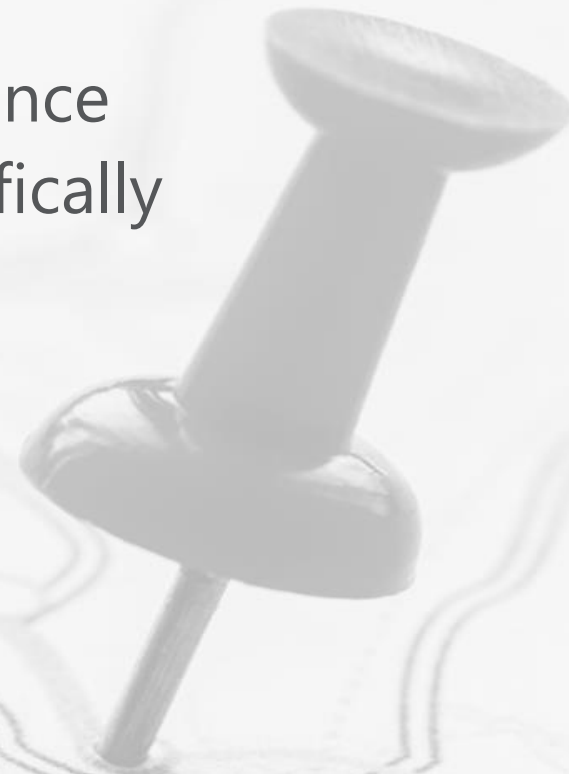
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In 2018, we partnered with The Campus School of Smith College to reconfigure their messaging platform and tell their authentic story—as a tightly knit school community enveloped in the campus and resources of one of the country's most prestigious liberal arts colleges.

# Campus School

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The school's branding worked hard to explain the significance and benefits of its location, leveraging a tagline that specifically references the physical place.



Campus School  
*of* SMITH COLLEGE

# Campus School *of* SMITH COLLEGE

On our campus,  
delight drives discovery.





At the lab school of Smith College, hands-on learning sparks intellectual engagement, research findings inform modern methods, and transformative relationships enrich masterful teaching.

## On our campus:

our academic program >



our community >



our approach to character  
development >



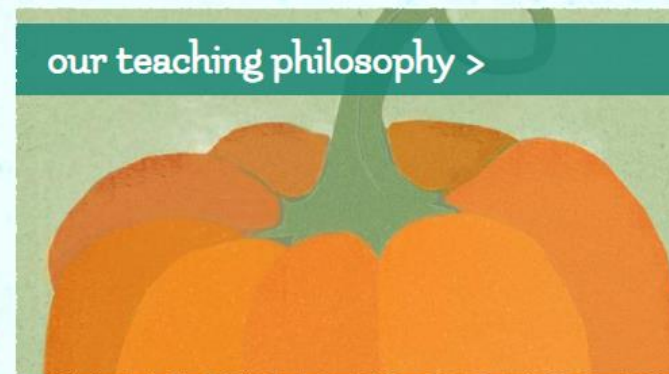
our partnership with Smith  
College >



our teacher preparation program >



our teaching philosophy >







On our campus,  
delight drives discovery.

Campus School  
*of* SMITH COLLEGE

Campus School is a haven  
of individually attuned teaching  
and a hub of new thinking  
about learning and community.

Our community  
celebrates each child as a stand out  
and helps every student find  
the perfect niche.



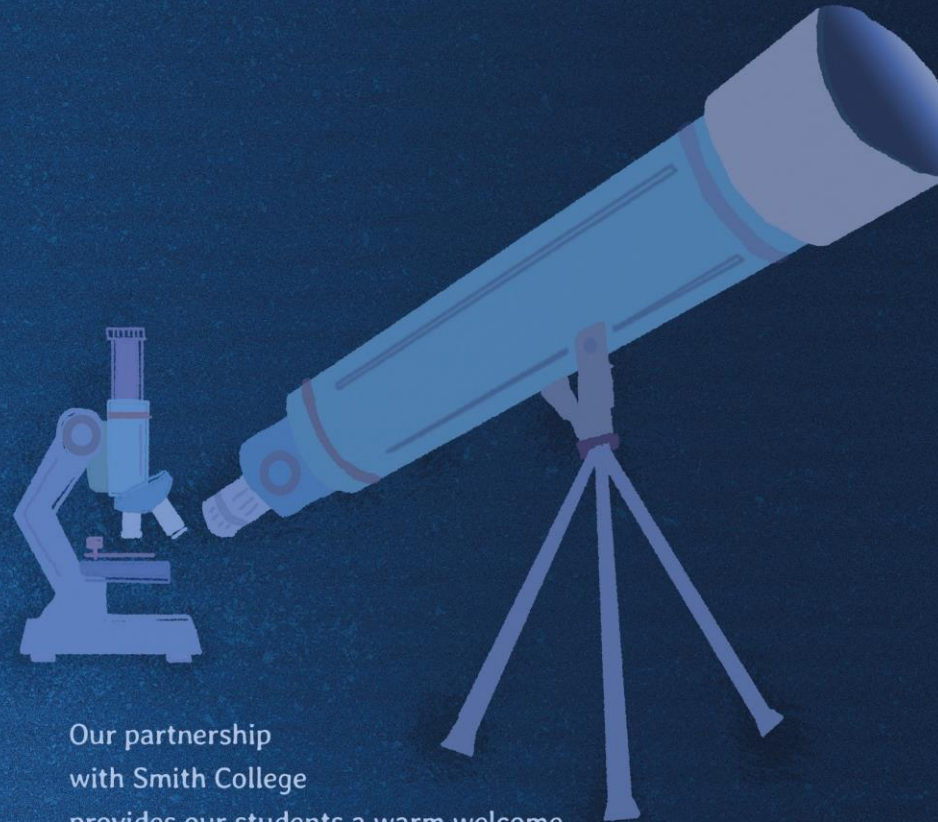
On our campus,  
a one-of-a-kind child  
becomes one of our own.

Campus School  
of SMITH COLLEGE



On our campus,  
small-world meets world-class.

## Campus School *of* SMITH COLLEGE



Our partnership  
with Smith College  
provides our students a warm welcome  
into an unparalleled atmosphere  
of curiosity, creativity, and intellectual energy.

# Campus School

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When the pandemic required Campus School to actually close its campus, it was important for the school's communications to explicitly address this change.

Together, we developed messaging to help current and prospective families embrace a more expansive—and no less true—definition of *campus*.

# Campus School

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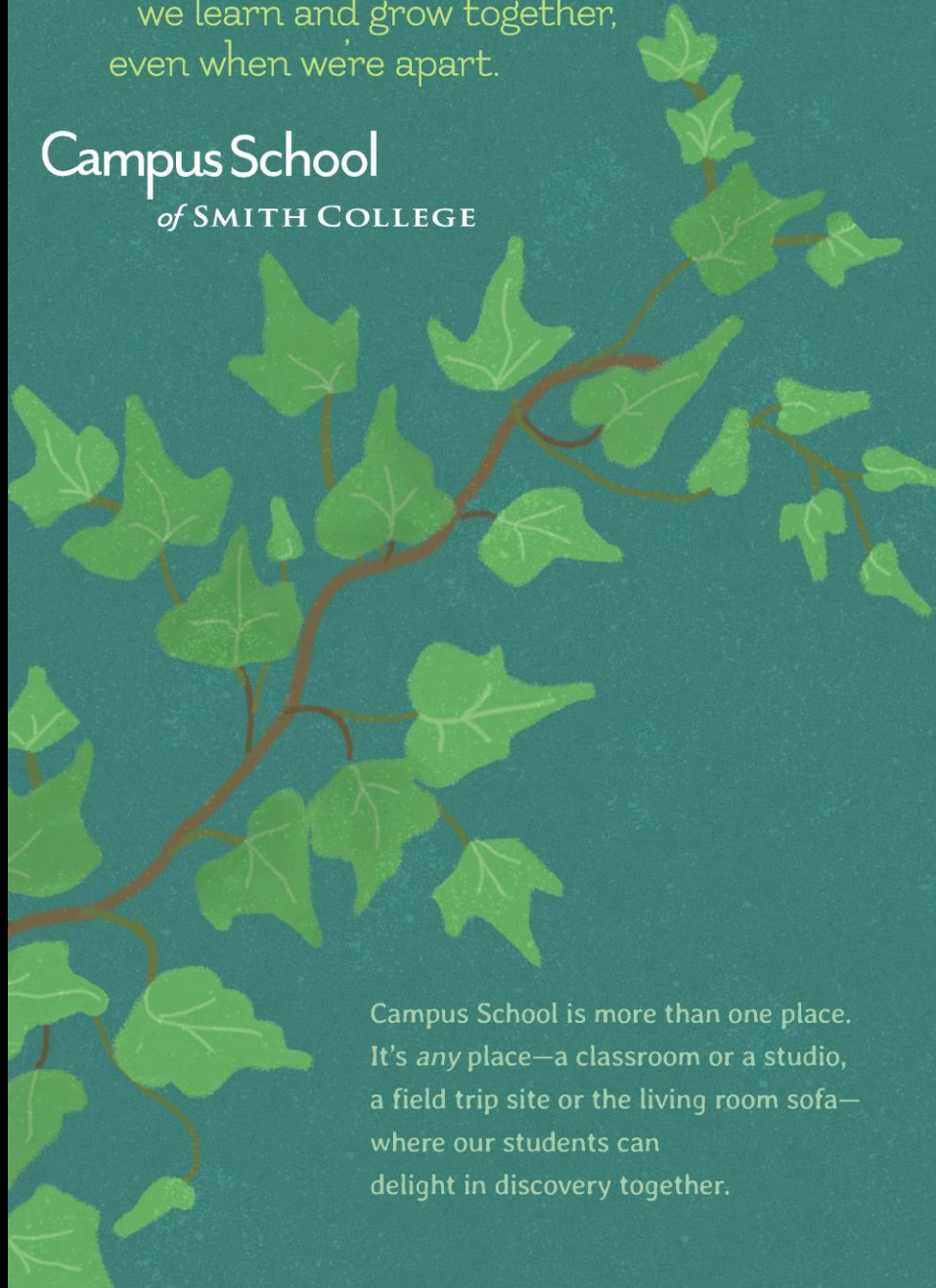
CSSC's existing messaging was deeply and resonantly true:

This school fosters **engaged learning through supportive community**, whether students meet in a cozy classroom or a group zoom. And this school remains **a small, safe haven with ties to a world of huge ideas**—whether students come to the Smith College campus physically or the resources of the college come to them virtually.

On our campus,  
we learn and grow together,  
even when we're apart.

## Campus School *of* SMITH COLLEGE

Campus School is more than one place.  
It's *any* place—a classroom or a studio,  
a field trip site or the living room sofa—  
where our students can  
delight in discovery together.



# Campus School

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Because the school's underlying values and mission shone through its existing messaging concepts, meeting the moment required only targeted fine-tuning—not wholesale reconfiguration—even in a moment of profound upheaval.

IS THE MESSAGE ACCURATE?	DOES THE MESSAGE MEET THE MOMENT?	RESPONSE
YES	NOT QUITE	<b>REFRAME</b> adjust messaging <i>concepts</i>

Yes & not quite?  
**Reframe.**

University Lake School  
Hartland, Wisconsin



# University Lake School

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For University Lake School, 2020 was a particularly eventful year, which included the completion of a new branding program.

To make things yet more complicated, the new messaging projected a particularly strong sense of place and campus identity—just as teaching and learning at ULS were reconfigured and relocated.









HERON ROOKERY  
PRAIRIE RESTORATION

VETTELSON road

CONSERVE NATURE

ENGINEER A FORT

EXPLORE BIG QUESTIONS

HAWK AND EAGLE NEST

MALLEGOLD LOWER SCHOOL  
MICHELS CAMPUS GREEN

SWISH A THREE-POINTER

MAKE AMAZING FRUITS

BUILD AN OUTDOOR SHELTER

Barth  
EXPECT YOUR IMAGINATION  
FIND YOUR VOICE

FINE ARTS-TREIBER THEATER

BRUMDER GYM

LEARN TO LEAD

STACKNER MIDDLE SCHOOL

CUT A NEW FIGURE

AMPLIFY YOUR AMBITIONS

UPPER SCHOOL

GOALING WITH YOUR CLASSMATES

PAVILION

CELEBRATE WITH TEAMMATES

PABST FIELDS

BLAZE YOUR TRAIL

STRENGTHEN THE HOODLINGS

UNIVERSITY LAKE SCHOOL  
1956



# University Lake School

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Fortunately, this branding work is grounded in something deeper than simple geography or physical plant.

Because the work was rooted in deep ideas about learning and community (instead of simply campus features), the messaging held.

# University Lake School

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*You are here*

- an extraordinary place on a beautiful campus
- a learning environment that is inclusive, immersive, and supportive
- a building or classroom that incubates community
- a group of people committed to being present with one another through a fraught and frightening experience



## *What should a school do? What should a school be?*

At University Lake School, those questions are one and the same.

We believe a Preprimary through 12th grade school must fully prepare students for college and career. But getting ready for the future should not be a substitute for living today.

**Your child's life doesn't begin after high school graduation – it's happening right now.**

When your child is thriving emotionally and physically, as well as intellectually, their academic performance improves – today and throughout their educational journey.



*Here.*  
*we prepare for tomorrow as we live in the moment*

It's no secret that ULS graduates enroll in the finest universities across the nation – and go on to satisfying, influential careers. They are also delightful, original, kind and courageous human beings. This combination of intellectual prowess and personal fortitude sustains and empowers our students throughout their days and years with us, and for the rest of their lives.

The world needs these young people now more than ever.

*Might your child – and your family – thrive here?*

For more information or to schedule a private tour,  
call 262-367-6011, ext. 1455 or email  
[admissions@universitylake.org](mailto:admissions@universitylake.org).



*Here*

*One reason our kids transition to college so successfully is that they're fearless. They have no fear in walking up to a professor to ask a question or discuss a point. Those ULS skills really carry through.*

- parent





## STUDENT Life

*Here,  
we embrace imagination and live our values*

At ULS, expert faculty and coaches draw on our extraordinary natural surroundings, carefully constructed learning spaces, and longstanding ties to the larger community to make student life exceptionally varied and invigorating.

From Lower School through 12th grade, we offer energizing programs in the **visual arts, music, theater, athletics and service learning** – inspiring students to put their imaginations, values and courage into practice.

Students **engage** in brave self-exploration and empathetic collaboration in our wonderfully equipped art studios and performance spaces. They **bond** with teammates and **build** healthy habits in our spacious gymnasiums and expansive outdoor fields. They partner with local organizations to discover real-world solutions for ending hunger and climate conservation.

Not “extra” to the curriculum, but essential: these programs promote **technical, problem-solving and collaboration skills** that serve students well in their academic subjects – and in life. As active members of many communities in and beyond our school grounds, students experience the profound satisfaction and productive challenges of working with others toward a common goal.



*Here*

*We teach something that other area schools don't – how to appreciate aesthetics, how to interpret your emotions, how to channel your emotions through artwork. The fact that a student can take 45 minutes out of their day to be surrounded by whatever they think is beauty is so exciting. It's what makes us human.*

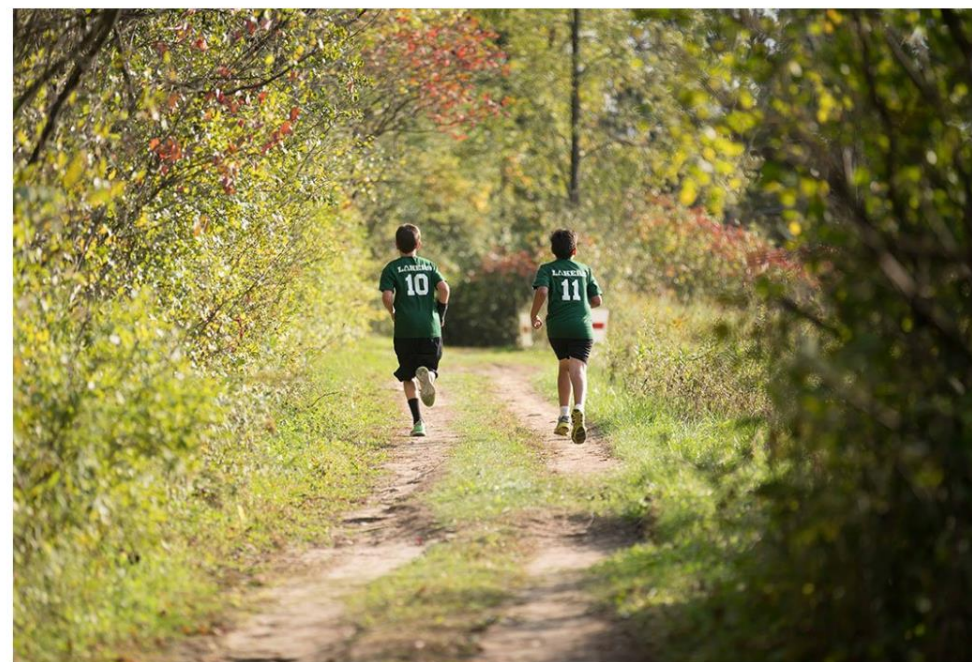
*- faculty member*



# EMBRACE YOUR SURROUNDINGS *here*

## How the Environment Defines Everything We Do

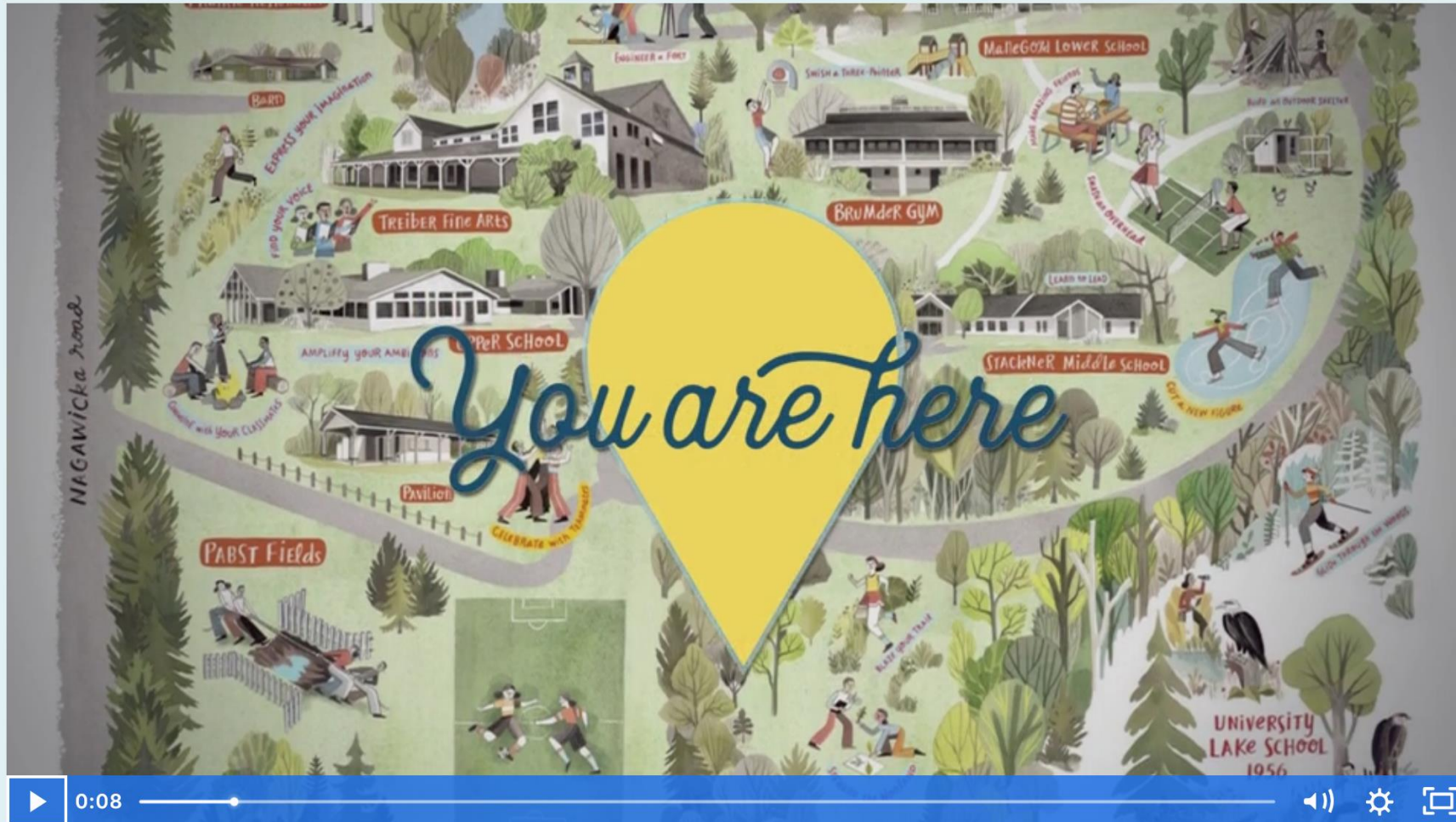
ULS is an intentionally distinctive place and community. The school sits on Hawk Hill – 180-acres of expansive woods, prairielands and green spaces. There are five buildings on campus with engaging learning spaces for all ages, from the youngest 3 year olds to our ambitious seniors. The dynamic interplay of people and place makes ULS a feeling as much as a school.





How does it feel to learn and grow in this amazing place?

Watch the video below to find out.



# University Lake School

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Even before the upheaval of 2020, ULS was well on the way to building its messaging on its timeless, unshakeable truths.

Accordingly, the language that rang true about ULS in 2019 continued to resonate in 2020, with minimal updating.

IS THE MESSAGE ACCURATE?	DOES THE MESSAGE MEET THE MOMENT?	RESPONSE
NOT QUITE	NOT YET	<b>REPRIORITIZE</b> focus messaging <i>emphases</i>

Not quite & not yet?  
**Reprioritize.**

The Branch School  
Houston, Texas

# The Branch School

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The Branch School of Houston is one of the warmest and most compassionate learning environments that we've had the pleasure of entering.

# The Branch School

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However, when our partnership began, the school's branding didn't convey this distinctive warmth or build on remarkable philosophies of kindness, compassion, and the unlimited potential of all children.

Branch unknowingly entered the process of a major rebrand with a tumultuous year on the horizon. But through moments of global disruption and internal discussion, the school determined to press on with the work.

# The Branch School

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Branch came into its messaging work to support ordinary recruitment and retention efforts—which only became more important as economic uncertainty deepened in 2020.

And in a chaotic and stressful time, the Houston market needed to know—now more than ever—about Branch’s distinctive commitments to a serene learning environment and a supportive school community.





The Branch School



## WHERE DOES LOVE LEAD?

From accepting yourself just  
as you are

to valuing others for what  
makes them different





## WHERE DOES LOVE LEAD?

From a flash of excitement in  
a science experiment

to an enduring fascination  
with knowing and growing



## WHERE DOES LOVE LEAD?

From the trust between a  
preschooler and his first  
teacher

to a willingness to try  
something new today





# WHAT CAN CHILDREN LEARN BY PRACTICING PEACEMAKING?

The benefits of serenity in a stressful world





## Modern life is filled with stress:

An accident on the interstate snarls traffic.  
A combative comment on social media stings.  
A family member forgets to follow through on  
a household chore.

Frustration gradually builds **and we react**,  
often badly. Children observe these fraught  
moments, which can complicate their own  
understanding of how to **cope with negative  
emotions and conflicts**.

However, some schools are taking important  
intentional steps to help their students **better  
cope** with frustrations and stressors.



## WHAT CAN PEACEMAKING TEACH EVEN OUR YOUNGEST LEARNERS?

### To understand emotions.

A peacemaking process starts with **self-awareness and careful reflection**. Consider the task of sharing—something even adults can struggle with—and imagine a scenario in which a first grader, Sarah, pulls a toy away from her classmate, Ben. The teacher witnesses this and asks the two children to practice peacemaking. Perhaps Sarah needs **time to calm down and process her feelings** before they engage in discussion. If so, she is encouraged to go to the Calm & Collect corner of the classroom, to sit undisturbed for a time and consider her feelings. Items in this calming corner—such as squeeze balls, calming messages, and a fidget spinner—help her to settle, **process what has happened**, and confront strong emotions.

### To express feelings.

Building on this example, when the two children are ready to talk, Sarah is asked to use “I-messages” to explain why she took the toy from Ben—a process which reveals that she feels angry because Ben has been monopolizing the toy all morning. Ben then also uses “I-messages” to explain that he didn’t intend to dominate the toy and that he didn’t realize Sarah wanted to play with it. The two children **discuss how they could peacefully share** the toy in the future, each taking into account the other’s feelings. They end the discussion by expressing what they appreciate about one another. Through a measured, supportive conversation, the children take responsibility for their part in the episode, devise a plan to share more fairly, and forgive one another. For small children and young men and women alike, a peacemaking practice encourages students **to explore and express emotions**, solve interpersonal conflicts, and build healthy relationships.



## WHAT CAN OLDER STUDENTS LEARN FROM A PEACEMAKING PROCESS?

### To respond intentionally.

Older children, pressured by more complex schoolwork and extra-curricular demands, can become distressed and overwhelmed when things don't go as expected. Middle School can be a particularly **challenging time of change and development**, in which it's all too easy for children to feel excluded, criticized, self-conscious, or uncertain. Taking deep breaths and clarifying emotions before engaging in conversation or conflict works at this developmental stage, too. This process frees older children from the idea that they are compelled to react emotionally. As they grow in responsibility and freedom, they also learn that they must **consciously decide to respond to emotional situations with clarity, fairness, and good faith**.

### To learn more and live better.

Students in a peaceful environment are more likely to **lose themselves in the joy of discovery**, as intellectual concentration improves, emotional distraction decreases, and children work together to create a thoughtful and supportive atmosphere. And when young thinkers feel secure enough to make, examine, and learn from mistakes, they glean important insights. Most of all, learning the practice of peacemaking helps children grow into **empathetic, resilient adults**—uniquely equipped to see past their own perspective into the wider world, to recognize the humanity in all others, and to become better and more fulfilled citizens.





“I feel like we’re here  
to get ready for the world,  
so it’s nice to be able  
to go outside and  
learn in it every day.”

–student





## BUILDING SKILLS AND STEWARDSHIP THROUGH OUTDOOR LEARNING

Our Outdoor Classroom program teaches children to feel comfortable in, connected to, and **responsible for nature**, while developing a deeper understanding of its fundamental processes. Our students can study root systems in the working wildscape just off our playground, observe the life cycle of a frog firsthand at our pond, and consider the dynamic role of vegetation in land conservation in our prairie. From tending vegetables and propagating plants to supporting butterfly populations and participating in an annual birdathon, our students learn **important scientific concepts through concrete experiences**. And they develop a sense of wonder and stewardship that can last a lifetime.



## GARNERING RECOGNITION AND GROWING OUR PROGRAMS

The Branch School's **learning initiatives and teachers** have won prestigious awards, earned important certificates, and captured key competitive grants, which have allowed us to buy scientific equipment, maintain our wildscapes and habitats, and expand our innovative projects and inspiring programs.

- Christa McAuliffe Excellence in Teaching Award
- Grants from: Susan Vaughan Foundation, Toyota Tapestry Foundation, The Joseph and Mary Cacioppo Foundation and Whole Kids Foundation
- The Lucie Wray Todd Award for The Branch School Outdoor Classroom program
- Texas Wildscapes Wildlife Habitat Demonstration Site certification from Texas Parks & Wildlife

# The Branch School

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By clearly articulating bedrock values and missions—things that are true of Branch no matter what unfolds around the school—Branch better prepared itself to explain how these values and missions could be deployed in response to a host of rapidly changing conditions.



[About](#)[Admissions](#)[Academics](#)[The Branch Way](#)[Support](#)

## HOW WE LOVE, LEARN, AND LEAD IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Oct 13 2020



## MORE BRANCH BLOGS YOU'LL LOVE



### [Why a Private School in Houston Teaches Peacemaking](#)

February 9, 2021



IS THE MESSAGE ACCURATE?	DOES THE MESSAGE MEET THE MOMENT?	RESPONSE
NO	NO	<b>REBRAND</b> create <i>new</i> messaging



No & no?  
**Rebrand.**

Linden Waldorf School  
Nashville, Tennessee

# Linden Waldorf School

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Linden Waldorf offers an exceptionally intricate and intentional program arc—which has also meant exceptional messaging challenges.

Two years ago, some prospective Nashville families knew nothing about the school; very few knew enough to fully grasp its approach.

Most had learned just enough to become overwhelmed by its complexity, which sometimes read as disorder to outside audiences.

# Linden Waldorf School

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It's crucial to solve this type of perception problem for *all* schools and in *all* times.

But given the intense anxieties of the last year, it was even more important that Linden Waldorf's messaging and visuals answer all questions about mission and quality clearly—instead of inadvertently raising even more of them.



Linden Waldorf



# Linden Waldorf

Nashville's co-ed independent school  
**where imagination is in the making**  
for preschool–grade 8.



What can your child learn to **make?**

... mud pies and messes, friends, projects, good decisions ...

All of these. And so much more.





At Linden Waldorf, we believe that the act of *making*—

of creating something from nothing,  
of joining disparate parts into a cohesive whole,  
of revising what currently exists for greater effectiveness—

is one of the most important capacities for our children's success in the unknown future.

And to *make* requires imagination:

*the ability to fabricate the possible and pursue it with tenacity.*

This capacity for imagination differentiates the greatest minds throughout history.  
And no matter how unexpected, out-of-the-box, or extraordinary an idea may seem,  
we believe your child can learn how to make that idea real.

At Linden Waldorf, we cultivate your child's imagination, as a tool and a skill,  
from their first days with us. Because **with imagination, the future is theirs to make.**

## How do we do it?

It starts with playing in the rain.





In their first years with us at Linden Waldorf, your child's "work" is play. In our Early Childhood classrooms, materials are purposefully both aesthetically pleasing and flexible.

Bright blue silk scarves can become a tent for camping, sails on a ship, or a blanket for a doll. A wooden balance board can transform into a rocket cockpit, an elaborate road system for trucks, or a kayak down rapids. Your child decides what the materials become based on their interests and what they want to explore that day.

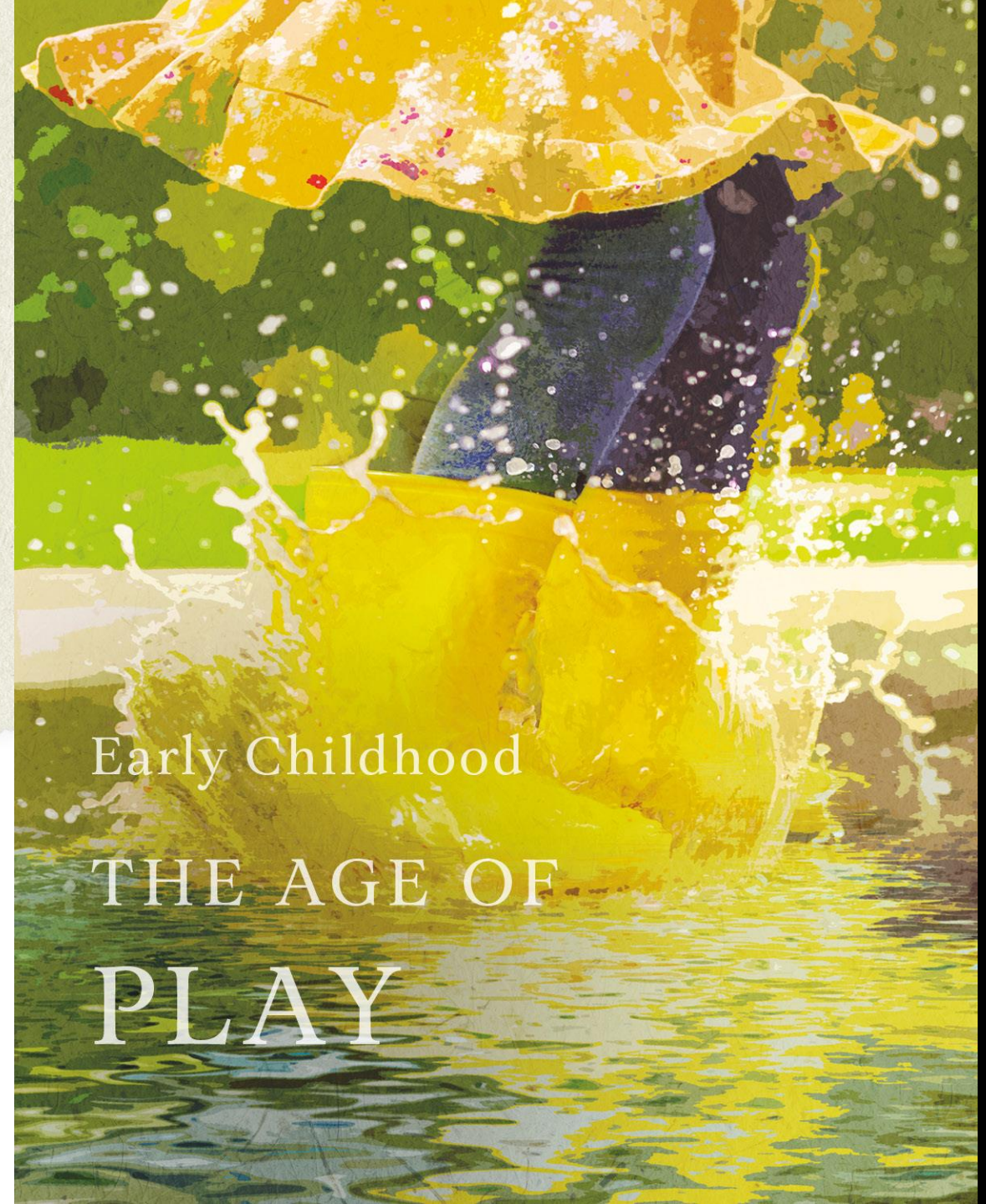
**We meet your child in their imagination.** Our teachers guide your child to learn to hold images in their mind through oral storytelling and repetition. They intentionally impart lessons through narrative—the worm eating the apple teaches a simple stitch, the chair wanting to hug the table introduces proper social etiquette, the call to hop like a bunny back to the classroom **turns reticent listeners into happy doers.**



Your child eagerly imitates home life: washing dishes, setting the table, helping prepare snacks, or sweeping.

Practicing these skills helps your child feel confident and useful while meeting their **need to emulate what they see most often.**

Playing outside in all sorts of weather presents countless opportunities for your child to experience and immerse in nature. They're **learning to listen, observe, and investigate** by engaging all their senses.



# Early Childhood THE AGE OF PLAY





Your second grader is still very much in a place of whimsical childhood, but they're also ready to test limits.

You might notice your child trying out a lie or find them sneaking a cookie before dinnertime. We meet this **duality of innocence and craftiness** by teaching your child stories of great people in history alongside fables of mischievous animals and tricksters.

These stories exemplify the propensity for goodness and deception within each of us and begin demonstrating for your child the **intricacies of human nature**. We focus on speaking to that newly discovered self-understanding in your child.



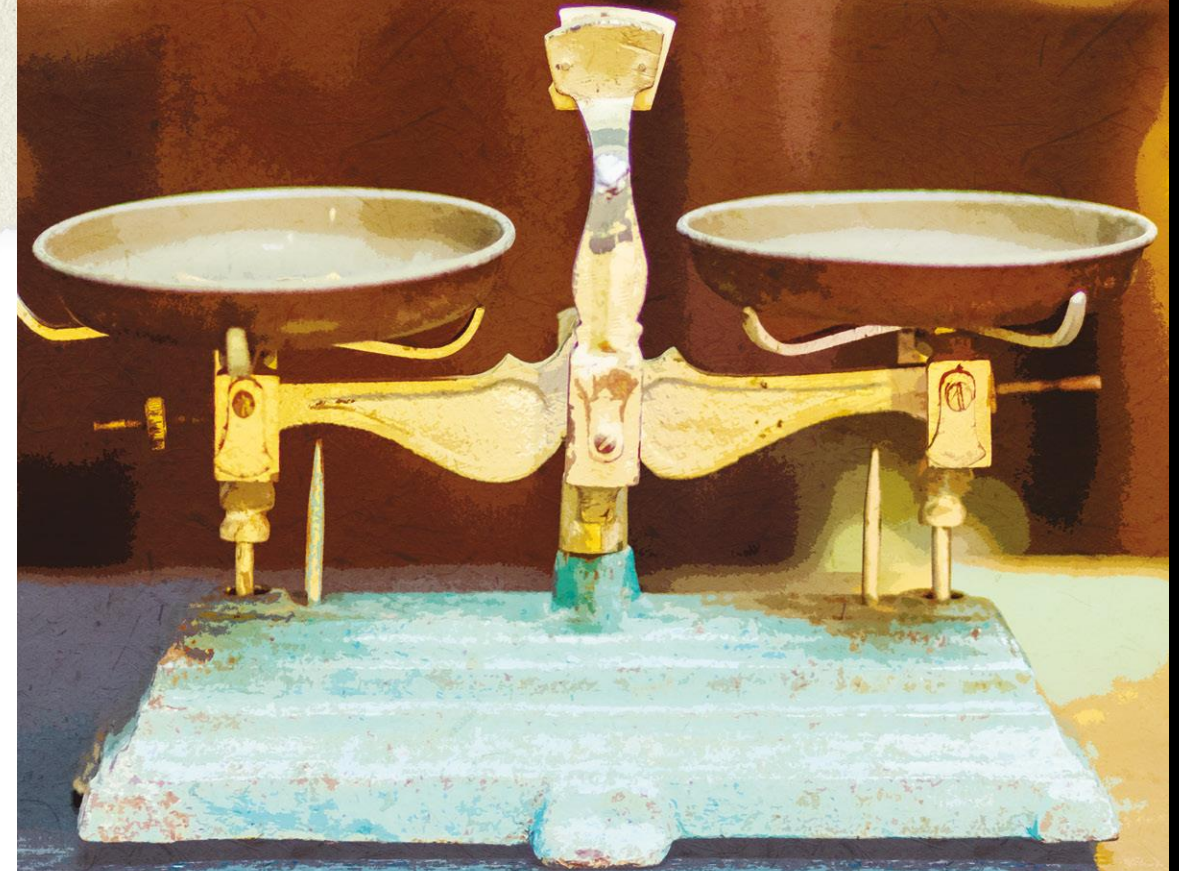
By this point, your child has had a year of practice with their main lesson book. They're **strengthening their dexterity**, their ability to cross their body's midline, and assuaging their brain's natural resistance to the difficulty of developmental leaps.

Your child's lesson book not only instructs art basics like shading and proportion, it further **hones your child's budding math and science skills**.

We intentionally teach the **patterns and rules of spelling and reading** in second grade, with an emphasis on your child **reading for comprehension and meaning**. We read together and individually, practicing first with prose or poetry we know by heart.

## 2nd grade

# THE AGE OF DUALITY







This is a year of so many changes for your sixth grader as they grow from childhood into adolescence, a joyful and often complex transition.

Peer relationships may take on new meaning and weight. While counterintuitive, your child **thrives with structure and rules** as they're grappling with existential questions like: *What am I doing here and where am I going? What's my purpose?*

Sixth graders advance from their previous year's study and move into Ancient Rome and Roman law. They study the cultures and societies of Ancient Africa and South America, and eventually the Middle Ages in Europe and Asia, seeking to understand *what happens when you work hard to build something and it all crumbles? How do you begin again?* They balance inquiry into themselves with study of the world far beyond them through deep **investigation of the rules and laws of the Earth, from a scientific and social perspective.**



Sound dynamics, thermodynamics, physics, astronomy, and minerology—sixth graders engage acutely with a wide range of scientific inquiry as a way to channel their current proclivity for complication into **thoughtful observation, persistent problem solving, and attention to nuance.**

We appeal to the highest in your sixth grader, knowing they'll rise to it, by asking them to seek out an adult who embodies traits they'd like to emulate. This process concludes with a ceremony, as both a rite of passage and a **culmination of their self-work.**

## 6th grade THE AGE OF VIRTUE







This is the year everything comes together. Eighth graders are ready for change—and ready to use their voices.

We mirror this for your child by engaging them in the history of early America, from pilgrims to the colonies and early American democracy. We cover the American Revolution as well as revolutions across the globe occurring at the same time to **demonstrate action and change** and guide our students to understand that **humanity is a work in progress—a constantly evolving community** around the world, to which they have a responsibility as global citizens.

Your eighth grader is eager to espouse opinions and defend them, so we ask them to do this by writing research-based essays on complex and often controversial topics. We ask our students to meet the challenges of these complex topics head-on to understand *why they occurred, what can be learned from them, and how to ensure history doesn't repeat itself*. They draft and receive feedback many times over, **learning the importance of forming opinions that are well-reasoned and well-informed** and experiencing firsthand the power of persistence.

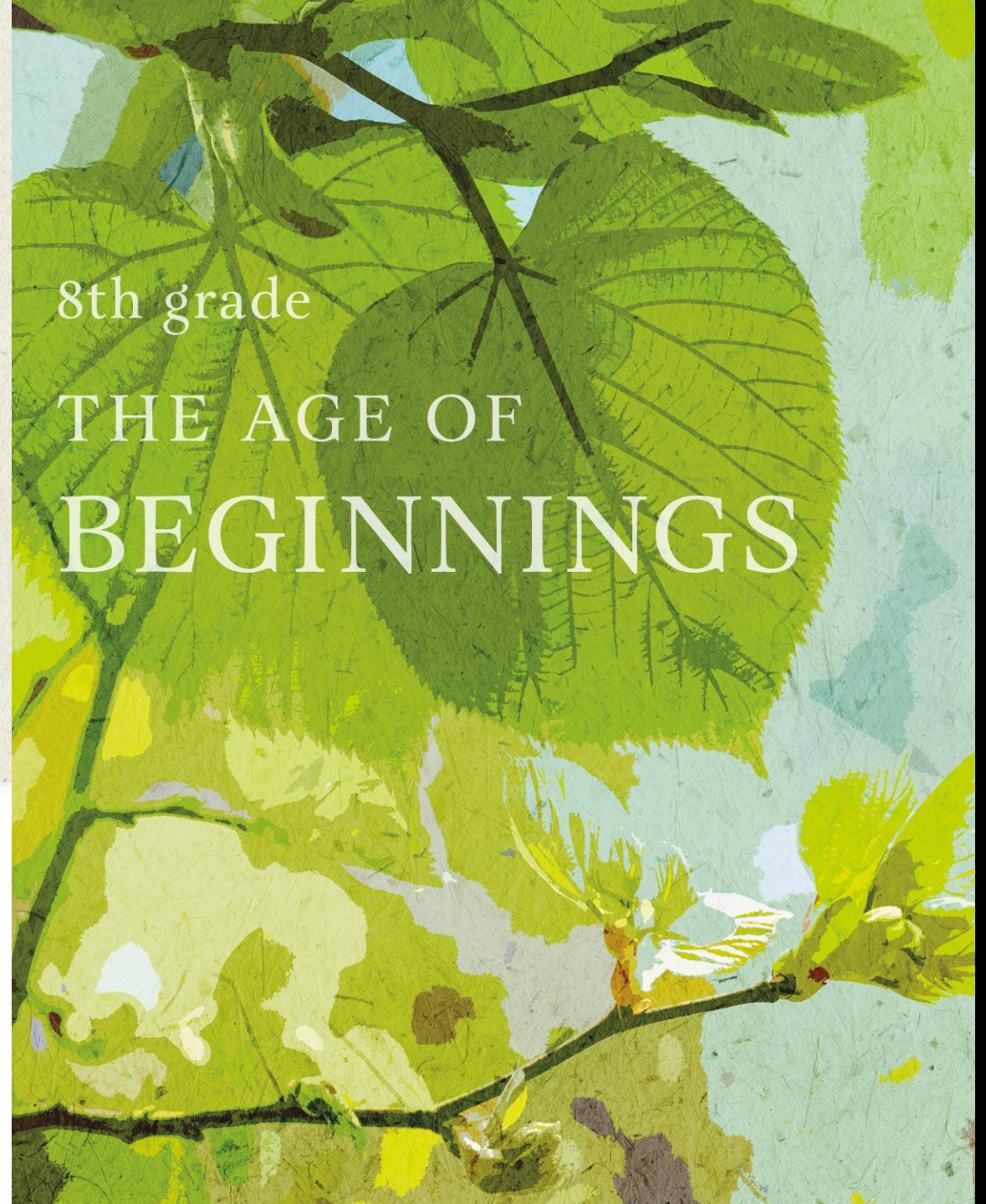


Studying the Platonic solids, 3D geometry, human physiology, and organic chemistry prepares your child for advanced science and math courses in high school and beyond.

Your child undertakes a **large-scale independent project**: building a full-size sailboat or electric guitar coalesces craftsmanship, beauty, and function; a lifestyle magazine empowers local students; a documentary film brings insight and research together; the making of paper, ink, and quills preserves heirloom practices while showcasing chemistry and art.

8th grade

# THE AGE OF BEGINNINGS





Throughout their Linden Waldorf journey, your child will open and close their days with a **pause for reflection and meditation** on words like these:

*All my work is now ended.*

*What I have learned will now rest.*

*When I have done my very best,*

*Wisdom, strength, and love will grow*

*And I will bless all that I know.*

By giving our students a chance to **gather their thoughts and center their minds, hearts, and bodies**, they're more prepared learners each day.

And by closing their days—and their time with us—in this way, they gain the space and ability to **deeply integrate all that they know and carry it forward** to their next schools and beyond.

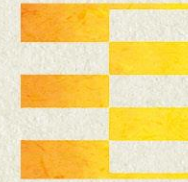
Ultimately, our students know that what they know in this moment is only the beginning to ***what could be.***



EC - THE AGE OF  
PLAY



1st - THE AGE OF  
DISCOVERY



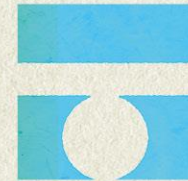
2nd - THE AGE OF  
DUALITY



3rd - THE AGE OF  
AWAKENING



4th - THE AGE OF  
CONNECTION



5th - THE AGE OF  
BALANCE



6th - THE AGE OF  
VIRTUE



7th - THE AGE OF  
PERSPECTIVE



8th - THE AGE OF  
BEGINNINGS

At Linden Waldorf, your child can  
**imagine the future—and then make it.**

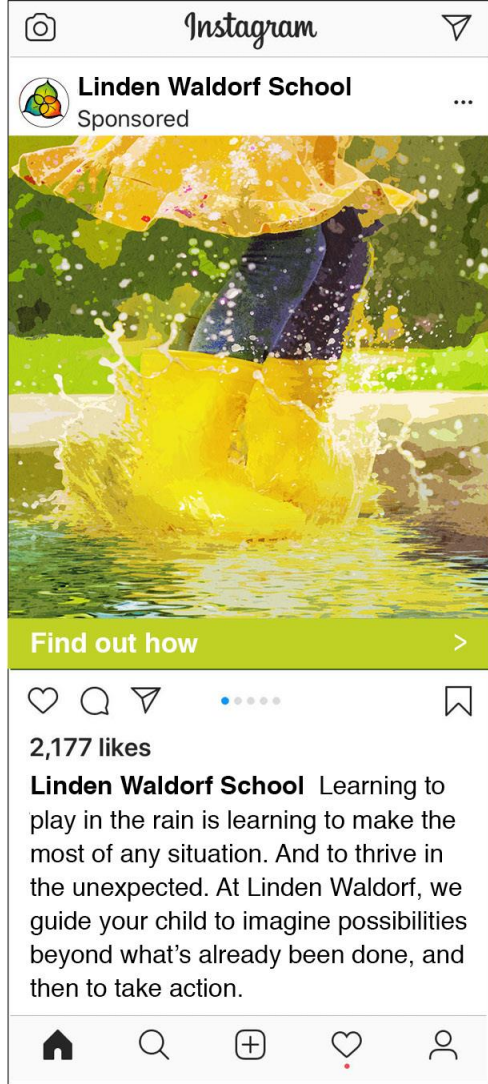
# Linden Waldorf School



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Our first charge was to build a messaging platform and branding program on Linden's unchanging mission and values.


From there, the school was well-positioned to address the many changes 2020 had in store. Linden Waldorf showed how long-established priorities and principles—like their embrace of the unexpected and dedication to outdoor learning—would guide all responses to evolving situations.

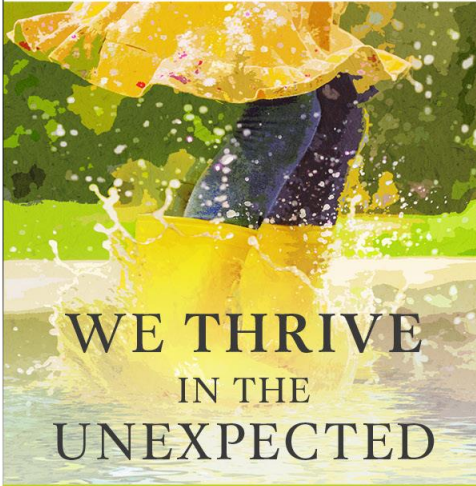





Instagram





**Linden Waldorf School**


Sponsored



WE THRIVE  
IN THE  
UNEXPECTED






Find out how

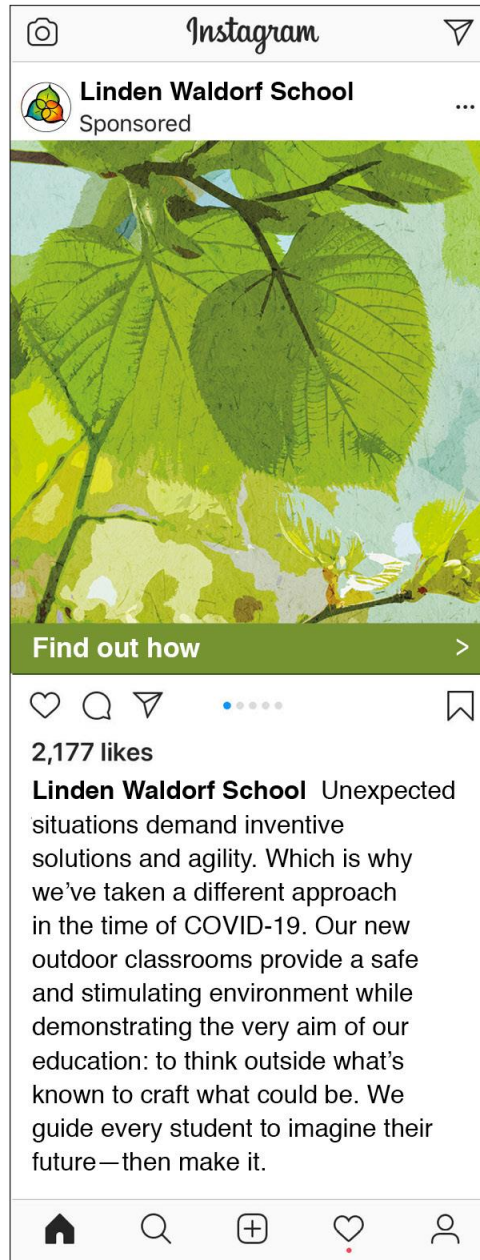







2,177 likes

**Linden Waldorf School** Learning to play in the rain is learning to make the most of any situation. And to thrive in the unexpected. At Linden Waldorf, we guide your child to imagine possibilities beyond what's already been done, and then to take action.







Instagram





**Linden Waldorf School**

Sponsored

...








[Find out how](#)

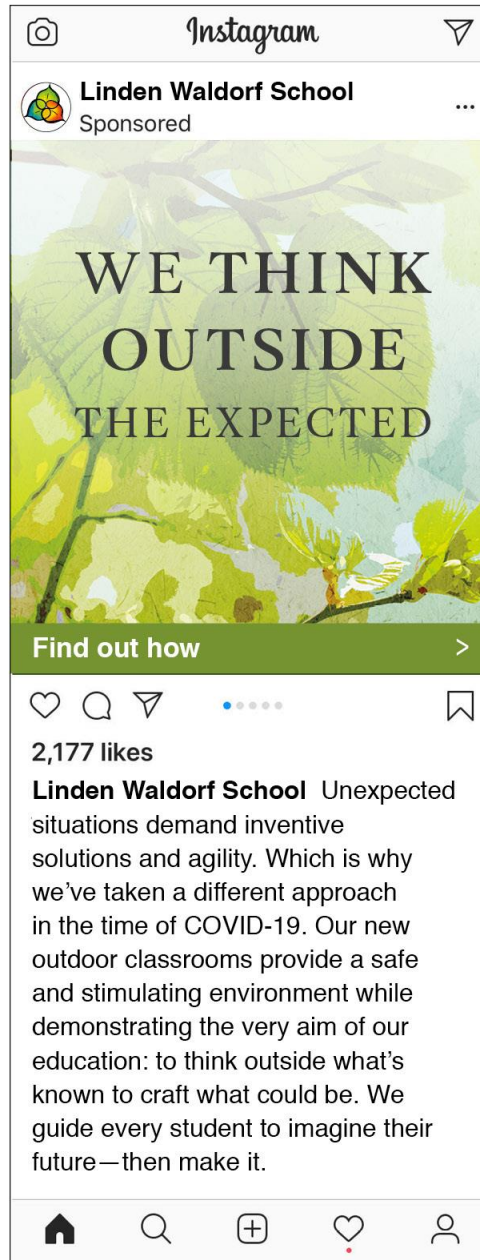


2,177 likes

**Linden Waldorf School** Unexpected situations demand inventive solutions and agility. Which is why we've taken a different approach in the time of COVID-19. Our new outdoor classrooms provide a safe and stimulating environment while demonstrating the very aim of our education: to think outside what's known to craft what could be. We guide every student to imagine their future—then make it.







IS THE MESSAGE ACCURATE?	DOES THE MESSAGE MEET THE MOMENT?	RESPONSE
YES	YES	<b>REPEAT</b> amplify <i>existing</i> messages
YES	NO	<b>REDEFINE</b> calibrate messaging <i>language</i>
YES	NOT QUITE	<b>REFRAME</b> adjust messaging <i>concepts</i>
NOT QUITE	NOT YET	<b>REPRIORITIZE</b> focus messaging <i>emphases</i>
NO	NO	<b>REBRAND</b> create <i>new</i> messaging

**Experience must match expectation.**



**lindenwaldorf** • [Follow](#)

Nashville, Tennessee



**lindenwaldorf** Friday is still painting day @lindenwaldorf! Ms. Settle leads the 4th grade in a weekly wet-on-wet watercolor class with beautiful results. A perfect out breath to complete our week!

Show us your paintings, @lindenwaldorf students!

#beyondtheclassroom  
#wetonwetpainting  
#lindenwaldorf  
#ipaintthereforeiam

75w



Liked by [sole\\_antonia\\_tosi](#) and others

APRIL 24, 2020



Add a comment...

Post





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lindenwaldorf ¡PURA VIDA! This is how we roll on a Friday night around here ... with a SOCA DANCE PARTY! Ms. Véro showed us the moves tonight and we partied down! Spanish teacher for our lower grades, Ms. Henson's energy is nothing if not infectious! .

#puravida  
#ilovesoca  
#socadance #fridaynightdanceparty  
#distancelearning #beyondtheclassroom  
@waldorfspanishteachers  
@awsna\_waldorf

78w



Liked by [chalkboardproject.info](#) and others

APRIL 3, 2020



Add a comment...

[Post](#)





lindenwaldorf • [Follow](#)



lindenwaldorf Here at #LindenWaldorf, we not only think outside the box, we think outside! Just as we foster resilience, agility, and flexibility of mind in our students, so do we in ourselves, and our response to COVID-19 was no different. We are the only independent school in the Nashville area to have constructed permanent outdoor classrooms in response to the pandemic.

Read more at the link in our bio.

1w



lindenwaldorf #Waldorf  
#WaldorfSchool #WaldorfClass  
#WaldorfClasses #WaldorfEducation  
#WhyWaldorf #WhyWaldorfWorks







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**lindenwaldorf** "While most of Nashville's students were tuning into class virtually from their homes, those enrolled at Linden Waldorf were learning outdoors."

Read more from our article in [@nashvillescene](#) at the link in our bio.

10w



**lindenwaldorf** [#LindenWaldorf](#)



Liked by [spesmentem](#) and others

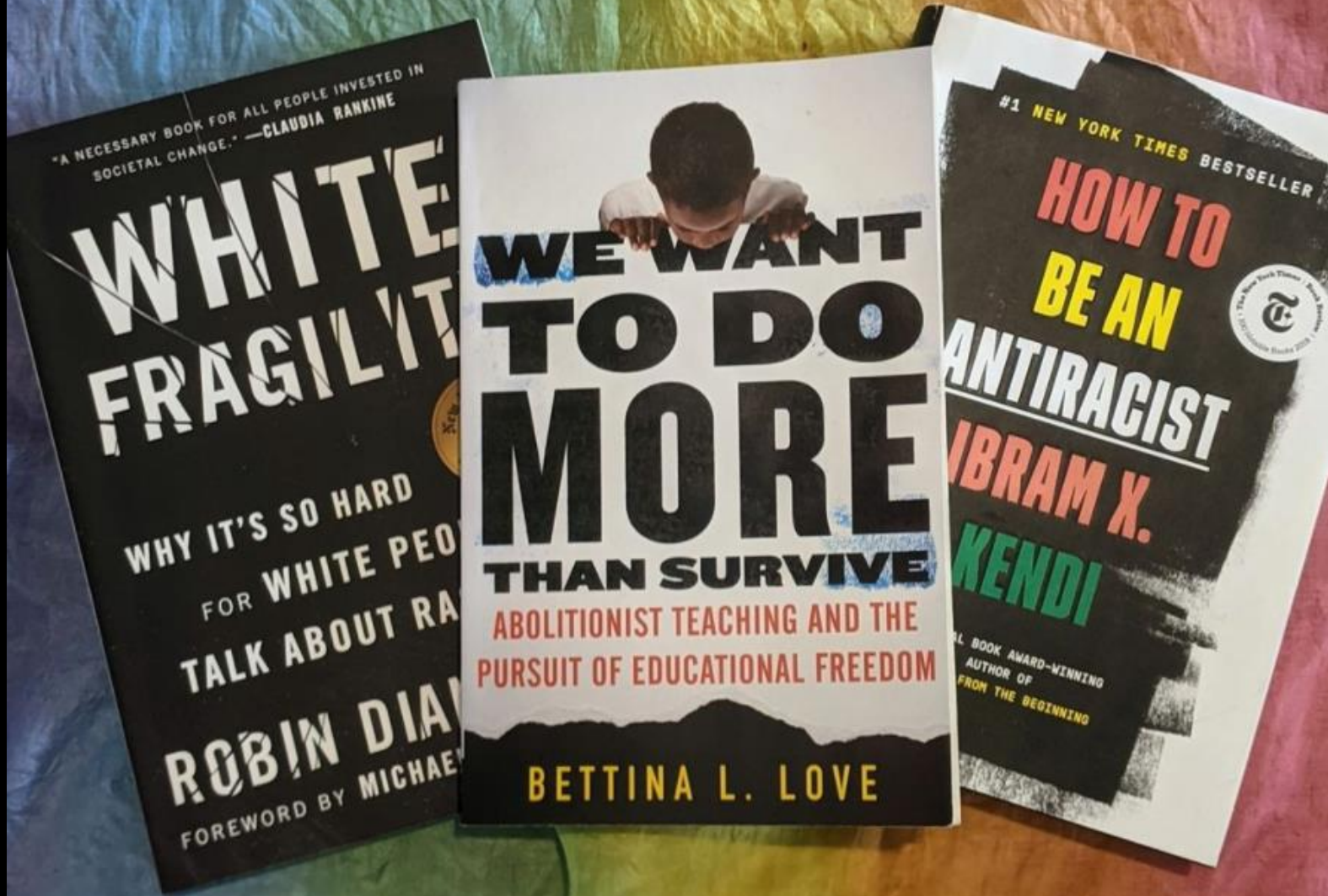
JULY 21



Add a comment...

[Post](#)





lindenwaldorf • [Follow](#)



**lindenwaldorf** We acknowledge our imperfection, and we know that talking is not enough when it comes to the fight against racism and social inequities. We have recommitted ourselves to our quest to know better and do better through the elevation and prioritization of our work on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Find out more at the link in bio.

4w



**lindenwaldorf** #LindenWaldorf  
#Waldorf #WaldorfSchool  
#WaldorfEducation  
#InclusiveEducation  
#DiversityEquityAndInclusion



Liked by ziehersmith and others

SEPTEMBER 1





**lindenwaldorf** • [Follow](#)

Linden Waldorf School



**lindenwaldorf** Woot woot!

Today we received 43 sets of skin-toned, hand-crafted beeswax crayons from [@waldorfincolor](#) for our young artists. We can't wait to introduce these high quality art supplies to the children next week in our fresh air [#outdoorclassroom](#) settings!

Thank you to Sabine for creating this exquisite product and to our generous anonymous donors for making this purchase possible.

[#worththewait](#) [#allskinisbeautiful](#)  
[#IDEA@linden](#) [@allofuscrayons](#)

59w



Liked by [rayremingtonmusic](#) and others

AUGUST 14, 2020



Add a comment...

Post

Closing thoughts

# Messaging beyond this moment

---

## 1. **Build a brand that tells the unchanging truth**

about who you really are, what you really do,  
and the missions and values that drive you to do it.

This is a messaging foundation you can build on  
even as trends, markets, and contexts shift and change.

# Messaging beyond this moment

---

## **2. Lean into these enduring values and mission, even—and especially—in rapidly evolving moments.**

Show your community how you will deploy your distinctive strengths and defining values to solve new problems and rise to unexpected challenges.

**This builds trust in your adaptations** and lets your families take comfort in knowing what will never change, no matter what.



# Messaging beyond this moment

---

## **3. Remember that good messaging is worth the work, even in moments of disruption or distress.**

Investing time and effort in an effective, authentic messaging platform—even when time and resources are taxed—helps to **sustain your ordinary efforts** (recruiting, retention, advancement) and **equips you to respond to extraordinary moments** (pandemics, disasters, tragedies) clearly and reassuringly.

**Knowing what to do starts with  
knowing who you are.**

**Shelly Peters, *principal***

shelly@unfoldingyourstory.com

@shellywpeters

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# Take-home exercise

Translating whats into whys



# Whats vs. whys

---

The most effective and resilient messaging is built around your **whys** instead of your **whats**.

Whys are the core, shared values that define an organization and drive all offerings, methods, and decisions.

# Whats vs. whys

---

## ***What***

a state-of-the-art maker space

## ***Why***

students learn problem-solving best through prototyping

# Whats vs. whys

---

## ***What***

a new sports complex

## ***Why***

young people learn poise through competition

# Whats vs. whys: A simple framework

---

We have \_\_\_\_\_ (what) **BECAUSE** \_\_\_\_\_ (why) \_\_\_\_\_.



# Naming your whats

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Using pink Post-its,  
each person notes  
one essential element of the  
[school/program] experience  
per Post-it.



# Sharing your insights

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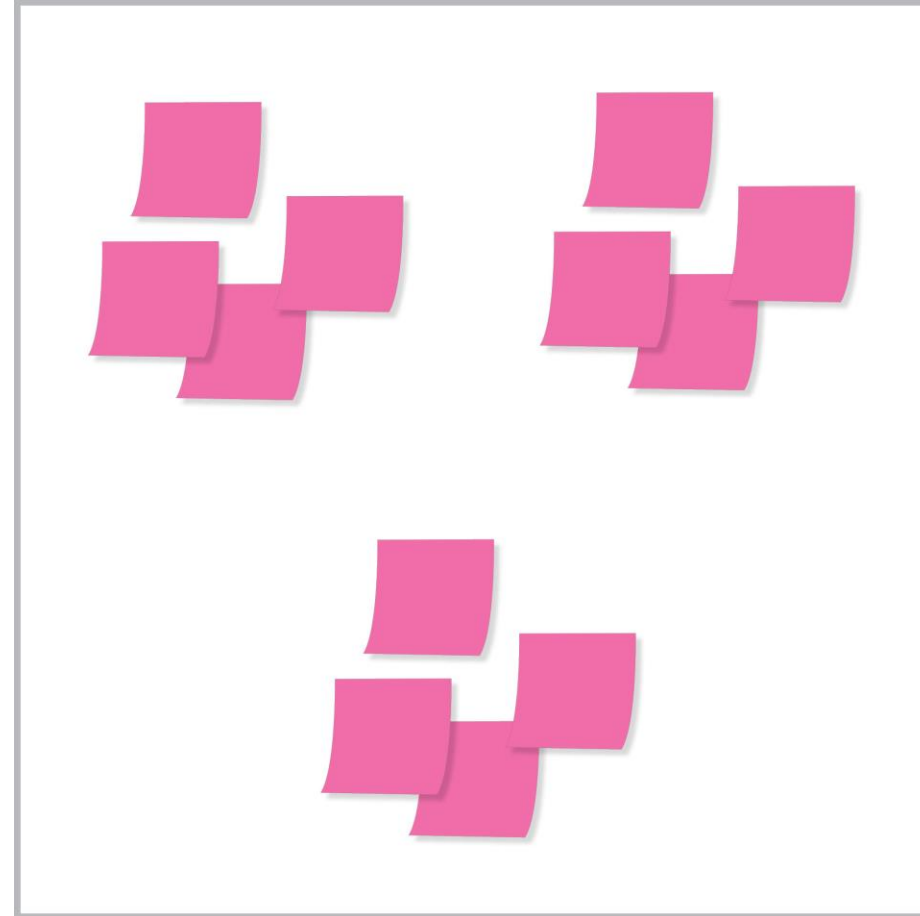
Compare your Post-its with your team members.

- Note elements that are consistent across the team.
- Determine if elements with little or no duplication are, in fact, essential elements.
- Set aside elements that you determine to be nonessential.

# Developing a framework

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Organize your Post-its  
on a wall or large table.



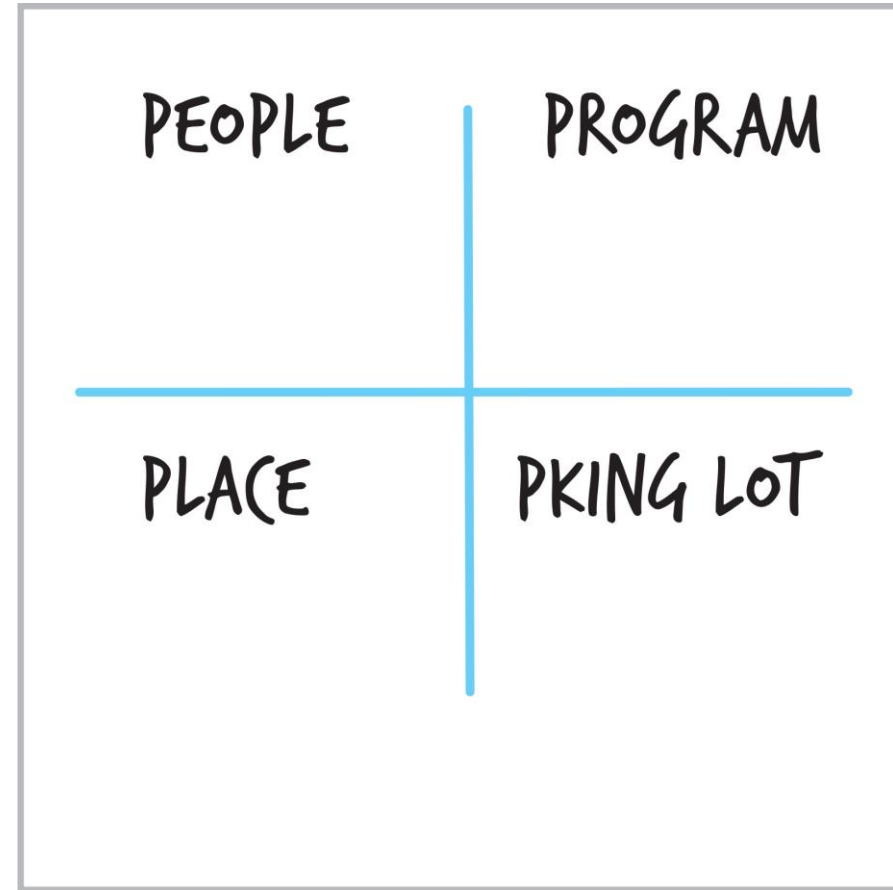
# Optional framework

PEOPLE

PROGRAM

PLACE

PARKING LOT



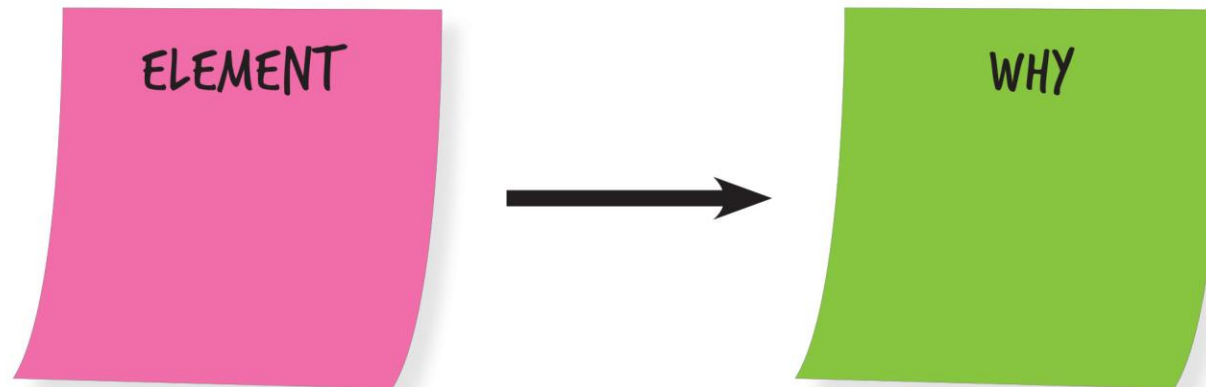


# Translating whats to whys

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On green Post-its, answer the following question for each of the pink Post-its:

[Element] is **essential** to the [school/program] experience because \_\_\_\_\_.



# Identifying your assets

---

Write **Assets** on the left and **Opportunities** on the right.

ASSETS	OPPORTUNITIES

# Identifying your assets

Place the Post-its in the **Assets** column that you consider particular strengths of your school/program.



# Identifying your opportunities

If you cannot articulate a “why” for an **Asset**, move it to **Opportunities**.





# Surfacing your throughlines

---

*What do you notice about the relationship between your pink and green Post-its?*

*Do clear intersections emerge?*

*What common threads surface?*