



**THE TEAK FELLOWSHIP**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028**  
Transforming Lives. Lifting Communities.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The TEAK Fellowship was created twenty-six years ago to help bright, motivated young people with limited financial resources achieve their potential. Since 1998, TEAK's educational enrichment program has served over 800 New York City students. TEAK Fellows have attended and graduated from the country's top educational institutions and are leaders in their professions and communities throughout New York City and across the globe.

We are remarkably proud of where TEAK is today and are excited to share our new strategic plan, which will build upon a quarter century of learning and growth and help propel the Fellowship into its next phase of impact.

TEAK launched its last strategic planning process in 2016, with the goal to expand the organization's reach while maintaining the high-touch individualized support and program quality that have always been core to our mission. In the years since, TEAK has expanded the program duration for each Fellow from six years to ten years through the addition of a College Success Program. TEAK added offsite afterschool locations in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens, which reduced Fellows' commute times and increased class time. Additionally, we have grown our incoming class size from 30 to 45 students per cohort.

Alongside these successful expansions, we've endured a pandemic, uncertain economic conditions, and social unrest. Our commitment to providing the best possible support to our Fellows and families has been unwavering, and, today, TEAK is better equipped than ever to deepen our impact and reimagine how we empower Fellows to thrive.

In February of 2023, we began TEAK's new strategic planning process by soliciting input from Fellows, alumni, staff, parents, school partners, donors, and board members through a combination of interviews, focus groups, and surveys. In reviewing stakeholder responses, several common observations emerged.

- TEAK's strength lies in its community and high-touch approach to supporting Fellows throughout their academic journey. This high-touch, high quality programming should not be sacrificed for growth.
- Fellows are proud of their affiliation with TEAK. This Fellow satisfaction should be a key metric when evaluating programmatic outcomes and success.
- There is an opportunity to enhance TEAK's program by focusing more on Fellow well-being, program flexibility, and diversifying extracurricular activities.
- There is an opportunity to further develop and strengthen TEAK's career exploration and development curriculum.

Drawing on our community's input and centering TEAK's mission and the Fellow experience, we have developed three strategic goals that will guide our five-year plan.

1. **Expand Impact:** Strengthen and grow the TEAK community by enhancing cross-class and Fellow/alumni connections, developing a robust alumni program while increasing class size.
2. **Broaden Career Horizons:** Close the opportunity and wealth gap by strengthening TEAK's career exploration and professional development opportunities while integrating financial literacy into TEAK's 10-year program.
3. **Deepen Holistic Support:** Ensure Fellows are set up for success holistically through the development of comprehensive wellness and experiential programs scaffolded by a strong staff.

We invite you to learn more about these goals in the pages that follow and hope you will consider joining us in our continued efforts to transform lives and lift communities. We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported TEAK over the past twenty-six years and are energized by our aspirations for TEAK's future.

In partnership,

Dr. Denise Brown-Allen  
Executive Director



“TEAK is one of the best kept secrets in NYC. I'd love to see more schools know about the work TEAK is doing.”

- TEAK Parent

# ABOUT TEAK

## OUR MISSION

The TEAK Fellowship believes that motivation and potential, not economic circumstances, should determine a student's future. TEAK unlocks access to outstanding education and transformative experiences for exceptional NYC students, who use these opportunities to change their lives and the world around them.

## OUR VISION

TEAK envisions a world in which barriers to education and professional resources no longer exist, where all students thrive in resource-rich learning environments and achieve success beyond the classroom.

## OUR CORE VALUES

### SCHOLARSHIP

TEAK Fellows develop the literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to thrive in top independent day and boarding schools. They learn about themselves, what they love, and what they can achieve.

### LEADERSHIP

TEAK Fellows are leaders in the classroom and, through TEAK's leadership programming, are taught the skills and perspective to thoughtfully and purposely effect positive change in their communities.

### CITIZENSHIP

TEAK Fellows complete volunteer hours dedicated to improving and giving back to their school and local communities, and devote an entire summer to a full-time volunteer experience.

### FELLOWSHIP

TEAK distinguishes itself from its peer organizations through its dedication to relationship building and investment in growing each student as an individual.

## OUR IMPACT

Since 1998, The TEAK Fellowship has empowered exceptional students to reach their full potential regardless of their financial situation. By transforming the life of a single student, TEAK impacts the world at large.

**363**

TEAK Fellows  
Currently Enrolled

**332**

TEAK  
Alumni

**815**

Students Served  
Since 1998

**100%**

TEAK Fellows have  
matriculated to  
four-year colleges &  
universities

**92%**

TEAK Fellows' high  
school and college  
costs are covered  
through awards and aid

**30%**

TEAK Fellows  
matriculate to schools  
in the Ivy League on  
average each year



TEAK  
FELLOWSHIP  
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



**“TEAK is not TEAK without its academic rigor and demand, which prepares Fellows for elite schools.”**

**- Current TEAK Fellow**



## STRATEGIC GOALS

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1

### EXPAND IMPACT

Strengthen and grow the TEAK community by enhancing cross-class and Fellow/alumni connections, developing a robust alumni program and increasing class size.

2

### BROADEN CAREER HORIZONS

Close the opportunity and wealth gap by strengthening TEAK's career exploration and professional development opportunities while integrating financial literacy into TEAK's 10-year program.

3

### DEEPEN HOLISTIC SUPPORT

Ensure Fellows are set up for success holistically through the development of comprehensive wellness and experiential programs scaffolded by a strong staff.

**“TEAK’s biggest strength is its community. As long as Fellows stay connected, they will have a support system to lean on.”**

**- Current TEAK Fellow**

# 1

## EXPAND IMPACT

**KEY QUESTION:** TEAK’s high-touch approach and holistic model have yielded great success since 1998. How can we expand our reach to impact more middle and high school students, foster greater connection among currently enrolled Fellows, and nurture our growing alumni community?

**ASPIRATION:** Strengthen and grow the TEAK community by enhancing cross-class and Fellow/Alumni connections, developing a robust alumni program and increasing class size.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- Continue to execute TEAK’s growth plan to double the number of students served by 2028
- Expand TEAK’s recruitment to manage for attrition and meet high school placement goals
- Formalize and expand an alumni program, leveraging a strong networking application
- Increase Board membership and strategic partnerships to support growing Fellowship

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Increased number of NYC students and families served by TEAK programming
- Increased number of middle schools and neighborhoods represented within each new TEAK class
- Increased number of alumni participating in TEAK events and enrolled in networking application
- Improved reported alumni, parent, and Fellow satisfaction with the program
- Increased number of cross-class interactions across all TEAK divisions

### RESOURCES NEEDED

- Staff: Additional Deans, Middle School Teachers, High School Placement Staff, Alumni Program Administrator
- Space: Additional offsite classroom space, space for Alumni activities, increased office space for in-house programming



# 2

## BROADEN CAREER HORIZONS

**KEY QUESTION:** Is TEAK preparing its Fellows to enter a changing workforce and competitive career landscape? How can we provide greater exposure to career paths and possibilities and equip Fellows with the hard and soft skills needed to succeed in adulthood?

**ASPIRATION:** Close the opportunity and wealth gap by strengthening TEAK’s career exploration and professional development programs while integrating a financial literacy program into TEAK’s 10-year program.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- Expand programming exposing Fellows to different career paths
- Expand internship opportunities for Fellows in diverse industries
- Develop database of career resources within the TEAK network
- Develop middle school through college financial literacy program

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Increased percentages of college Fellows pursuing graduate school and/or securing full-time employment within 6 months of graduation
- Fellows indicate greater earning potential compared to their families’ income potential upon entrance
- Fellows in each division participate in financial literacy programming
- Fellows in each division participate in career exploration and professional development programming
- Fellows report a stronger understanding of financial literacy concepts through participation in programming

### RESOURCES NEEDED

- Staff: FTE for Career Services, Financial Literacy staffing, additional intern to organize and update career resources, consultant to help develop career resource database
- Build out an online database for internship and job opportunities and career resources.

“TEAK alums are working as doctors, lawyers, coders, in finance, etc. They are pursuing careers that would only have been a dream to them without TEAK and the staff and volunteers who have opened the doors for them to a brighter future.”

- TEAK Staff Member

# 3

## DEEPEN HOLISTIC SUPPORT

**KEY QUESTION:** TEAK believes in nurturing the development of the whole student/person. How can we strengthen and formalize our efforts to support Fellows' emotional, social, and mental well-being and development?

**ASPIRATION:** Ensure Fellows are set up for success holistically through the development of comprehensive wellness and experiential programs scaffolded by a strong staff.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- Formalize mental health resources and support for student well-being
- Attract and retain a talented staff and faculty; provide professional development opportunities for TEAK staff
- Ensure students have access to experiential programs beyond academics, such as performing arts, visual arts, athletics, and STEM

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Clearly defined process to provide students with access to mental health resources
- Availability of diverse therapeutic counseling resources
- Clearly defined professional growth path for Deans
- Increased number of Fellows participating in experiential programs
- Fellows report satisfaction with wellness and experiential programming
- Reduction in staff turnover and greater self-reported staff satisfaction

### RESOURCES NEEDED

- Space for Director of Counseling to meet with students utilizing counseling services and space for expanded programming
- Expanded budget for staff professional development
- Expanded budget for experiential programs for Fellows, such as CATS, swimming, and STEM

**“TEAK’s strength is its holistic support and mentoring, not just in academics, but also in culture, extracurriculars, career, and professional development.”**

**- TEAK Alumnus**



# METHODOLOGY

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Dr. Denise Brown-Allen, Lauren Girshon, John Green, Robert Kalsow-Ramos, Kim Koopersmith, Matthew Stopnik

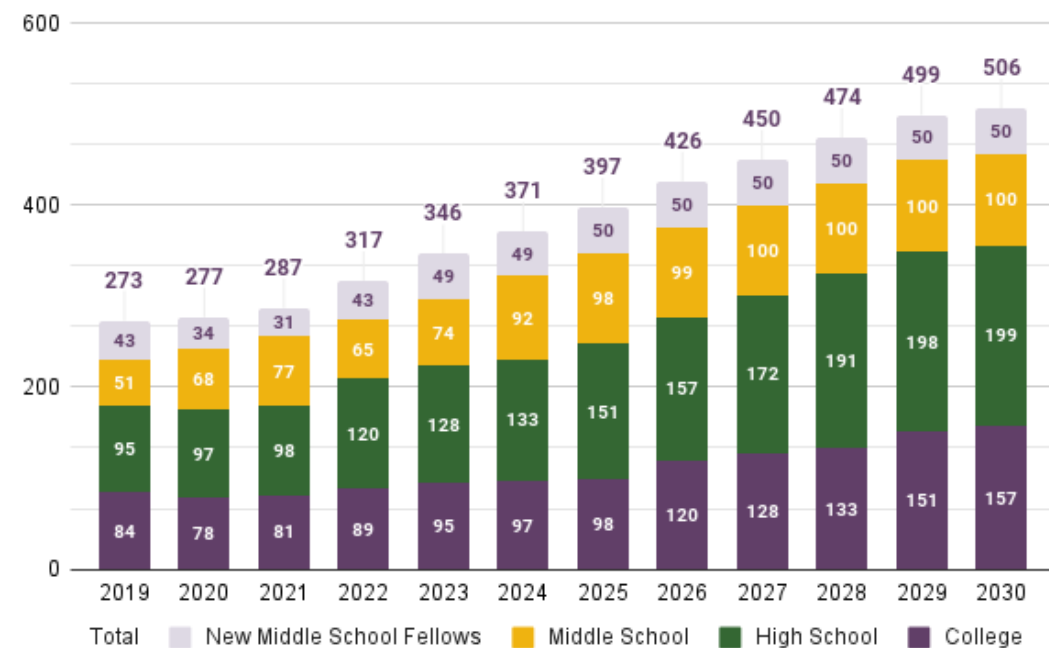
Beginning in February of 2023, in partnership with Bain & Company, TEAK's Board of Directors formed a Strategic Planning Committee and defined the methodology for development of a strategic plan. Bain conducted research to understand TEAK's strengths and opportunities and worked with TEAK staff to gather feedback from stakeholders through interviews and constituent surveys.

Upon review of Bain's analysis, TEAK's Board Strategic Planning Committee worked with Bain to identify three strategic priorities and formed working groups to refine each strategic initiative. In partnership with Apollo Global Management, TEAK staff developed a financial model for implementation of the strategic priorities.

TEAK engaged FTI Consulting to conduct a feasibility study to determine the viability of expansion given the changing demographics within boroughs served by the TEAK Fellowship. FTI developed an academic and economic model to identify potential NYC neighborhoods to benefit from the TEAK program. FTI surveyed TEAK families and alumni to understand considerations for choosing or leaving NYC neighborhoods. FTI also interviewed a selection of nonprofit organization leaders and school partners to understand trends pertaining to demographic shifts in the neighborhoods they serve. FTI recommended ten neighborhoods for further review and presented findings to TEAK staff and Board Strategic Planning Committee.

Following review of FTI's study, the TEAK Board of Directors approved the Strategic Plan.

# PROJECTED ENROLLMENT



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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\*In Memoriam





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CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



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