

## Forward Together

### Spring 2026 Strategic Planning Report

For May 2026, the Strategic Planning Committee reports on progress in the following focus areas.

- Ministry Advancement and Partnerships
  - Serve leaders in our constituency and community
  - Offer an increased number and variety of discipleship resources
  - Provide a “partner hub” for other ministries
- Building Capacity and Sustainability
  - Review and respond to long-term facilities needs
  - Maintain and enhance institutional financial health
  - Develop personnel for increased capacity and fruitfulness
- Student Development and Academic Quality
  - Expand mentoring opportunities for students
  - Support student retention, completion and transition into vocations
  - Increase excellence in learning and teaching

### Serve leaders in our constituency and community

#### *Build individual relationships with “influencers”*

The Department of Public Relations is focused on initiating and cultivating relationships with church and ministry leaders, and new relationships are continually being formed. For example, during the recent college orchestra tour, a new relationship was established with a small denomination in Pennsylvania and future engagement opportunities subsequently scheduled. In addition, ongoing interactions across our constituency continue building partnerships which support student recruitment, expand prospective donor networks, and create opportunities for ministry or professional placement for graduates, with the most recent example being the Job Fair hosted on our campus, with participation by leaders from multiple denominations and para-church organizations.

#### *Offer leadership development and support opportunities, both curricular and extracurricular*

In January 2026, GBSC launched [Hilltop Conversations](#), a biweekly podcast “featuring conversations on leadership, education, and questions students and Christian leaders face today.” Hosted by President Loper, the podcast includes conversations with professional

and ministry leaders. Episodes explore a range of topics; recent examples include higher education, parenting, and self-care in ministry.

*Hilltop Conversations* is available on major streaming platforms, including YouTube, Spotify, Apple, and Amazon, with edited transcripts published on the GBSC [alumni website](#). At the time of this report, nine episodes have been released. YouTube viewership exceeds 10,000 across short- and long-form content, with 96 current subscribers.

The launch of the new Master of Arts in Leadership is one example of curricular expansion supporting this initiative (see discussion below).

### *Offer additional graduate-level programs*

The addition of the Master of Arts in Leadership marks an important step in expanding graduate-level offerings. The program is designed around a set of core leadership courses and includes six possible concentration options, allowing students to align their studies with specific vocational goals and professional contexts.

Following approval from all required accrediting bodies, the program was introduced as a soft launch in Spring 2026. To date, 13 students have been admitted and five are currently enrolled in the inaugural course. Two additional courses will be offered in Summer 2026, with plans to move toward a full course rotation in the fall as enrollment grows.

Work on an additional master's program is ongoing; efforts are focused on building the faculty capacity necessary for program leadership and developing curriculum and course syllabi.

## **Offer an increased number and variety of discipleship resources**

### *Enhance chapel livestreams*

Intro and outro [slides](#) are now consistently incorporated into livestreams, highlighting institutional resources and initiatives while providing a more seamless viewing experience for online participants. As of Fall 2025, chapel camera systems were also upgraded to 4K to enhance overall broadcast quality and viewing experience.

### *Launch preaching archive channel*

In a previous update, GBSC reported the planned launch of a continuous sermon livestream alongside the new alumni website in early 2026. Technical issues encountered during implementation have delayed the project; however, resolution efforts are underway, with launch anticipated within the next few months.

### *Launch music channel*

A continuous music livestream was launched in early 2026 via the [GBSC Music](#) YouTube channel, providing an additional avenue for alumni and friends to access and engage with GBSC's musical legacy.

## **Provide a “partner hub” for other ministries**

### *Partner with churches to support their education programs*

Two current projects are underway in this area.

1. Academic personnel collaborated with a church to develop a Certificate of Completion in conjunction with the church's 2-year internship program. The Certificate is designed with a core as well as specializations. In Spring 2026, two students are enrolled in courses as part of this partnership.
2. Academic staff are working to develop a BA degree pathway that will only be available in partnership with churches that offer an extended ministry residency program. These programs all involve considerably more time than any of GBSC's traditional internships. Students will participate in multiple church ministries, and in some cases with multiple churches, gaining significant ministry experience in addition to their coursework. A proposal will be submitted to the Ohio Department of Higher Education in the near future as part of this project.

A survey of pastors of current students and alumni is currently in development and includes an item soliciting feedback on how GBSC can better support the ministries of their churches.

### *Partner with additional Christian schools for dual credit and leadership development*

This year a dual-credit partner school added in-person instruction in two courses, as well as significant in-person supplemental instruction in a range of additional courses. This partner also has a staff member currently enrolled in a GBSC degree program for leadership development.

Throughout 2025-2026, representatives from GBSC's Enrollment department engaged directly with 31 Christian secondary schools and two partner colleges through in-person visits to their campuses. More than half of these connections were with new potential partner schools or existing partner schools that had not been visited in the past two to three years. These efforts emphasize intentional relationship-building and strategic outreach, supporting both ongoing development of dual credit opportunities and strengthening partnerships with Christian secondary schools and like-minded institutions.

## **Review and respond to long-term facilities needs**

### *Continue to seek increased space for ACA growth*

The planned foyer construction project (see "New Construction") has been redesigned to include an additional second-floor classroom space. This adjustment reflects GBSC's ongoing attention to the growing need for both college and academy instructional space. Incorporating additional classroom capacity into the project provides greater flexibility in space allocation and will more effectively accommodate the needs of both groups.

### *Explore opportunities for new construction*

The 125 Capital Campaign was publicly launched in Fall 2025 to address long-term campus space and accessibility needs. The project is currently awaiting final city approvals for Phase 1, a foyer addition to the Adcock Chapel, with construction poised to begin once all permits are in place. The planned addition will provide approximately 5,000 square feet of expanded space, including classrooms, restrooms, and gathering areas to support campus needs and growth. A groundbreaking service is planned during GBSC's Commissioning Weekend activities.

### *Increase accessibility of campus facilities and online courses*

A faculty development session dedicated to accessibility in online classes was held in January 2026. The session provided a framework for thinking about accessibility in online learning environments, reviewed available GBSC student feedback data on the topic, and offered practical strategies faculty can implement to improve accessibility in their courses. In addition, GBSC's course designer demonstrated a tool developed to assist faculty in identifying broken content links within online courses to support course quality and accessibility.

## Maintain and enhance institutional financial health

### *Address employee salary alignment with the economy*

Work to address employee salary alignment with broader economic conditions remains active. The administration continues to engage the Board Finance Committee, the President, and department vice presidents in considering practical strategies to advance this initiative. Amid challenges and uncertainty in the current economic climate, modest wage increases are being implemented in select areas to ensure a sustainable approach. The initiative continues to receive broad support, and planning remains ongoing, with the aim of implementing more comprehensive, institution-wide adjustments within the next several fiscal years.

## Develop personnel for increased capacity and fruitfulness

### *Develop and implement a new leadership structure in ACA*

Throughout 2025-2026, we have discussed and experimented with new leadership structures for Aldersgate Christian Academy.

1. Staff committees have functioned this year in several areas. An Admissions Committee has developed and implemented revised admissions criteria and processes, including review of continued enrollment for all students. PTO is also driven by a staff committee.
2. ACA athletics provides opportunities for significant character development, in addition to increased health/fitness for participants. Responsibilities for athletic leadership have been clarified this year, with additional changes planned for next year.
3. Discussions continue for additional changes for next year. For example, the principal plans to create a mechanism to cycle through all classrooms, to increase direct interaction with students in smaller settings. As these changes are implemented, additional opportunities may emerge.

## Expand mentoring opportunities for students

### *Continue the Ministerial Education honors mentorship program*

In its first pilot year, three students took part in the Honors Mentorship Program; two graduated and the third continued in his senior year. Including this senior, a full complement of five students participated in the program this year; of these, two graduate this spring. One student commented about the program, “The intentional connection that

was created when we entered into the program blossomed to become a regular connection that continues to this day!”

We plan to continue to offer this program in the future.

### *Launch a structured mentoring program for campus and online undergraduate students*

Progress on launching a structured mentoring program for campus and online undergraduate students has been delayed due to time constraints impacting planning and implementation. However, ongoing feedback and institutional data, including a student-led research project in Spring 2026, continue to indicate student interest in expanded mentoring opportunities. Work will continue as capacity allows, with the goal of developing a more structured mentoring model at scale.

Mentoring continues to be emphasized through more targeted efforts. For example, during the Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 semesters, GBSC’s Media Department hosted a student intern, providing an individualized experience aimed at developing professional skills. Two initial internships have included focused work in photography and development of written content.

## **Support student retention, completion and transition into vocations**

### *Enhance student advising/registration processes*

While discussions and plans have taken place in this area, some advancements are tied to funding, and we currently await information about our funding requests to third parties. In the meantime, we have added advisors, including for online students.

Student Satisfaction Inventory data for advising- and registration-related items shows slight improvement in the 2024-2025 data. Four out of five items have increased student satisfaction, and no item qualifies as a “challenge” for GBSC. One item, “My academic advisor is available when I need help,” qualifies as an institutional strength.

### *Launch a job/career fair, both for local jobs for students and post-graduation opportunities*

A Job Fair was hosted in February 2026, bringing together 17 exhibitors, including local businesses, local ministries, out-of-state businesses, missions organizations, and church denominations/associations. Over 80 students participated in visiting every booth throughout the event. Student feedback was positive, and participating vendors

completed a post-event survey, with responses indicating a highly positive experience along with several constructive suggestions for future events.

### *Improve student success in mathematics and natural sciences*

We continue to work to increase in-person offerings in math and natural sciences, in addition to online courses. In cooperation with ACA, we will have an in-person math course in Fall 2026 for the first time in several semesters; the instructor will have a mentor who is a veteran math/math-education teacher. Additionally, we have sought grant funding to develop a supplemental-instruction system, but have not yet received support for this.

In the sciences an instructor introduced a new module, with a lab scenario and group experiment, to improve student understanding of the scientific method. We do not yet have separate assessment data to identify possible results of this module.

## **Increase excellence in learning and teaching**

### *Increase faculty-student connection and engagement in online classes*

Throughout the year, this has remained an emphasis for online faculty. We continue to see strong engagement by online teachers in ADEP faculty meetings. ADEP faculty also make use of email alert systems to ask for support for students who exhibit signs of academic struggle. Throughout the year, Academic Committee has reviewed information on faculty responsiveness and engagement, using data from the Buzz learning management system. This allows for identification of faculty who may be struggling to manage workloads to maintain high engagement.