

<BOLD IDEA>

BOLD IDEA

2023 - 2028

# STRATEGIC PLAN



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SEPTEMBER 2023

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## **VISION**

Our vision is a world where every student has an unobstructed path to access computer science education and pursue fulfilling careers in technology.

## **MISSION**

Our mission is to create access to computer science in under-resourced communities and prepare students for the technology careers of the future through project-based learning and mentoring from industry professionals.

## **PROGRAM GOAL**

Students will embark on an immersive learning experience with Bold Idea that equips them with the knowledge, skills and practical exposure needed to excel in the field of computer science and coding.

Bold Idea seeks to offer students a multi-year pathway to build critically-needed computer science skills through project-based learning and mentoring from industry professionals. As a result of their long-term participation in our Coding Clubs program, students will have the computer science and 21st century skills that prepare them for challenging STEM subjects in college and qualify them for the digital careers of the future.

The planned trajectory is from 3rd grade through high school to a technology career or job. By focusing on elementary school first, we can set the foundation for middle school and high school. Engagement levels and interests look different at each school level. Once the elementary school model is solidified, we can scale elements of it to focus on the middle and high school levels after adjusting curriculum, respectively. We will evaluate the final outputs and outcomes after each level is solidified through data.

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# IDEA\* STRATEGY

Bold Idea closes the opportunity gap in computer science for low-income students and boosts diversity in the tech industry. We prioritize students in under-resourced communities in Dallas and create opportunities for learning computer science where opportunities do not exist due to historical and institutional barriers. Through diverse mentorship Bold Idea creates an inclusive learning environment for girls and Black and Latinx students.

Bold Idea's team works together to create an equitable learning environment that invites different viewpoints and respects the unique qualities of each person. We believe that all students deserve the opportunity to learn computer science and create technology, regardless of their race, gender, or family income level. This belief is vital to our organization's mission and remains our focus. Equity in north Texas computer science education will lead to more diverse technology college graduates who are qualified for higher-paying jobs, creating a more diverse tech industry workforce.

To continue our pursuit of equity in computer science education, we are adding new school partnerships to increasing computer science access and participation for Black and Latinx students.



*\*Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access*

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# GOALS

1

**Create opportunities for students in under-served communities.** We will grow sustainable student participation across north Texas and particularly in under-served and under-represented communities. The more students we can serve, the greater our potential to influence and impact Dallas' future for the better. That equates to more empowered creators, innovators and changemakers in a rapidly evolving digital world.

2

**Deliver high-quality after-school programs.** Recognizing the importance of high-quality programs and strong partnerships, we will assess, improve, and implement programs core to the mission of Bold Idea. We will develop progressive programming for students to participate from 3rd to 8th grades and update curriculum to establish a focused direction.

3

**Invest in students through philanthropic partnerships.** This goal aligns our philanthropic work strategically to the priorities of reaching and serving more students in under-resourced communities and delivering high-quality programs and to increase individual, corporate, and foundation philanthropy to propel strategic initiatives.

4

**Build a scalable organization.** With enhanced and flexible operations, Bold Idea can scale appropriately. Bold Idea will build the structural foundation for growth and also scale its mindset. The Board serves as a conduit for Bold Idea's messaging, vision and fundraising efforts. Exceptional board members and leadership are the key to the success of Bold Idea.

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# GOAL 1: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS IN UNDER-SERVED COMMUNITIES



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1 Use data and school feeder patterns to determine highest-need neighborhoods to target for program growth
- 2 Strengthen existing and create new community-based partnerships to deliver programs undergirded by the larger vision
- 3 Ensure a sustainable volunteer structure that increases the capability of volunteer, teacher and student retention



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1.1 Use data and school feeder patterns to determine highest-need neighborhoods to target for program growth

**Tactics:**

- Prioritize Title 1 schools with high number of students qualifying for free or reduced fee lunch
- Identify neighborhoods that have historically marginalized schools
- Prioritize schools with high numbers of Black students to address the limited number of Black students who participate and show an interest in CS (A goal of the Dallas ISD CS Dept.)
- Identify neighborhoods and zip codes in Dallas County, as defined by data from [the ALICE report](#), that have 50%+ households that live below the poverty line or are very close (i.e. struggle to make ends meet)
  - Examples include 75210 (South Dallas), 75216 (south Oak Cliff), 75231 (Vickery Meadow), 75061 (Irving), and 75051 (Grand Prairie/south of 30)
  - Create a Dallas County map with zip codes that is shaded with the above data

1.2 Strengthen existing and create new community-based partnerships to deliver programs undergirded by the larger vision

**Tactics:**

- Strengthen outreach to, and partnership, with well-regarded non-profits, grassroots organizations and community stakeholders that provide out-of-school support and wrap-around services to households in identified neighborhoods
- Add elementary school partners and students in 3rd-5th grades by June 2025
- Add middle school partners and students in 6th-8th grades by June 2028
- Increase awareness of and interest in computer science among students, parents and teachers by visiting classrooms, hosting career days and one-day camps, and aligning with school PTAs, SBDM committees, etc.
- Explore delivering summer Coding Camps only alongside a community partner and if it requires a low-lift and reliable revenue for Bold Idea
- Establish partnerships with Dallas College campuses and universities that serve a common population as Bold Idea; prioritize partners who can provide resources such as classrooms, volunteers, expertise, and more

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### 1.3 Ensure a sustainable volunteer structure that increases the capability of volunteer, teacher and student retention

#### Tactics:

- Build a volunteer workforce that reflects community demographics by partnering with employee resource groups (ERGs) from corporate partners and aligning our work with minority-focused professional organizations
- Strengthen existing corporate partnerships and expand relationships with new partners who can provide reliable and skilled volunteer teams
  - Partner agreement with measurable, agreed-upon goals
  - Meet with current corporate partners for input on strengthening relationship and designing mutually beneficial goals
- Empower and invest in teacher liaisons in order increase their year-over-year retention; explore providing professional development opportunities



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## GOAL 2: DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAMS



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1 Polish curriculum and program resources for students in 3rd to 5th grades (by June 2025)
- 2 Build curriculum and program resources for students in 6th to 8th grades (by June 2028)
- 3 Improve the volunteer mentor experience and effectiveness
- 4 Improve the overall teacher experience and increase their role in the program
- 5 Standardize program logistics
- 6 Improve virtual, in-person and hybrid delivery



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# SUPPORTING DATA

**Q: Why do we start our program in elementary school for students in 3rd to 5th grades?**

1. The elementary years are critical for forming **positive attitudes toward computer science and STEM subjects**. Elementary school students exposed to even short, weekly doses of computer science have demonstrated a higher interest in computer science. ([Source](#))
  - a. Students who express early interest and confidence in STEM subjects are more likely to pursue STEM careers. When STEM interest is not established early, there is a marked decline in positive attitudes toward STEM as students move through middle and high school. ([Source](#))
2. Learning computer science at a young age fosters **self-belief or self-efficacy** that's critical when first learning these concepts. ([Source](#))
3. Studies show that participation in computer science instruction **boosts math achievement scores**. Perhaps this is because math and computer science have many skills in common. Both subject areas involve abstract reasoning, critical thought, and logic. ([Source](#)), ([Source](#)). Studies show that passing 5th grade math tests puts students on the trajectory for college readiness. ([Source](#))

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## 2.1 Polish curriculum and program resources for students in 3rd to 5th grades (by June 2025)

### **Tactics:**

- Create pre-defined curriculum and instructor guides for creative projects
- Add programming specifically highlighting careers and applications of Computer Science delivered by program mentors
- Create curriculum guides that align with learning objectives for mentors/facilitators and self-led for students
- Expand web development curriculum beyond the existing introductory course

## 2.2 Build curriculum and program resources for students in 6th to 8th grades (by June 2028)

### **Tactics:**

- Build a program committee, composed of educators and technologists, who will inform the logic model, program delivery, and curriculum development
- Expand and define more advanced courses to challenge and engage returning students, (like biosciences/data analysis, machine learning, and cybersecurity curriculum)
- Host career days showcasing college and vocational careers and applications of Computer Science
- Provide mentoring and resources for 8th graders considering CTE and P-TECH options in high school

## 2.3 Improve the volunteer mentor experience and effectiveness

### **Tactics:**

- Codify a self-paced volunteer training process and roadmap
- Require that volunteer mentors and team captains participate in at least one Professional Learning Community (PLC) session per semester
- Set clear expectations with mentors up front
- Show appreciation to volunteers
- Train volunteers on habits of mind and cultural competence

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## 2.4 Improve the overall teacher experience and increase their role in the program

### **Tactics:**

- Secure 2 teacher liaisons at school sites and provide a 2-hour training session annually
- Provide a marketing toolkit and materials (instruction guide, access to online training, etc.) at the start of the 14-week semester
- Provide support for teachers to have snacks to engage kids
- Create consistency across programming and have a more robust instructors guides

## 2.5 Standardize program logistics

### **Tactics:**

- Create plans focusing on overall room preparation including size, seating, snacks
- Link brain breaks to objectives
- Have tailored programming for each level
- Facilitate career preparation for older students
- Expand mentor ratio based to 3:1 or even 4:1
- Streamline registration forms and process
- Align program with DISD calendar, including assessment dates

## 2.6 Improve virtual, in-person and hybrid delivery

### **Tactics:**

- Implement a hybrid approach with mentors both in person and online
- Host kick-off and wrap-up celebrations in person for Coding Clubs
- Set virtual learning expectations with students and volunteers
- Consider Bold Idea alumni to serve as site leads as a way of continuing to support Bold Idea's objectives while providing a better student experience

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## GOAL 3: INVEST IN STUDENTS THROUGH PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERSHIPS



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1 Set the foundation for fundraising success
- 2 Develop an organization-wide culture of philanthropy and increase fund development skills
- 3 Increase individual giving and its proportion of overall giving to Bold Idea
- 4 Increase corporate giving and business leader engagement
- 5 Increase foundation giving and Bold Idea's visibility in the philanthropic community
- 6 Evaluate opportunities for earned revenue



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### 3.1 Set the foundation for fundraising success

#### **Tactics:**

- Create annual development plans based on donor data, history and potential funding for the year
- Monitor, measure and analyze relevant KPIs, including donor retention rate and average individual donor gift; create dashboards displaying real-time data to track progress
- Build a financial reserve of six months of operating capital to see Bold Idea through difficult times
- Streamline processes to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of gift processing and acknowledgement

### 3.2 Develop an organization-wide culture of philanthropy and increase fund development skills

#### **Tactics:**

- Train the Board on developing a culture of philanthropy and growth mindset regarding fundraising, encouraging them to participate in fundraising beyond their personal gifts
- Consider increasing board-required give/get contribution and create a process of accountability for board members to reach their give/get goals
- Could include direct communication among peers, a quarterly report card and board member acknowledgements of giving
- Engage and leverage board members and create a plan for them to be invested stakeholders and fundraisers who are ultimately responsible for the philanthropic growth of Bold Idea
- Create a formal plan for the development committee, created by and led by the development committee chair reporting to the CEO, that includes goals with strategies and tasks assigned to committee members
- As a Board, officially adopt the Donor Bill of Rights as a commitment to a culture of philanthropy and assurance of being good stewards of donors and their investment in the mission.
- Provide the development staff with professional development in the key areas of fundraising for Bold Idea including corporate fundraising, foundation grants and annual giving
- Re-evaluate the structure and purpose of the Hexagon Club; develop and train group to serve as a giving circle

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### 3.3 Increase individual giving and its proportion of overall giving to Bold Idea

#### **Tactics:**

- Focus on stewardship and retention strategies, investing time to deepen relationships with current funders
- Create a pipeline of new funders and cultivate relationships through targeted outreach, network-building goals for board members, and site visits to introduce new people to the organization
- Double our monthly donors by Oct. 2024 by way of one direct mail campaign, three digital campaigns and adding the 'give monthly' button to all communications
- Brand the major donor giving program (\$1,000+ annual giving) and create cultivation strategies
- Engage volunteers to become donors through direct appeals as well as opportunities to participate in fundraising efforts, like North Texas Giving Day, fundraising events or other special campaigns
- Explore ways to make giving simple and easy, like text-to-give donating and peer-to-peer campaigns
- Re-brand the Annual Celebration as a fundraiser (removing the volunteer appreciation aspects) and increase event revenue with at least 4x the amount of expenses, including staff time

### 3.4 Increase corporate giving and business leader engagement

#### **Tactics:**

- Create a formal corporate giving strategy, so that we might be in constant communication with corporations, create direct connections to C-suite staff, receive funding from multiple areas within a corporations, and ensure alignment with their giving pillars
- Seek to retain and upgrade existing corporate partners and engage new corporate partners through relationship building and exposure to Bold Idea programs
- Explore corporate giving recognitions and acknowledgements through marketing opportunities
- Create and pitch personalized corporate sponsorships with associated opportunities for volunteerism/pro-bono help/in-kind donations
- Create giving levels and associated benefits, including program-related activations; outline and fulfill clearly

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### 3.5 Increase foundation giving and Bold Idea's visibility in the philanthropic community

#### **Tactics:**

- Steward and upgrade requests from existing foundation donors to continue to build a deeper relationship and keep their support
- Cultivate major foundations that are not currently supporting Bold Idea by establishing a donor cultivation plan and submit grant requests, focused on those whose funding priorities best match the mission goals of Bold Idea
- Plan to include donor identification, research and qualification, cultivation meeting to form relationship, grant proposal and relationship stewardship
- Write a case for support that includes the need, program description and outcomes for each program to streamline grant writing
- Create a detailed grants pipeline with total ask value of at least 3x the fundraising goal for grants; track continually

### 3.6 Evaluate opportunities for earned revenue

#### **Tactics:**

- Determine the future viability of the fee-based Coding Clubs program and summer Coding Camps, based on staffing needs, effort required, and cost model
- Explore vendor opportunities with Dallas ISD and other school districts to deliver our after-school program. Funders are interested in seeing some level of investment from Dallas ISD in programs serving its schools.
- Create a marketing strategy and campaign to improve Bold Idea brand awareness for its programs among families, schools and school districts in north Texas
- Idea: Partner with a coffee roasting company to create a co-branded, bold-blend coffee with a portion of proceeds to support Bold Idea

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# GOAL 4: BUILD A SCALABLE ORGANIZATION



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1 Use and invest in technology that is reliable and sustainable over many years
- 2 Increase capabilities by expanding staff and prioritizing professional development and accountability
- 3 Increase visibility and relatability of Bold Idea brand in both the north Texas business community and under-served communities
- 4 Enhance the Board to meet the growth needs of Bold Idea and establish governance



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#### 4.1 Use and invest in technology that is reliable and sustainable over many years

##### **Tactics:**

- Perform an annual cybersecurity audit, to identify risks, ensure data privacy, and comply with school policies. Report will be generated (or outsourced) by the technology committee and shared with the board of directors.
- Biennially, perform a current state assessment of technology stack, documenting things like outdated technology, critical path, customer support, availability, scalability and resilience. Include a custom vs. off-the-shelf assessment to see if there are in-market software products that could meet the organization's needs
- Create and maintain a 5-year technology roadmap and budget that mirrors the organization's growth goals, ensuring that technology evolves with the needs of the organization. Include findings from biennial current state assessment and annual cybersecurity audit.
- Create a stakeholder map to identify all users of Bold Idea's platforms and whether their needs are being met (students, parents, schools, volunteers, corporate partners, employees). Expand this to include journey maps for each stakeholder, which are maintained as the technology roadmap evolves.

#### 4.2 Increase capabilities by expanding staff and prioritizing professional development and accountability

##### **Tactics:**

- Fill needed staff positions, including:
  - FY24: Development Director to focus on new strategies and developing major donor relationships
  - FY25: Curriculum Manager to create new computer science educational materials
  - FY26: Marketing Manager to strengthen promotion and increase marketing skills
  - FY27: Corporate Relations Director to oversee relationship with corporate partners
- Implement performance management tools for all staff in order to track performance to goals; review throughout the year and give feedback from both supervisor and staff
- Review job descriptions yearly to ensure alignment with shared priorities and organizational needs.
- Prioritize professional development and normalize career goal setting and mentorship to ensure that all staff members grow within the organization
- Continue to build upon strong organizational culture through celebration, team building, and individual recognition

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4.3 Increase visibility and relatability of Bold Idea brand in both the north Texas business community and under-served communities

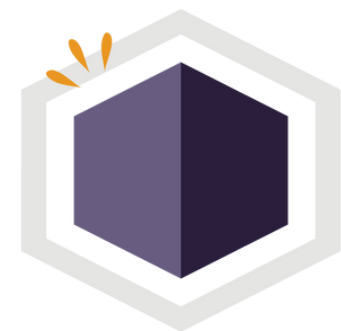
**Tactics:**

- Create a brand marketing strategy and campaign to showcase increased reach in under-served communities, program delivery, and other initiatives to excite funders and improve understanding of Bold Idea's impact and relevance using metrics and outcomes
- Partner with a web design firm to build and launch a new Bold Idea website that effectively targets multiple stakeholders
- Improve marketing skill set with new staff position, expertise on the Board, and professional development for all staff
- Improve brand narrative in social media profiles
- Empower CEO to serve as spokesperson to elevate public profile, reach new audiences on social media, and attract new prospects and sponsors
- Develop compelling marketing materials and improve external understanding of Bold Idea's impact and relevance

4.4 Enhance the Board to meet the growth needs of Bold Idea and establish governance

**Tactics:**

- Create term limits
- Formalize Roles & Responsibilities for board members & committees
- Maintain a Board matrix to identify existing and desired capacity, like professional expertise, community voice, and a blend of philanthropic and corporate
- Operate with a growth mindset
- Review progress toward strategic planning metrics on a quarterly basis
- Perform an annual board assessment using BoardSource
- Add diversity to ensure the board reflects the communities we serve
- Implement a formal recruitment process as a collaboration between the board chair and CEO, including board member job descriptions, an interview and a board agreement



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