

SquashBusters: Scaling Impact Through Community and Alignment

A Strategic Plan Through 2032



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SquashBusters: 2032 Strategy At-A-Glance

Alignment and Growth through 2032

Why This Strategy, Now

SquashBusters' strength has always been depth. Long-term, relationship-centered programming that delivers strong academic, postsecondary, and life outcomes for young people across Boston, Lawrence, and Providence. The model works because it is intensive, consistent, and grounded in trust among students, families, staff, and the squash community.

This strategy builds directly on those strengths. We are protecting what makes SquashBusters distinctive, including high-dosage programming, whole-child development, and committed staff, while strengthening consistency, sustainability, and scale. At the same time, we see a clear opportunity to harness our facilities, alumni network, and community presence to expand access to squash, deepen neighborhood connection, and position SquashBusters as a stronger community anchor. By aligning people, programs, and resources, this plan ensures SquashBusters grows with intention and extends impact without diluting quality.



Vision (North Star): SquashBusters envisions a world where every young person has the opportunities they need to fulfill their greatest potential and where squash strengthens communities and creates spaces for growth.



Mission (In Practice): Deliver high-dosage, relationship-centered programming for youth from under-resourced communities, sustain support into adulthood, and expand community access to squash across Boston, Lawrence, and Providence.

Theory of Change

When SquashBusters delivers multi-year, whole-child programming that integrates academics, squash and fitness, social-emotional learning, enrichment, and postsecondary advising, along with sustained alumni support, young people develop **character, health, career readiness, and transformative relationships**.

By expanding SquashBusters' role as a community anchor through greater **access** so more people can play and deeper **unity** so more people connect, youth thrive, achieve economic mobility and well-being, and contribute to stronger communities.

Outcomes by 2032

- Young people achieve lasting academic, social-emotional, and career success, grounded in trusted relationships and clear pathways to upward mobility.
- Staff are empowered to sustain excellence, supported by strong structures, professional growth, and efficient systems.
- SquashBusters operates at full enrollment with high-quality, consistent programming across all sites, driving stronger post-secondary and alumni outcomes.
- Communities experience greater access to squash, wraparound services, and deeper connection, with SquashBusters serving as a vibrant community anchor.
- A diversified and resilient funding model fuels long-term sustainability and growth, ensuring impact endures and expands.



Champion Our People

Goal: Cultivate a high-performing, inclusive, mission-driven team so every staff member is set up to do their best work.

How we'll get there:

- Build a strong, aligned team: Design a highly effective structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities aligned to organizational priorities
- Invest in growth: Differentiated professional development, mentorship, and leadership pathways; build internal advancement



Perfect Our Craft

Goal: Elevate and standardize program quality, youth and alumni experience, and operational excellence so every participant benefits at full enrollment.

How we'll get there:

- Expand the pipeline: Early exposure and a lower-dosage models to broaden access and strengthen recruitment
- Deepen whole-child supports: Integrate SEL and mental wellness supports
- Elevate postsecondary and career pathways: Stronger career networks and skill-building



Fuel Our Vision

Goal: Fortify SquashBusters' financial foundation with a diversified, resilient funding model that sustains today's work and invests in what's next.

How we'll get there:

- Build a multi-year revenue strategy: Balance events, individuals, corporations, foundations, and earned income to reduce volatility
- Grow reserves to \$21M and use planned reserve draws to strategically fund innovation while protecting long-term financial stability



Embrace Our Community

Goal: Expand squash access and community services that strengthen outcomes for youth and alumni while deepening neighborhood ties across all three cities.

How we'll get there:

- Launch and scale access: Membership and community programming (youth and adult clinics, open play, junior academies)
- Strengthen alumni engagement: Build systems that provide ongoing mentorship, career development, and opportunities for connection across the SquashBusters community

Our Moment of Opportunity

SquashBusters is entering its next decade with focus and ambition. This plan charts our path through 2032, outlining the landscape we face, the impact we aim to create, and the strategic priorities that will guide our work over the next seven years.

Why This Moment Matters

For nearly thirty years, SquashBusters has shown that a long-term, relationship centered model can change the trajectory of young people's lives in powerful and lasting ways. Our results have remained strong and consistent, and the strength of our program model is evident in the more than twenty Squash and Education Alliance sites it has inspired nationwide. The outcomes we see in our students and alumni continue to affirm the depth and durability of this approach. In short, SquashBusters knows what works.

As we developed this strategic plan and looked ahead to SquashBusters potential impact through 2032, one theme became clear. Our future is not about reinventing our core, but about strengthening what already works and thinking boldly about what comes next. The opening of the Lawrence SquashBusters building in 2024 gives us a powerful new asset that can deepen our impact with young people and strengthen community ties. This opportunity, and the community centered mindset behind it, reaches beyond Lawrence and will guide a clear vision for how all three of our communities grow in ways that foster connection and create meaningful opportunities to engage our neighborhoods. This plan positions SquashBusters to honor the integrity of our core program while extending our reach to support young people, families, and communities across the areas we serve.

Students today face a very different reality than they did seven years ago. Social, emotional, and mental health needs are rising. Postsecondary pathways are more complex. Families are navigating instability and limited access to after-school and summer support. At the same time, the cost of delivering high quality programming continues to rise. These pressures require SquashBusters to be both steady and adaptive, consistent in what we know works and innovative in how we respond to evolving needs.

Forces Shaping Our Work

To understand the stakes and possibilities of this moment, it is important to place SquashBusters' work within the broader social, economic, and political landscape that is reshaping the environments in which we operate.

Uneven Academic Recovery and More Complex Postsecondary Pathways: Post-pandemic academic recovery remains highly uneven, with districts serving higher shares of low-income students and students of color experiencing the greatest and most persistent setbacks in math and reading achievement (Education Recovery Scorecard, 2024). Many of these communities remain below pre-pandemic performance levels, and recovery trajectories differ widely. At the same time, declining FAFSA completion and rising college costs have made postsecondary transitions more complicated for students and families (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2024).

Uncertainty in K–12 Funding and School-Based Supports: As federal ESSER relief expires, districts face growing fiscal strain and anticipate reductions in academic, enrichment, and mental-health services (Learning Policy Institute, 2024). This financial instability creates gaps in the supports many students rely on.

Rising Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs: Adolescents continue to report elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and persistent sadness (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024). Most public schools report increased demand for mental-health support but insufficient staffing and resources to meet student needs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2024).

Family Instability and Shifting Immigration Pressures: Low-income families continue to experience rising housing cost burdens and economic instability (Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2024). Policy shifts have also introduced greater uncertainty for immigrant and mixed-status families, affecting household security and mobility (Pew Research Center, 2024).

Rising Costs and Workforce Pressures: Nonprofits face increasing operating costs and persistent workforce shortages, driven by rising wages and heightened competition for qualified staff (National Council of Nonprofits, 2024; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). These pressures strain organizational capacity across the sector.

A More Competitive Funding Landscape: Giving by individuals has continued to decline when adjusted for inflation, while foundation giving now represents a growing share of total philanthropic dollars (Giving USA, 2024). At the same time, funders are adopting longer time horizons, emphasizing systems-level impact, and expecting nonprofits to demonstrate clear evidence of outcomes, strategic alignment, and long-term sustainability in their funding proposals (Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, 2025).

Taken together, these trends create both challenges and opportunities for SquashBusters. They underscore the need for programs that provide stability, relationships, and strong outcomes in uncertain times. The next section, *A Proven Record of Impact*, shows how SquashBusters has delivered exactly that for nearly thirty years and is well positioned to continue doing so in the decade ahead.

A Proven Record of Impact

Over the past three decades, SquashBusters has delivered consistent impact that reflects what leading research confirms: young people thrive when they experience stable, caring relationships and have access to high-quality after-school programming. Developmental science shows that strong, supportive relationships build resilience and promote academic persistence (Search Institute, 2018; Harvard Center on the Developing Child, 2023). National studies also find that participation in structured after-school programs improves attendance, grades, and readiness for postsecondary pathways (Afterschool Alliance, 2024). In addition, sports-based youth development strengthens social-emotional skills, mental health, leadership, and school engagement, particularly for youth from under-resourced communities (Aspen Institute, 2024). Together, this research highlights the power of the core elements that define the SquashBusters model and reinforces the durability of our results over time.

As seen in the [SquashBusters 2023-24 Impact Report](#), SquashBusters model of sustained support, high expectations, and deep relationships has produced near-perfect high school graduation rates. In 2024, all 35 seniors graduated on time with meaningful postsecondary plans. Students matriculated to colleges such as Northeastern University, Dartmouth College, and UMass Boston, and 78% are on track to complete college without student loan debt. SquashBusters also invested more than \$115,000 in scholarships to support postsecondary persistence.

Beyond academics, SquashBusters students build strong character, leadership skills, and a sense of community belonging. In 2024, they contributed 300 hours of service through 28 community projects, competed in more than 40 squash matches, along with 1,400 hours of squash and fitness training. Summer engagement remained strong, with 87 enrichment opportunities that kept students active and connected.

Career readiness is another defining strength. Students completed more than 40 hours of career and academic enrichment with professionals across multiple industries. Among SquashBusters postsecondary graduates in 2024, eight secured full-time jobs or internships at organizations such as Ernst & Young, The Broad Institute, and Wayfair, while five continued on to graduate programs.

Families, schools, and partners view SquashBusters as a trusted community anchor. Our sites provide young people with safe, supportive environments that build confidence, purpose, and long-term networks. Students leave SquashBusters with strong social-emotional skills, leadership capacity, and relationships that continue to support them into adulthood. As we look ahead to 2032, we remain committed to sustaining this strong history of results while creating space for new opportunities for impact and deeper ways of understanding our outcomes.

What Sets SquashBusters Apart

To understand SquashBusters path forward, it is essential to be clear about what sets the organization apart. SquashBusters is uniquely positioned to meet the evolving needs of young people because it offers a level of depth, duration, and community connection that few youth programs can match. These strengths form the foundation for every priority in this strategic plan.

Long-Term Commitment: SquashBusters walks alongside students for nearly a decade, from sixth grade through early adulthood. Very few programs offer this level of continuity. This long-term commitment builds trust, stability, and the sustained momentum young people need to navigate school, postsecondary pathways, and early career decisions.

A Comprehensive, Integrated Model: SquashBusters combines athletics, academics, social-emotional learning, enrichment, and postsecondary advising into one cohesive program. This blend reinforces discipline, belonging, and healthy habits while supporting the whole student. It is a rare model in a landscape where programs typically focus on only one domain.

Deep, Transformative Relationships: Students are surrounded by a network of caring adults and peers who remain present well beyond program hours. This durable social capital, built through years of shared experience, is one of SquashBusters' most powerful differentiators.

Community-Rooted Facilities: SquashBusters' sites in Boston, Lawrence, and Providence provide safe, consistent, and welcoming spaces where young people and families feel a sense of ownership and belonging. The Lawrence building in particular deepens the organization's role as a long-term community anchor and creates expanded opportunities for connection and engagement.

Support Into Adulthood: SquashBusters continues to support students through college and early career transitions, offering guidance and stability at a time when many young adults lose access to structured support.

Together, these elements make SquashBusters uniquely prepared to address both the opportunities and challenges outlined in this plan. They position the organization to move forward with both steadiness and ambition, building on a proven foundation while creating new opportunities for young people and their communities.



Our Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change describes how SquashBusters unique model translates into long-term impact for young people, alumni, and communities.

Strengthening the Model

As part of this strategic planning process, SquashBusters reviewed its Theory of Change to more clearly reflect the full scope of our work and the impact we aim to drive in the decade ahead. Several important updates strengthen both the clarity and the ambition of our model.

First, we elevated **community** as a core element of our desired impact. While our mission has always centered on young people, we are now naming the broader influence SquashBusters seeks to have, reflected in our aspiration that squash strengthens communities and creates spaces for growth. This shift recognizes that our buildings, partnerships, and programs are not only youth-serving but also community-building, and that by serving the community we ultimately better serve our youth.

To make this explicit, we added two clear pathways through which SquashBusters contributes to community vibrancy:

- **Access**, which focuses on expanding opportunities for more community members to learn and love the game of squash through strategic partnerships and networks.
- **Unity**, which emphasizes the connections between youth, families, alumni, and community members through shared squash experiences, giving core youth access to broader community relationships and networks they may not have otherwise.

Second, we formally incorporated **alumni** into the Theory of Change. Although alumni engagement has been part of SquashBusters practice for years, naming alumni as a distinct group affirms our long-term commitment to supporting young people well into adulthood. Alumni also play an essential role as mentors, volunteers, and emerging leaders in the community, widening the circle of support available to current students.

Third, we elevated **transformative relationships** as a core pillar to highlight the central role of social capital in driving long-term outcomes. Finally, we replaced college with **career** as a pillar, clarifying economic mobility as the outcome and the many ways to get there.

Together, these refinements make our Theory of Change more aligned with our strategic direction through 2032. They reflect both who SquashBusters has always been and who we are becoming as we deepen our roots and strengthen our role as a community anchor. The strategic priorities that follow are designed to bring this Theory of Change to life over the next seven years.

Our North Star

SquashBusters envisions a world where every young person has the opportunities they need to fulfill their greatest potential and where squash strengthens communities and creates spaces for growth.

Who We Serve

- Youth from under-resourced communities (grades 6–12 and postsecondary within 6 years of high school graduation) in Boston, Lawrence, and Providence
 - Provide intensive, multi-year programming
- Graduates of the SquashBusters program
 - Support personal and professional development and activate them as mentors, role models, and community leaders
- K–12 youth, families, community partners, and the wider squash community
 - Engage them through accessible programming

Our Pathway to Impact

Across all programs, youth will strengthen the work ethic and commitment to excellence that disciplined squash training demands, equipping them with skills essential for long-term success.

Through intensive core programming and alumni support, youth develop:

- **Character:** Personal integrity and a commitment to their communities, empowering them to become leaders who create positive change
- **Health:** Lifelong physical wellness habits and the ability to adapt to challenges
- **Career:** Academic skills, career pathways exposure, and readiness for postsecondary success
- **Transformative Relationships:** Networks and connections that support growth in personal lives and careers



We continue to strengthen our core programming by uplifting and partnering with the communities to foster a sense of:

- **Access:** Expanded opportunities for more community members to learn and love the game of squash through strategic partnerships and networks
- **Unity:** Connections between youth, families, alumni, and community members through shared squash experiences, giving core youth access to broader community relationships and networks they may not have otherwise

The Change We Aim to Create

Youth thrive and strengthen their communities, achieving economic mobility, maintaining physical and mental well-being, flourishing in their personal and academic lives, and contributing positively to the places where they live, learn, and work.



Strategic Priorities for 2026 - 2032

The following strategic priorities will guide SquashBusters through 2032. They build on the strengths of the organization today while providing a clear structure for where we are headed over the next seven years. As noted throughout this plan, much of this work reflects what SquashBusters is already doing well. The priorities do not reinvent our model, but instead sharpen its focus, provide alignment across teams and sites, and ensure that our strategy reflects the needs of our key stakeholders.

Each priority includes desired outcomes, which describe the long-term changes we aim to achieve, and associated metrics that will help us measure progress. Some of these metrics are well-established indicators that SquashBusters has tracked for years, such as graduation rates, program retention, and postsecondary persistence. Others are newer measures that reflect the evolution of our work, including social-emotional skill attainment, alumni engagement, and total community members reached. Together, these outcomes and metrics will help us better understand the holistic impact of our model.

The priorities below also include tactics that outline the major strategies we will pursue in order to reach our goals. These tactics will be further developed and sequenced in the implementation plan, which will provide greater detail on timelines, owners, and resourcing.

In the section that follows, we describe how these priorities will unfold over time, including which areas will be addressed first and which will be advanced in the later years of the plan. This reflects the intentional design of a seven-year strategy, recognizing that meaningful, sustainable change requires focus, sequencing, and consistent investment over time.

Together, they form the roadmap for SquashBusters future impact.





Champion Our People

Grow support, and retain staff through strategic investment and a thriving organizational culture.

SquashBusters will optimize how staff time and skills are deployed by streamlining systems, using technology thoughtfully, and aligning roles to focus on the work that matters most. Combined with professional development, mentorship, and leadership opportunities within a culture of care and belonging, SquashBusters will strengthen its team and position itself as a desired place to work in the youth development and sports-based nonprofit sector.

Goal: Cultivate a high-performing, inclusive, and mission-driven team by investing in people, systems, and culture so that every staff member is empowered to do their best work.

By 2032, SquashBusters staff will:		Associated Success Metrics
People Development & Growth	Strengthen skills and leadership capacity to support students and the communities they serve	• ≥85% of staff report a favorable perception of their job self-efficacy • Cumulative ≥65% of internal roles and leadership opportunities are filled internally • 100% of staff participate in differentiated professional development and mentorship opportunities
	Experience clear pathways for growth and internal advancement	
	Have access to meaningful professional development and advancement	
Thriving Culture	Feel supported, connected, and motivated to advance the mission	• Achieve a staff Net Promoter Score of ≥60 • ≥90% of staff report a favorable perception of belonging and collaboration • ≥90% annual retention rate for high-performing staff
	Cultivate an inclusive, collaborative, and mission-driven environment	
Operational Effectiveness	Focus on high-impact, mission-aligned priorities	• ≥75% of staff report a meaningful reduction in administrative tasks



Champion Our People

Grow support, and retain staff through strategic investment and a thriving organizational culture.

How We Will Pursue This Priority

- **Design a highly effective team structure** with clearly defined roles and responsibilities that align with organizational priorities and provide consistent management support. Enhance coaching and communication practices to help staff excel and collaborate.
- **Define clear performance goals and accountability measures** for every role to strengthen alignment and foster continuous improvement. Use these benchmarks to focus effort on high-impact, mission-critical work and to guide professional development and recognition.
- **Cultivate differentiated staff development programs** that include personalized growth plans, mentorship, and leadership pathways to promote internal advancement, career fulfillment, and long-term retention.
- **Hire high-quality talent** by strengthening recruitment pipelines, embedding inclusive hiring practices, and creating professional development opportunities that engage alumni and attract them back to SquashBusters as future staff.
- **Optimize internal operations** by adopting technology and data tools that are designed to reduce administrative burden, improve collaboration, and free up time for direct mission delivery.





Perfect Our Craft

Enhance core programming quality, youth and alumni experience, and operational excellence to maximize impact at full enrollment.

SquashBusters will deepen the quality and consistency of its core programming to ensure every student and alum experiences the full power of the SquashBusters journey. By strengthening academic, athletic, and character development outcomes; enhancing alumni and postsecondary support; and refining operations for efficiency and excellence, SquashBusters will elevate the youth experience, maximize retention, and ensure lasting impact at full enrollment.

Goal: Advance SquashBusters’ program excellence by continuously improving quality, relationships, and systems so that every student and alum benefits from an exceptional, outcomes-driven experience that is equitable, engaging, and sustainable across all sites.

By 2032, SquashBusters Students will:		Associated Success Metrics
Student Experience, Belonging & Program Quality	Feel a deep sense of belonging and connection	• Full enrollment across all three sites + PSS
	Engage consistently and persist through the program	• ≥90% of students (6-12 + PSS) report feeling that they belong at SquashBusters
	Participate in high quality and consistent programming across all three sites	• Maintain 70% 4-year program completion rate for high school students (9-12)
		• Sustain attendance rates of 85% for 80% of students

By 2032, SquashBusters Students will:	Associated Success Metrics
Social-Emotional & Academic Growth	Build self-advocacy, confidence, and positive peer relationships Strengthen academic skills and graduate ready for purposeful next steps • ≥85% of students (6–12) report a favorable perception of self advocacy and relationship building skills • ≥85% of students (6–12) report a favorable sense of their ability to meet their goals and their growth mindset • Ensure ≥85% average recipe attainment • Graduate 100% of students from high school • Support 100% of graduating students to pursue a meaningful postsecondary pathway aligned with their interests, strengths, and long-term goals
Postsecondary Readiness & Alumni Success	Persist through postsecondary programs Gain career skills, real-world experience, and supportive networks Enter early careers with stability, purpose, and economic mobility • ≥85% of students (9–12 + PSS) have access to at least one strong, supportive relationship and/or network offering community connection, mentorship, and career growth (outside of a SquashBusters staff member) • ≥85% of students (PSS) report a favorable perception in their career-related skills such as networking, public speaking, and interviewing. • ≥85% of qualifying students (PSS) are employed with a summer internship or enrolled in summer classes • ≥85% of enrolled students (PSS) graduate within 150% of time • ≥85% of students (PSS) report positive job satisfaction, financial stability, and a strong sense of purpose within six months of completing postsecondary education • ≥60% of students graduate college with no student loan debt; 100% graduate with ≤\$27,000



Perfect Our Craft

Enhance core programming quality, youth and alumni experience, and operational excellence to maximize impact at full enrollment.

How We Will Pursue This Priority

- **Expand access and early exposure** by introducing lower-dosage and earlier-entry programming, such as elementary clinics and community days, that build foundational skills, spark interest in squash, and strengthen the pipeline for future participation.
- **Support student mental wellness and social-emotional development** by integrating a SEL curriculum and potential wraparound services that build self-awareness, resilience, and healthy relationships across all grade levels.
- **Strengthen and expand partnerships with new and existing schools and community organizations** to enhance recruitment pipelines, broaden access to squash and program exposure, ensure full enrollment, and better align academic and social supports across sites.
- **Provide more flexible opportunities for students** to explore and pursue experiences aligned with their individual interests, strengths, and aspirations. Tailor academic, athletic, and enrichment offerings to deepen engagement, strengthen relationships, and support long-term persistence.
- **Create clear student leadership pathways, launch coordinated community service initiatives, and offer cross-site travel experiences** to foster belonging, purpose, and personal growth and to increase engagement and retention across all sites.
- **Provide career readiness guidance and exposure** to essential professional skills, including networking, public speaking, and interviewing, to prepare PSS and alumni for success beyond SquashBusters through strategic partnerships and by leveraging the SquashBusters network.



Fuel Our Vision

Build diverse, sustainable revenue streams to support our current work and future innovation.

SquashBusters will secure the resources and systems needed to sustain today's operations while investing in tomorrow's possibilities. Through a comprehensive financial strategy that balances annual operating support with forward-looking investment, SquashBusters will diversify its funding base, strengthen organizational resilience, and continue delivering meaningful, lasting impact.

Goal: Fortify SquashBusters' financial foundation through a balanced and resilient funding model that sustains current programs, fuels future growth, and ensures lasting organizational vitality.

By 2032, SquashBusters will have:		Associated Success Metrics
Revenue Growth	A balanced and diverse funding portfolio that reduces reliance on core fundraising events	- Secure ≥5 funding sources (events, individuals, corporations, foundations, earned income), each contributing ≥10% of total revenue ≥20% of alumni contribute annually
	Alumni and community investment strengthen long-term sustainability	
Long-Term Financial Stability	Strong reserves to safeguard core operations and enable innovation	- Increase SquashBusters' total reserves to \$21M ≥3% annual revenue growth above planned expenses
	Financial resources support predictable and confident planning	



Fuel Our Vision

Build diverse, sustainable revenue streams to support our current work and future innovation.

How We Will Pursue This Priority

- **Design and execute a multi-year revenue strategy** that integrates philanthropic, corporate, events, foundation, and earned income sources to ensure stability and growth while reducing reliance on events. The strategy will determine appropriate revenue allocations across sites, initiatives, and reserves and be supported by a development team structure with clear roles and responsibilities to sustain fundraising excellence organization-wide.
- **Diversify philanthropic revenue** by developing targeted engagement strategies for new individual donors and proactively building a wider portfolio of foundation partners aligned with SquashBusters mission and model.
- **Strengthen the alumni donor base** by fostering a sense of community and shared purpose through targeted cohort-based giving campaigns and engagement opportunities.
- **Develop and scale earned revenue programs** that leverage SquashBusters' assets, including facilities, expertise, and partnerships, to generate recurring unrestricted income. Opportunities may include junior programming and lessons, strategic space rentals, and community membership initiatives that deepen engagement while reinforcing SquashBusters' mission and brand.
- **Implement a sustainable reserve and innovation strategy** that draws up to 3% annually for mission-critical income (e.g., Lawrence building operations), preserves 1% for security needs, and caps total reserve usage at 4% for the operating budget. The Board may designate a higher draw above 4% for bold capital projects, positioning SquashBusters to invest in future-facing initiatives that expand community engagement and deepen student impact (as outlined in this strategic plan) without straining the operating budget.
- **Establish a Board-level Fundraising and Advancement Committee** to strengthen donor cultivation, expand networks, and provide strategic guidance on revenue growth.
- **Grow the Board's capacity** by filling all board seats and intentionally recruiting a diverse board whose lived experience, professional expertise, and community ties reflect the communities SquashBusters serves.



Embrace Our Community

Expand squash access and services to engage partners and communities while enriching core youth outcomes.

Strengthen outcomes for SquashBusters youth and alumni while deepening ties across the neighborhoods served in Boston, Lawrence, and Providence. By expanding wraparound supports and bridging U.S. squash and urban squash, SquashBusters will foster stronger community connections and greater access to resources. These efforts will unite students, alumni, families, partners, and donors, positioning SquashBusters as both a champion for the sport and a trusted community anchor.

Goal: Expand SquashBusters’ reach and impact by transforming community engagement into a shared movement that opens access to squash, forges lasting partnerships, and unites cities through play, mentorship, and opportunity.

By 2032, SquashBusters will:		Associated Success Metrics
Community Support & Engagement	Build a supported and connected community beyond the core program	• >1,000 community members engaged annually (excluding core program students)
	Increase community exposure to squash and the SquashBusters mission	• Establish 5–10 formal partnerships at each site that expand access to squash and/or deliver complementary services supporting SquashBusters students and the communities where they live • ≥35% of students (PSS) and alumni actively engage through volunteering, mentoring, or coaching • Achieve a 35% increase in the number of donors contributing to SquashBusters



Embrace Our Community

Expand squash access and services to engage partners and communities while enriching core youth outcomes.

How We Will Pursue This Priority

- **Launch a community membership program at the Lawrence site** to open the club to all individuals in the region, regardless of background, while welcoming new participants, strengthening local relationships, and generating revenue that supports long-term sustainability.
- **Expand community squash programming across all sites** through junior academies, adult clinics and lessons, and open-play opportunities that increase access and visibility while strengthening social connections.
- **Offer wraparound services for community members**, such as English language learning and family enrichment programs, positioning the Lawrence site as a community hub that meets needs beyond the court.
- **Strengthen alumni engagement systems** to provide ongoing mentorship, career development, and meaningful opportunities for connection through structured partnerships, networking events, and peer-to-peer support—such as annual alumni reunions and expanded participation in adult squash leagues.
- **Broaden access to squash through strategic community partnerships outside SquashBusters facilities** that deploy courts and light-touch programming in additional locations, such as outdoor facilities or local recreation centers, extending SquashBusters' reach.



Scaling our Impact

Our Approach to Scale Through 2032

SquashBusters' strategy for scale is anchored in depth first, then reach. Over the next seven years, we will strengthen the core experience for youth and alumni while thoughtfully expanding access points and community engagement. Our focus is not on growing into new geographies, but on maximizing our impact within the Boston, Lawrence, and Providence communities through:

- Consistent high-quality core programming at full enrollment
- A broader pipeline of access for young people and families
- A thriving alumni network and community ecosystem
- Sustainable revenue streams aligned with long-term growth

The metrics below represent the ambition of the 2032 strategic plan and define what "scaled impact" means for SquashBusters across youth, alumni, community, and organizational health. These indicators create shared clarity about the future we are building toward and provide a high-level frame that will guide continued implementation planning.

385

Core Program Enrollment (6-12)

Representing each site operating at full enrollment with sustained retention and stable cohort sizes

255

Students in Postsecondary Success

Representing strong continuation of support into early adulthood

415

Alumni

Representing a growing alumni network that contributes to student support and community strength

300

Additional Youth

Representing a diversified and sustainable recruitment pipeline into the core program

1,000

Community Members

Representing powerful neighborhood networks that create supportive environments for youth to flourish

**Note: These numbers are directional, not budget or staffing commitments, and clarify SquashBusters' intended 2032 annual footprint across youth, alumni, and community, emphasizing that scale is achieved through depth and reach.*

Bringing the Plan to Life

Multi-Year Progression

The strategic priorities outlined in this plan are designed to guide SquashBusters through 2032, but not all priorities can or should advance at the same pace. Some require early investment to strengthen the organization's foundation, while others will reach full expression later in the strategic period as systems, staffing, partnerships, and resources mature. The multi-year progression below reflects how the work is intentionally sequenced to ensure stability, sustainability, and long-term impact.

The accompanying implementation plan will provide detailed timelines, owners, resourcing, and change-management support. What follows is a high-level roadmap of how the strategy will unfold over the next seven years.

Years 1 to 2: Strengthen the Foundation

In the first phase, SquashBusters will focus on the foundational work required to support all strategic priorities. These early years center on building the stability, systems, and structures that enable responsible growth across all three communities, with clear accountability between headquarters and regional sites.

During this phase, SquashBusters will define which functions and standards are designed centrally to ensure consistency and quality, and where sites have flexibility to adapt programming to local context and community needs. This clarity will strengthen execution, reinforce shared expectations, and create the conditions for sustainable, high-quality impact at every site. Key early priorities include:

- Establishing a multi-year revenue strategy and beginning to diversify funding
- Reviewing staffing structure for clarity, alignment, and sustainability
- Launching SEL supports and strengthening program consistency
- Activating the Lawrence membership program to begin community engagement and earned revenue generation
- Growing the endowment to support long-term organizational stability

This period lays the groundwork for scalability and ensures that future investments rest on a strong operational base.

Years 3 to 4: Expand, Deepen, and Integrate

With foundational systems and structures in place, SquashBusters will shift focus to expanding and deepening priority areas that require more mature staffing, stronger partnerships, and clearer resource alignment.

This phase intentionally incorporates findings from early implementation, using data and site-level learning to refine program models and align expectations across sites. Where consistency is essential to quality and outcomes, shared standards will be strengthened, while sites retain flexibility to adapt to local context. Key mid-term priorities include:

- Building out early access to squash for elementary school students
- Implementing a lower dose model
- Deepening SEL support and services
- Strengthening career development and postsecondary success supports
- Growing alumni engagement and leadership pathways

This phase builds on the success of the first two years and positions SquashBusters to broaden its reach and impact in intentional ways.

Years 5 to 6: Sustain, Refine, and Reinforce Long-Term Impact

The final phase focuses on sustaining diversified funding and fully realizing the long-term vision outlined in this plan. By this stage, core initiatives will be implemented and operating, allowing SquashBusters to focus on scalability, refinement, optimization.

This phase includes final calibration of cross-site practices to ensure shared standards, consistent quality, and clear expectations, while preserving the flexibility for sites to respond to local community needs. Key later-stage priorities include:

- Fully sustaining a diversified and resilient revenue model
- Maturing the community hub model across all sites
- Strengthening multi-site alignment and operational efficiency
- Refining long-term program pathways based on data, learning, and evaluation

During this period, SquashBusters reinforces what is working, strengthens financial and organizational resilience, and secures the infrastructure needed to carry its mission well beyond 2032. As we move through these phases, we will also proactively manage the risks that could affect our progress and stability.

Anticipating and Managing Risk

Executing a seven-year strategic plan requires acknowledging the risks that could impact progress and putting clear strategies in place to manage them. The following risks represent the most significant potential challenges to achieving our goals. Each is paired with the mitigation strategies SquashBusters will use to remain steady, adaptive, and aligned with our mission.

(1) Risk: Financial Volatility

As philanthropy becomes more competitive and larger economic forces are less predictable, SquashBusters faces increased vulnerability to fluctuations in annual revenue.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Expand and diversify revenue streams to reduce reliance on any single source
- Strengthen reserve strategies to protect core programming during economic downturns
- Build multi-year funding commitments and deepen new donor stewardship to increase predictability
- Grow earned revenue models, particularly through the Lawrence community hub

(2) Risk: Student Enrollment and Recruitment

Shifts in student needs, school system instability, and competing after-school options could impact recruitment and retention across sites.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Develop robust, multi-site recruitment pipelines through expanded school and community partnerships
- Strengthen early access programming (elementary and middle school) to build future cohorts
- Increase alumni involvement in recruitment and mentorship
- Enhance belonging, engagement, and personalized supports to increase retention

(3) Risk: Organizational Capacity

Rising workforce pressures and increased program demands could strain staff capacity.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Review staffing structures for goal clarity, support, and sustainability
- Expand professional development and leadership pathways to increase retention
- Reduce administrative burden through improved systems, technology, and data tools
- Strengthen management practices and provide consistent coaching for staff at all levels

(4) Risk: Systems and Infrastructure Updates

Growing programming, a larger staff, and expanded community-facing work increase organizational complexity and the need for aligned systems.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Standardize core program practices and data systems across sites
- Strengthen cross-site coordination and communication structures
- Phase growth intentionally to ensure quality and consistency
- Invest in technology, operations, and data capacity to streamline systems

(5) Risk: Community and Partnership Challenges

As SquashBusters expands community-facing programming, shifts in local partnerships, facility use, or community needs could create new challenges.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Build diverse, mission-aligned partnerships rather than relying on any single partner
- Invest in consistent community engagement practices rooted in trust and collaboration, rather than one-offs
- Use the Lawrence facility as a learning model to refine community hub practices before expanding them
- Monitor feedback from families, alumni, and community members to adapt programming

(6) Risk: Program Quality and Mission Misalignment

As programming and community engagement expands and evolves, maintaining high-quality experiences and strong outcomes for students becomes increasingly critical.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Use clear, organization-wide metrics to monitor progress and guide adjustments
- Invest in data capacity and continuous improvement practices
- Strengthen staff training on SEL, academic support, and relationship-building
- Use implementation data to inform pacing and resource allocation

Together, these mitigation strategies ensure SquashBusters can pursue its 2032 vision with both courage and discipline.

Appendix

Strategic Planning Process Overview

To ensure this strategic plan was grounded in evidence and community voice, SquashBusters partnered with EdVenture Lab to design and execute a rigorous planning process. From July 2025 through January 2026, SquashBusters partnered with EdVenture Lab to conduct a comprehensive strategic planning process designed to be inclusive and grounded in the lived experiences of our students, families, staff, alumni, and partners. More than 160 stakeholder inputs informed this plan, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and site observations across Boston, Lawrence, and Providence. Participants represented students (6-12 + PSS), families, staff, alumni, donors, board members, peer organizations, and community partners.

The work began with site visits and direct observations at all three program locations. These visits offered insight into day-to-day program delivery, facility usage, staffing workflows, and the community contexts in which each site operates.

Insights gathered during this phase were synthesized into early themes that guided strategic direction setting, where the team refined the Theory of Change and identified the long-term strategic priorities, desired outcomes, and associated metrics. These included both longstanding indicators, such as graduation and retention, and new measures like SEL skill attainment and community engagement.

From November through January, the plan was drafted, tested, and refined, resulting in a final set of priorities and tactics designed to guide SquashBusters through 2032. These priorities reflect both the work the organization already does well and the areas where clearer alignment and structure will strengthen impact across sites.

With the strategic plan complete, a full implementation plan will follow, detailing sequencing, roles, resource needs, and which priorities will launch early in the seven-year period and which will be phased in over time.

This process ensures that the strategic plan is both ambitious and grounded, reflecting the expertise of EdVenture Lab, the voices of the SquashBusters community, and the realities shaping the decade ahead.

