



ACIS Thanks ISU Insurance

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36th Annual Leadership Conference**



ISU Insurance Services of Colorado (ISU) is a 139-year-old independent insurance brokerage firm, partnering with independent schools on their commercial insurance, risk management and employee benefits protection.



What 100 Heads of School Reveal About the Independent School Business Model



Agenda

- Part One:** About Me
- Part Two:** What I've Learned from 100 Heads of School
- Part Three:** Case Studies and Rapid Focus Groups
- Part Four:** Q&A

Meet Peter Baron

Boarding school graduate.

Spent the past 20+ years as an association leader, board member, and **passionate champion for independent schools with one goal: to help you and your school succeed.**

Helped thousands of independent school leaders with enrollment, marketing, professional development, hands-on training, information management, and more.



Organizations where I worked to support independent schools like yours.

MoonshotOS



blackbaud®



ADMISSIONSquest

ed Social Media

The Future of the Independent School Business Model

2019



COVID-19



“Private schools lament that their business model is broken and therefore unsustainable. But, they follow some uncommon business practices and exhibit severe limitations in their thinking that literally threaten their existence.”

Ian Symmonds - Feb 2023

<https://bit.ly/ian-symmonds>



ian symmonds & associates

**I've spoken with more than
100 heads of school and
industry leaders.**

Challenged Model

Hiring & Staff Retention

NAIS Research: 2023 Hot Issues Survey

Challenges and Opportunities for Independent Schools

100%



Finding and retaining qualified staff as workplace expectations shift

91%



Ensuring the school's sustainability



**Why are we in
this situation?**

“

**Peter, people have been saying
this model has been
challenged for at least 20
years, but yet we're still here.**

”



Hiring and Retention

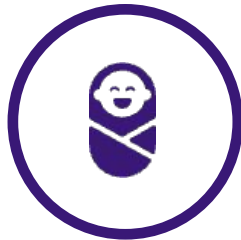


Tightening Credit



New Generations of Parents

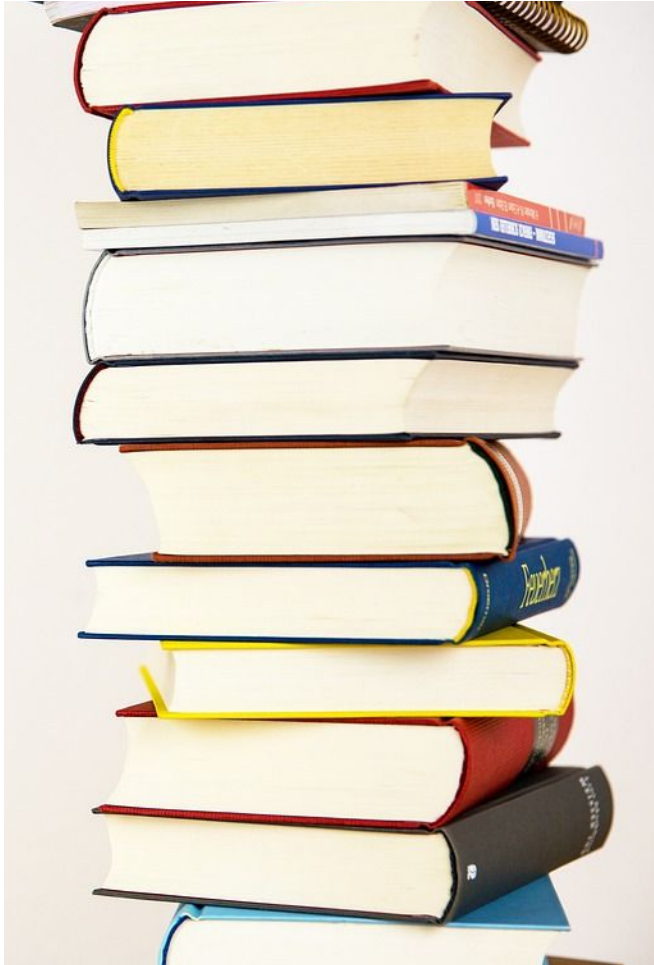
Circumstances have changed



**Declining Birth
Rates**



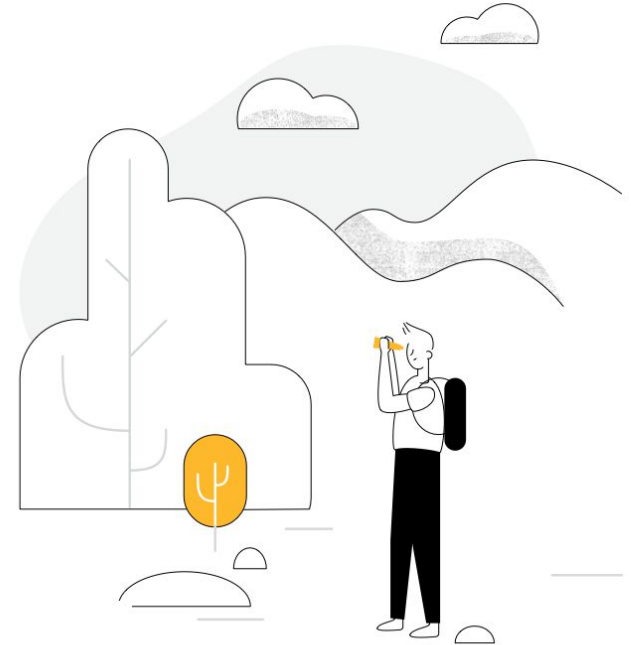
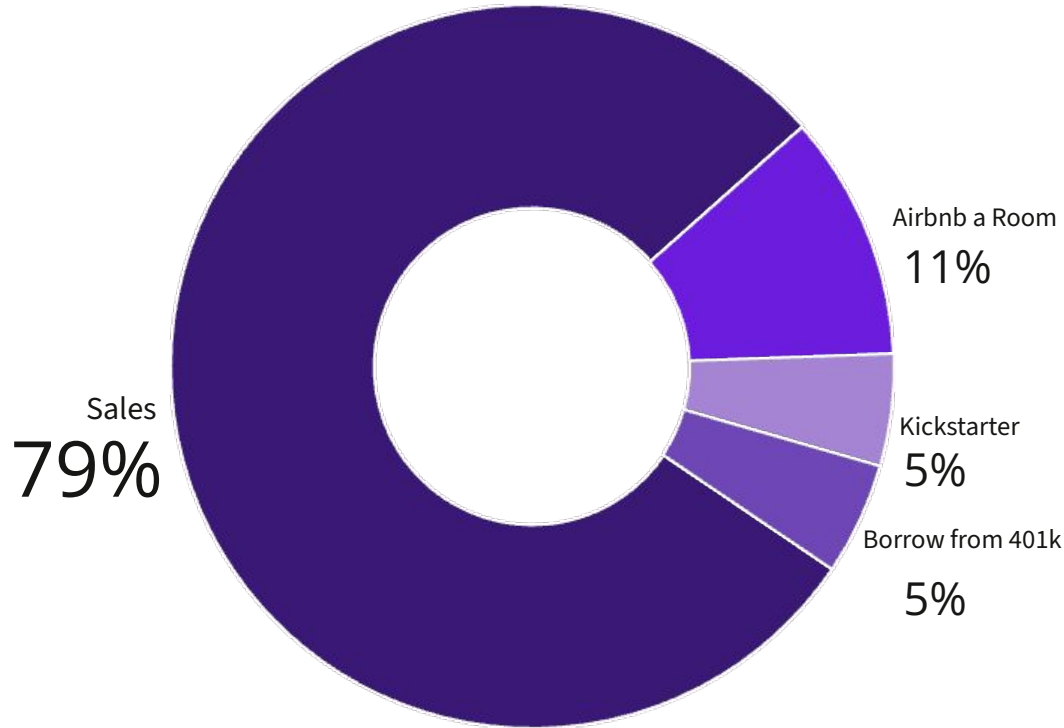
Increased Tuition Discounting



Are we preparing leaders to tackle these challenges?

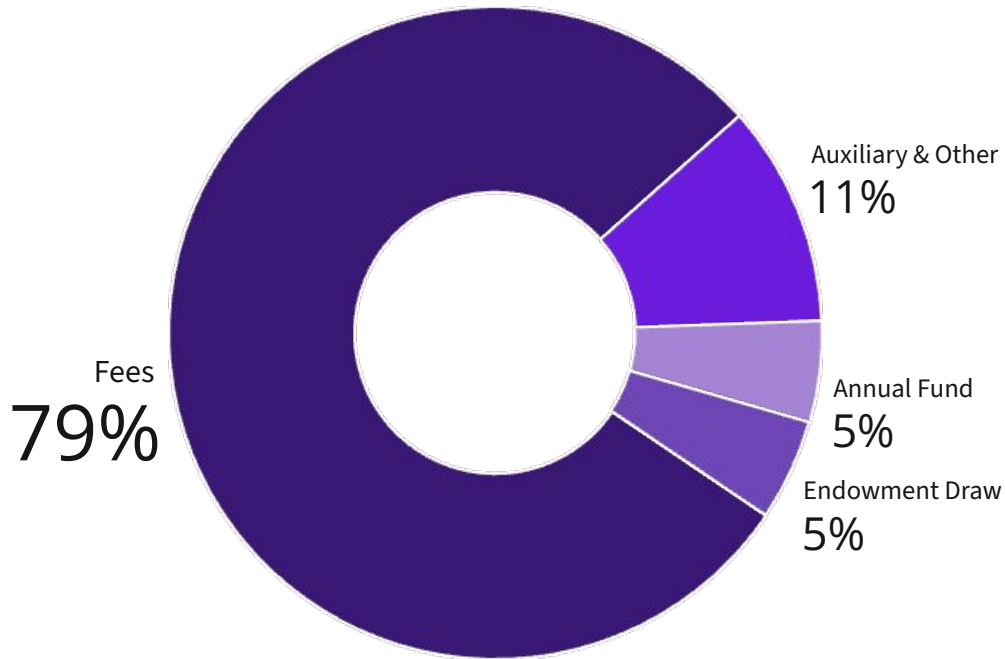
- Leadership is committed to their organizations.
- They are talented, caring people who want the best for their communities.
- They care deeply about mission.
- But have they universally received business and entrepreneurial training?

Do I have an investment opportunity for you!

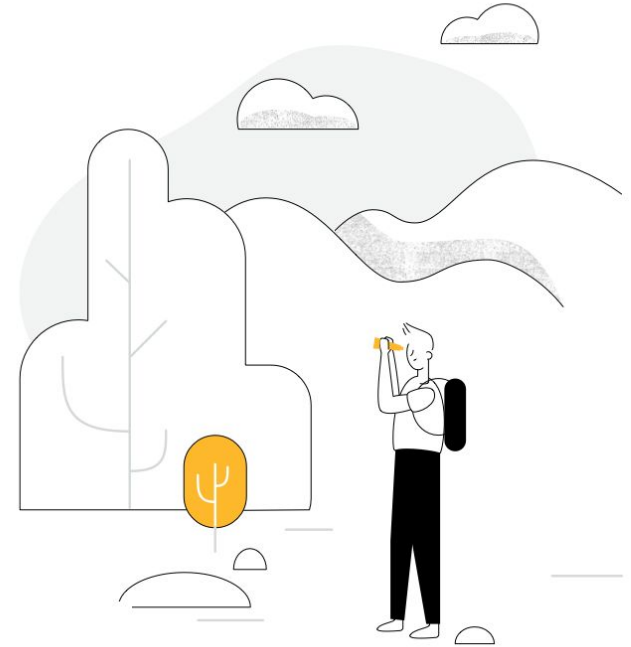


Independent School Revenue Distribution

SOURCE: Financial State Of The Industry - BIIS Financial And Operational Indicators: 2020-2022



Note: data rounded to whole numbers.



**Are we
providing
leaders with
the necessary
training?**



MOONSHOTOS



**This is the
opportunity.**



MOONSHOTOS

Business Competencies for the Independent School Leader

01



Entrepreneurial Mindset

Identifies opportunities and launches impactful programs.

02



Strategy & Change Management

Skilled at crafting strategy and leading change with agility.

03



People Management & Development

Inspires and develops talent with visionary leadership.

04



Adaptability & Continuous Learning

Champions adaptability and lifelong learning, expanding skills and networks.

05



Financial Acumen & Data Informed Decision Making

Makes strategic, data-informed decisions, understanding business essentials.

06



Operations

Ensures the school and its ecosystem operate efficiently, aligning with the mission.

07



Advancement & Enrollment Management

Expert in advancement and enrollment strategies, driving school revenue.

08



Marketing Strategy

Masters marketing principles, optimizing engagement and retention.

Leadership

Operational Excellence

2 minute rapid focus group

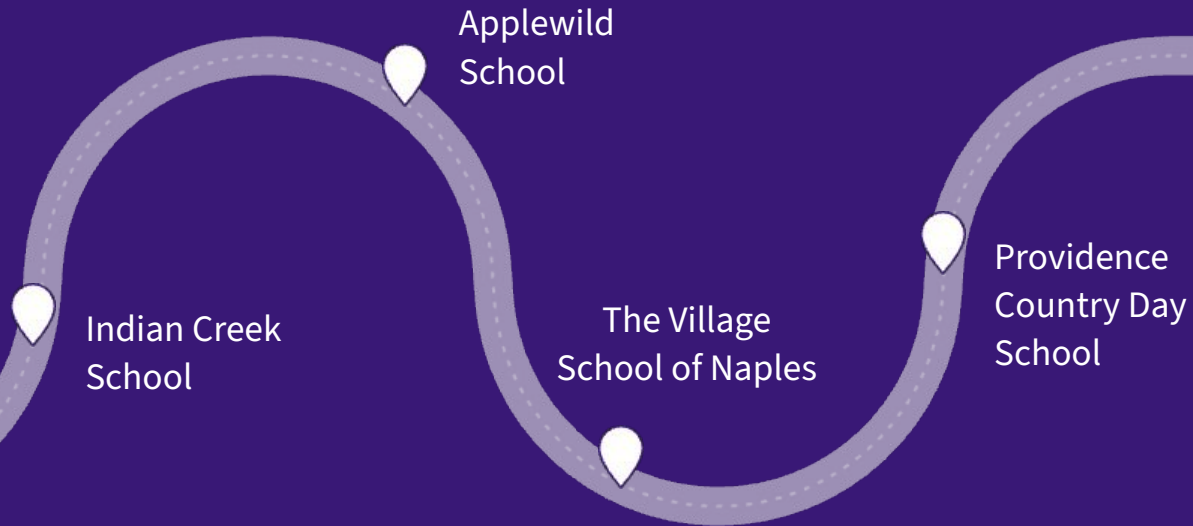
Let's do a two minute rapid focus group:

- Turn to your neighbor
- Share one thing from that resonated
- Share one question you have



**It has been a journey of
inspirational stories.**

Schools Reimagining the Business Model



Optimizing for Surpluses: How Indian Creek School Engineered a Financial Turnaround

- **Strategic Consolidation:** Overcame a \$750,000 deficit by consolidating campuses and optimizing resources and operations.
- **Efficient Cost Management:** Implemented cost-saving measures in transportation, dining, and staffing, aligning expenses with school capacity.
- **Revenue Optimization:** Generated approximately \$550,000 annually by strategically renting out athletic facilities. Refined the admission process to meet a baseline of 550 students, optimized class sizes, and applied strict criteria to financial aid allocation.
- **Surplus Achievement:** Achieved operational surpluses post-first year, enabling future investments in staff and facilities.



Interview with Booth Kyle, Head of School,
Indian Creek School

Doubling Applewild School Revenue in Four Years: The Power of Iterative Leadership

- **Strategic Leadership:** Amy Jolly's leadership since 2019 focused on reversing enrollment decline and financial issues.
- **Facility Utilization for Revenue:** Converted an old mansion into a 16-bed dormitory, enhancing revenue through a junior boarding program. Expanded to 30 students.
- **Program Optimization:** Expanded profitable programs like preschool, and phased out less effective ones, aligning with market needs.
- **Significant Revenue Increase:** Successfully doubled the school's revenue in four years, a key metric of financial growth.



Interview with Amy Jolly, Head of School,
Applewild School

Let's do a two minute rapid focus group:

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- Share one question you have

Acquisitions with a Twist:

The Village School of Naples' Unique Approach to Growth

- **Leadership and Growth:** Dennis Chapman led a significant transformation since 2018, focusing on enrollment growth and enhancing the school's educational offerings.
- **Enrollment Increase:** Achieved a 54% increase in enrollment, including a nearly fourfold growth in the upper school.
- **Strategic Acquisition:** Implemented a unique strategy by acquiring 'Quest for Success', a college counseling service, enhancing the school's profile and educational services.
- **Operational Expansion:** The school expanded its services beyond just its students, serving a wider community, which led to an increase in the school's visibility and appeal.



Interview with Dennis Chapman, Head of School, The Village School of Naples

Let's do a two minute rapid focus group:

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- Share one thing from the case studies that resonated
- Share one question you have

Inside Providence Country Day School's Four-Year Journey to Nearly Double Enrollment

- **Challenging Start:** When Kevin Folan started in 2019, the school faced declining enrollment and financial issues, and he was tasked with growing school population and reinvigorating philanthropy and alumni engagement.
- **Strategic Initiatives:** Implemented innovative strategies, including tuition model revision
- **Tuition Reset Success:** The tuition reset, reducing fees by 36%, opened the school to 6,000 additional families, leading to a significant increase in applications and enrollments.
- **Enrollment Growth:** Needed 23 additional students in year one to break even, achieved an addition of 51 students, almost doubling applications.



Interview with Kevin Folan, Head of School, Providence Country Day School

Let's do a two minute rapid focus group:

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- Share one thing from the case studies that resonated
- Share one question you have

Access the case studies:

<https://bit.ly/moonshot-case-studies>

What 100 Heads of School Reveal About the Independent School Business Model

- **Opportunity to Upskill**

Independent schools have an opportunity to upskill leaders with business and entrepreneurial skills to reimagine the business model.

- **Innovative Leadership**

All schools demonstrated strong leadership that embraced change and innovation.

- **Strategic Resource Utilization**

Effective use of resources, such as facilities and programs, to generate revenue and attract students.

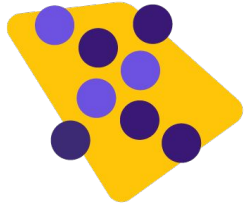
- **Adaptability to Market Needs**

Schools adapted to changing market demands, reshaping programs and tuition models.

- **Enrollment Growth Strategies**

Each school focused on increasing enrollment through unique approaches.

Questions?



Think

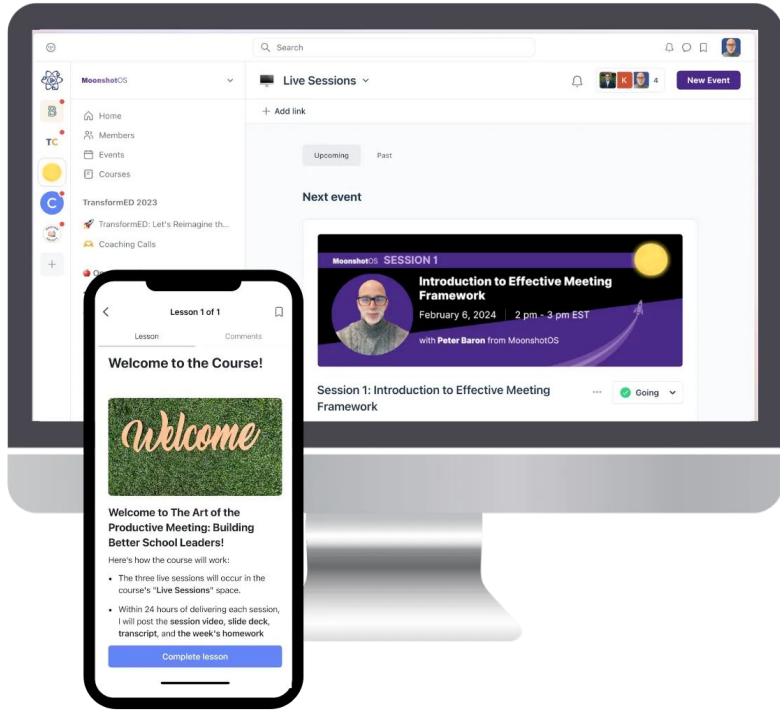
Like a Head of School

by **MoonshotOS**

A free, on-demand six-lesson email course from MoonshotOS, offering a practical introduction to the financial, strategic, and management fundamentals every aspiring school leader needs.



www.moonshots.com/think-like-a-head-of-school



Thank you!



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