

BRIGHTER. BETTER. TOGETHER.

MICDS

Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School

Presented By: The Strategic Planning Steering Committee
February 2015



An aerial photograph of a school building. The building is primarily red brick with white trim around the windows and doors. A prominent feature is a white, classical-style dome with a green patina, supported by several white columns. The roof is grey and covered with numerous solar panels. In the foreground, there is a brick wall with a black metal railing. To the right, a paved walkway leads to a grassy area with a bench. The background shows a baseball field and more trees.

OUR MISSION

More than ever our nation needs responsible men and women who can meet the challenges of this world with confidence and embrace all its people with compassion. The next generation must include those who think critically and resolve to stand for what is good and right.

Our School cherishes academic rigor, encourages and praises meaningful individual achievement, and fosters virtue. Our independent education prepares young people for higher learning and for lives of purpose and service.

Dear Board of Trustees,

Strategic planning is inspiring. It brings together communities with shared values and enduring connections to share their highest aspirations for the future. With one eye on recent progress and the other fixed boldly to the future, MICDS embarked on a process to create a Strategic Plan for the next seven years that will provide direction as the School strives to fulfill its Mission and build upon its high level of success. Careful planning strengthens and shapes our School's future, allowing MICDS to capitalize on its full potential, to articulate a clear sense of purpose, and to define the directions toward which we will head.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee, led by Board Chair Julie Jansen Lilly '86 and Vice Chair Bill Polk '74, and including Head of School Lisa Lyle, former Board Chairs Terry Pflager '80 and Stuart Campbell, was instrumental in guiding the planning process.

This planning process was grounded in the enduring principles and core values that have long defined MICDS and leverages the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan as the foundation on which to imagine and build the next exciting chapter of our School.

The planning process has been affirming and energizing and allows us to remain confident in the distinctive culture of MICDS, the value of our students' educational experience, and the promise that awaits us as we embark on the next stage of our exciting journey.

Sincerely,

Julie Jansen Lilly '86, Board of Trustees Chair

Bill Polk, '74 Vice Chair

Terry Pflager '80, Past Board Chair

Stuart Campbell, Past Board Chair

Lisa Lyle, Head of School

MICDS
Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School



STRATEGIC PLANNING AT MICDS

AN INCLUSIVE PROCESS

With one eye on recent progress and the other fixed boldly to the future, MICDS embarked on a process to create a Strategic Plan for the next seven years that will provide direction as the School strives to fulfill its Mission and build upon its high level of successes. Careful planning strengthens and shapes our School's future, allowing MICDS to capitalize on its full potential, to articulate a clear sense of purpose, and to define the directions toward which we will head.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee, led by **Board Chair Julie Jansen Lilly '86** and **Vice Chair Bill Polk '74**, and including **Head of School Lisa Lyle**, former **Board Chairs Terry Pflager '80**, and **Stuart Campbell**, was instrumental in guiding the planning process. The work of the Strategic Planning Committee has been grounded in the enduring principles and core values that have long defined MICDS, and leverages the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan as the foundation on which to imagine and build the next exciting chapter for our School.





To inform its work, the Steering Committee conducted a careful and comprehensive review of many resources, including:

- The recent ISACS Self-Study and Visiting Team Report
- Portraits of a MICDS Graduate created by faculty, staff, board members and parents
- Parent, alumni, faculty and staff survey data
- Analytics from the community-wide Jam session
- Environmental scans of other similar schools including research on their imperatives

The Steering Committee developed a broad set of three categories for Priority Committees made up of parents, students, alumni, faculty, staff, and Board members to consider, to collect data, and to more fully explore.

Transparency and feedback have been key themes throughout the planning process, with input and suggestions being sought from and provided by all constituencies. The ultimate goal of this Strategic Plan is to provide a roadmap for MICDS to realize even greater achievement and its full potential as a truly world-class independent school community.



STRATEGIC PLANNING PRIORITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRIORITY #1: Transformative Student Experience

Terry Pflager '80
Mark Proctor
Scott Small

Marie Campagna Brauer '64
Chris Brennan '94
Michelle Leith Cohen '88
Matt Essman
Juan Ferreira
Kara Friedman
Erin Hamill
Bob Koplak '98

Peggy Laramie
Don Maurer
Erica Moore
Ines Oulamine '16
Kavita Patwardhan '15
Bob Shaw
Vicki Thurman
Zoe Virant '15

PRIORITY #2: Great Teaching and Learning 2.0

Ed Macias
Bill Polk '74
Amy Scheer

Miranda Allen '18
Magda Curylo
Jeff Gaw
Elizabeth Helfant
Nicole Howard '16
Chris Ludbrook
Janet McMillion

Lynn Mittler
Christy Wuertenbaecher Moore '72
Kendra Neely-Martin
Dan Ory
Mead Heitner Ploszay '91
Jen Schuckman
Jaleen Walker '16

PRIORITY #3: Ensuring a Vibrant School Future

Eric Brunt '02
Stuart Campbell
Debbie Rush

Tilman Bartelsmeyer '15
Kelly Dopman '76
Mark Duvall
Chip Hiemenz '02
Lily Howlett '15
Rich Ives
Tracy Kaye Jasper '86
Karen Kalinowski

Rob Klahr '87
Middy Wolfarth Perkins '88
Caleb Pultman '17
Buddy Reisinger '81
Brian Roche '87
Mary Russell
Tom Wyman
Becky Young



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We seek to educate students through a rigorous academic and co-curricular program that challenges and supports students in their unique talents, while promoting a diverse school community that values and privileges affective relationships. We also aim to attract, retain, and continually develop a diverse and distinguished faculty capable of and committed to educating young people in and outside of the classroom while preparing them for college and the global community. Finally, we seek to ensure access to the School for students of talent, intelligence, and integrity from diverse cultural, geographical, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds.



From the start, the development of our Strategic Plan was Mission-led and values-based. As our community coalesced around these common ideas, we were able to define critical strategic goals that would help us live our Mission and values in all areas of the school. Based on extensive input, we have named the following as the School's three key priorities:

- 1. TRANSFORMATIVE
STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
- 2. GREAT TEACHING AND
LEARNING 2.0**
- 3. ENSURING A VIBRANT
SCHOOL FUTURE**

For each priority we list the leading strategies proposed to help us achieve our goals as well as examples of key tactics, performance indicators, and measurement tools to hold the School accountable for delivering quantifiable results.

We recognize that more steps will be developed as the plan is put into effect and as new information and ideas emerge.

TIMELINE

RESEARCH & DATA

- PARENT SURVEY
- ISACS*
- VISITING TEAM REPORT
- ADMISSIONS
- STUDENT/FACULTY FOCUS GROUPS***

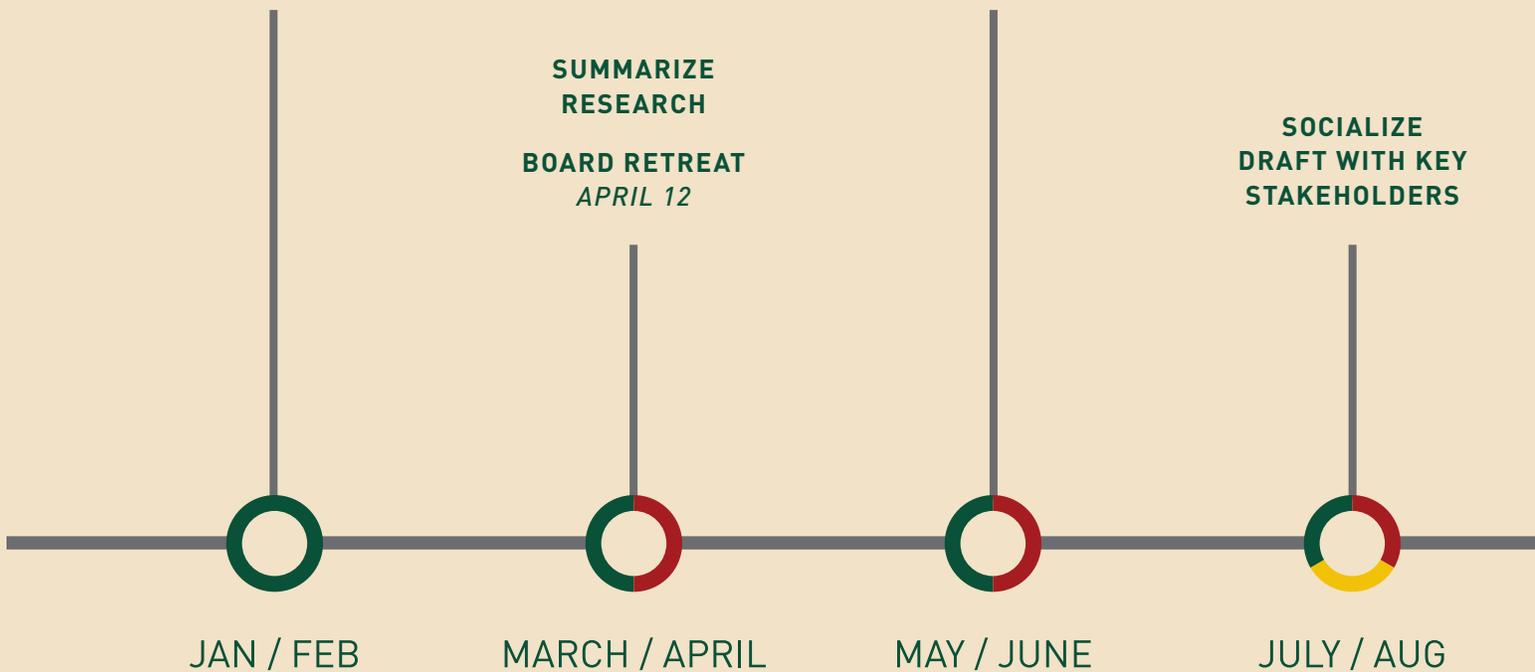
FINALIZE DATA & RESEARCH

- REFUSAL STUDY**
- FACULTY & STAFF INPUT/DISCUSSIONS

DRAFT PLAN

SUMMARIZE RESEARCH
BOARD RETREAT
APRIL 12

SOCIALIZE DRAFT WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS



*ISACS - in addition to key benchmark data - it includes data from alumnae / old & young, students, parents, faculty and staff.

**Refusal Study to identify why those we've accepted chose to go elsewhere.

***Focus groups to get feedback and input from Students and Faculty on the themes that have emerged from existing data and research.

ONLINE
COLLABORATION
WITH FULL
COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY
DISCUSSION
GROUPS

PLAN
REFINEMENT

COMMUNITY
CONVERSATIONS
FINALIZE DRAFT

PRIORITY
COMMITTEE &
ADMIN TEAM WORK

BOARD APPROVAL

SEPT / OCT

NOV / DEC

JAN 2015

MARCH 2015

- *STEERING COMMITTEE*
- *STRATEGY COMMITTEE*
- *PRIORITY COMMITTEES*



PRIORITY

1



TRANSFORMATIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

COMPEL AND HONOR EVERY STUDENT'S ENGAGEMENT IN TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES BOTH WITHIN THE CLASSROOM AND BEYOND



OVERARCHING GOAL

Inspire students to discover and pursue passions and develop agency, empathy, and perseverance to prepare them for lives of purpose and service as engaged and informed world citizens and courageous, compassionate leaders.



RATIONALE/PURPOSE

To serve the “whole child,” we intentionally focus on developing intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies through a well-rounded program that engenders growth in mind, body, and spirit. Recognizing that the quality of our students’ learning and their ability to contribute significantly to community is inextricably linked to the relationships they develop, we seek to foster strong mentoring relationships throughout our community. This important work must occur in a safe and supportive environment that recognizes the unique gifts and interests of each child and encourages meaningful contributions to community.



OBJECTIVES

1. **RELATIONSHIPS**

Focus on the critical development of personal and meaningful relationships and affective connections to enhance the learning experience of our students and to challenge them to pursue a range of interests and passions.

2. **CHARACTER**

Engage students in experiences that foster personal integrity, self-awareness, perseverance, and empathy for others.

3. **COMPREHENSIVE AND CONCENTRATED KNOWLEDGE**

Ensure all students develop appropriate knowledge and skills in academics, athletics/ physical fitness, fine and performing arts, and provide the opportunity for each student to pursue interests more fully in a few areas.

4. **CULTURAL COMPETENCIES**

Deliver a challenging academic program that prepares students to excel and lead in a complex and multicultural world.



STRATEGIES



OBJECTIVE 1: RELATIONSHIPS

- A. Provide an exceptional student experience by fostering individual growth through the development of personal and meaningful adult/student relationships that are mentoring in nature.
- B. Build upon and leverage opportunities naturally afforded by our JK-12 community for meaningful peer-to-peer mentoring across grade levels to help students feel more connected and empowered as members of a larger community of learners.

OBJECTIVE 3: COMPREHENSIVE AND CONCENTRATED KNOWLEDGE

- A. Champion and celebrate each student's ability to engage both broadly as well as deeply in academic pursuits through co-curricular offerings, differentiated instruction, student support and institutional flexibility.
- B. Ensure that all students have the ability to participate in significant transformative opportunities during their school experience.
- C. Provide opportunities for students to explore possible professions, connect with community leaders, and develop meaningful life skills to help prepare them for the world that awaits.

OBJECTIVE 2: CHARACTER

- A. Elevate the role of leadership and service in program and curriculum by enhancing opportunities/requirements for civic engagement, service learning and community service.
- B. Develop a robust experiential learning program that provides significant experiences in the natural world and fosters teamwork, leadership, and a commitment to sustainability.
- C. Ensure that students develop habits of effective self-management/wellness within an environment in which fun and joy are woven into the fabric of school life.
- D. Partner with parents to create an environment that compels students to stretch and grow as learners, practice perseverance in the face of challenges and setbacks, and develop intrinsic motivation.

OBJECTIVE 4: CULTURAL COMPETENCIES

- A. Target the development of cultural competencies in our students so they are able to engage confidently and effectively as informed citizens of our community willing to become effective agents for change.

Transformative Student Experience – Sample tactics & metrics:

TACTICS	METRICS
<p>Elevate advisor and mentor responsibilities as a fundamental obligation of faculty and increase accountability</p> <p>RELATIONSHIPS</p>	<p>Empower dean oversight of program</p> <p>Field Advisor Survey among students focused on performance of advisory and role of advisor</p>
<p>Develop and field a Young Alumni Survey to gauge effectiveness, performance, and impact of transformative programs</p> <p>RELATIONSHIPS</p>	<p>Partner with Lookout Management to conduct Performance Measurement Survey among young alumni</p>
<p>Embed service learning in the JK-12 curriculum and require meaningful community service hours</p> <p>CHARACTER</p>	<p>Institute more intentional curriculum/program with required hours</p>
<p>Map, develop and refine age-appropriate experiences that bring to life transformative experiences for all students</p> <p>COMPREHENSIVE AND CONCENTRATED KNOWLEDGE</p>	<p>Create a committee to track all students' access and engagement in transformative experiences beyond the classroom</p>
<p>Establish a program leveraging relationships with adults in the community (parents and alums) who will present, share their career / area of expertise with the student body</p> <p>COMPREHENSIVE AND CONCENTRATED KNOWLEDGE</p>	<p>Number of presentations and the variety of speakers and topics</p> <p>Level of engagement among students – as indicated in surveys</p> <p>Level of interest among adults to participate and present</p>
<p>Engage students in meaningful opportunities outside the classroom locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally designed to foster understanding of those whose experiences are different from their own</p> <p>CULTURAL COMPETENCIES</p>	<p>Curriculum development and advisory programming</p> <p>Faculty Training</p>

**This is not a comprehensive list, and we recognize that more tactics will be developed as the plan is put into effect.*



PRIORITY **2**  **GREAT TEACHING AND LEARNING – 2.0**

CULTIVATING A WORLD-CLASS FACULTY AND PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS TO MAKE THEIR MARK ON THE WORLD



OVERARCHING GOAL

Maintain a relentless focus on excellence in student-centered learning as the defining characteristic of the MICDS educational experience in service of active engagement and lifelong learning.



RATIONALE/PURPOSE

In order to maintain our School's leadership positioning, we must attract and retain the best and brightest faculty and continue to invest in their professional development.

Students must leave MICDS prepared for college and equipped with the tools to be lifelong learners who are willing to follow their passions, are flexible in their thinking, and are committed to finding their role in a global community.



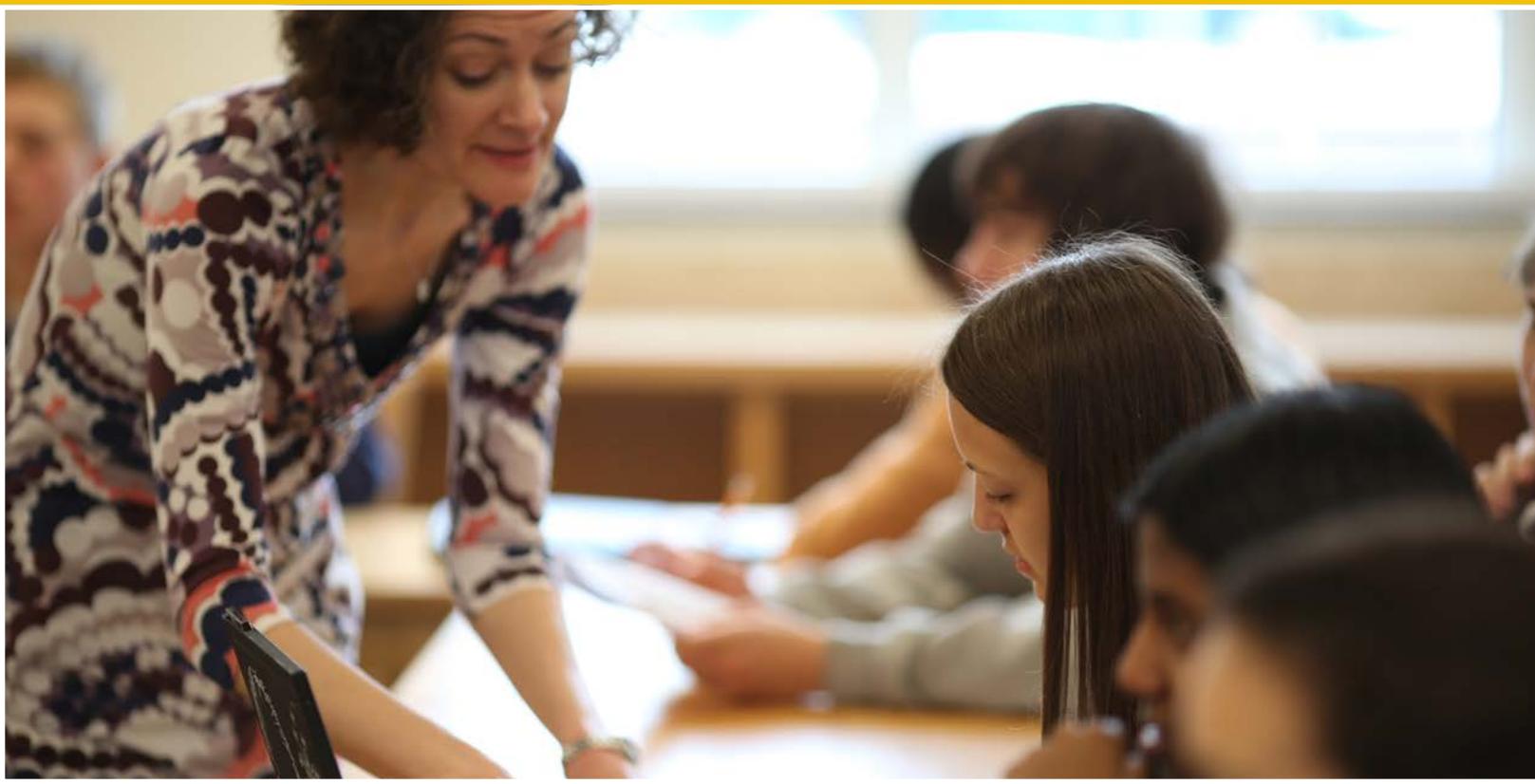
OBJECTIVES

1. *GREAT TEACHERS*

Nurture an outstanding and diverse group of educators who are reflective and engaging, experts in their discipline, and are eager and able to implement and create best-practice pedagogy and embrace change in order to optimize the student learning experience both inside and outside the classroom.

2. *GREAT LEARNERS*

Cultivate a rigorous, relevant, and responsive standards-based curriculum to provide students with deep conceptual understanding across disciplines and important non-cognitive skills so that they can discover personal strengths and passions, and leverage their knowledge and understanding in new and important ways.



STRATEGIES



OBJECTIVE 1: GREAT TEACHERS

- A. Cultivate teachers who are committed to delivering both curricular and co-curricular experiences central to the MICDS education, and who effectively engage with students in and out of the classroom.
- B. Develop, endorse, and collectively uphold a shared vision for best-practice pedagogy.
- C. Foster a community in which a personal commitment to ongoing professional development is integral to success as an educator.

OBJECTIVE 2: GREAT LEARNERS

- A. Highlight student skill development in critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and collaboration as curricular goals across disciplines and grade levels.
- B. Leverage standards-based feedback to facilitate learning experiences, appropriate challenge, and deep engagement for all students.
- C. Promote a student-centered learning experience by attending to social/emotional development, a positive classroom environment, and opportunity for student choice.



Great Teaching and Learning 2.0 – Sample tactics & metrics:

TACTICS	METRICS
<p>Articulate expectations for student engagement and ensure faculty partner effectively in that work</p> <p>GREAT TEACHING</p>	<p>Faculty goals and reflection (fall and spring) to identify areas of strength and opportunity</p> <p>Observation and evaluation process</p> <p>Student surveys to provide feedback to faculty, coaches, and sponsors</p>
<p>Launch Summit for Transformative Learning at MICDS for all faculty to ensure our practices and professional development is grounded in current research on how students learn</p> <p>GREAT TEACHING</p>	<p>Summit Attendance</p> <p>Surveys – satisfaction survey of attendees regarding Summit and presenters</p>
<p>Deepen faculty understanding of how standards, assessment, homework, and grading connect with effective instruction</p> <p>GREAT LEARNING</p>	<p>Review of assessments by discipline to ensure all are aligned to curricular standards; incorporate table grading to promote discussion and common understanding of standards</p>
<p>Create internal groups to share and foster the adoption of effective classroom strategies that promote social, emotional development, a positive classroom environment, and opportunity for student choice</p> <p>GREAT LEARNING</p>	<p>Peer Observations, including cross division</p> <p>Feedback by administrators and department chairs</p>

**This is not a comprehensive list, and we recognize that more tactics will be developed as the plan is put into effect.*



PRIORITY
3



ENSURING A VIBRANT FUTURE

VIBRANT SCHOOL FUTURE: WISE AND DISCIPLINED STEWARDSHIP OF OUR SCHOOL'S RESOURCES, INCLUDING HUMAN, PHYSICAL, AND FINANCIAL.



OVERARCHING GOAL

Affirm MICDS as the leader in independent education in St. Louis and beyond, for today and tomorrow.



RATIONALE/PURPOSE

For MICDS to continue to build upon its cherished legacy of outstanding academics; a culture that fosters and celebrates lifetime connections between faculty and students; and the calling to prepare young people to be leaders in the world they will inherit – we must continue to employ wise stewardship of the School's resources.

St. Louis is a highly competitive market for independent schools. MICDS must consistently communicate what makes it distinct and its value in order to enroll exceptional students who will most benefit from the School's offerings.



OBJECTIVES

1. **ATTRACT GREAT STUDENTS**

Consistently attract and retain extraordinary students who both benefit from the unique attributes of the MICDS experience and contribute in important and meaningful ways to our School community.

2. **ATTRACT AND RETAIN GREAT EDUCATORS**

Attract, enhance, and retain exceptionally talented educators and administrators who reflect the diversity of the student body.

3. **ENSURE RESOURCES**

Ensure that the School has the financial strength, sustainable facilities, infrastructure, and associated services essential to its Mission.



STRATEGIES



OBJECTIVE 1: ATTRACT GREAT STUDENTS

- A. Develop fresh and data-driven personalized approaches to engage and yield prospective students who can best contribute to and benefit from a MICDS education.
- B. Explore the strategic use of financial aid and awards and contain incremental costs associated with co-curricular offerings to help attract and retain students with the ability to excel both in the classroom and beyond, and to engage them fully in the transformative student experience.

OBJECTIVE 2: ATTRACT AND RETAIN GREAT EDUCATORS

- A. Attract, hire, and retain educators who create relevant and transformative experiences for the students with whom they work.
- B. Ensure the educators in the community reflect the diversity of the student body.
- C. Encourage a school culture of high professionalism and sustainable work/life balance for all members of the school community.
- D. Commit to a robust compensation package, including evaluating the expansion of tuition remission, to ensure that our best-in-class educators are recognized and rewarded for their performance.

OBJECTIVE 3: ENSURE RESOURCES

- A. Ensure the School develops and maintains first-rate facilities that support all aspects of the MICDS transformative experience, including a new athletic complex.
- B. Continue to employ wise stewardship of the School's resources including managing endowment and expenses, ensuring balance between short-term needs and desires with long-term sustainability.
- C. Develop a shared vision of sustainable practices to guide allocation of resources and to ensure the viability of our campus for years to come.

Transformative Student Experience – Sample tactics & metrics:

TACTICS	METRICS
<p>Establish Tuition and Aid Strategy Committee to determine long-term framework of tuition increases, as well as strategic use of financial aid and funding access for all students</p> <p>ATTRACT GREAT STUDENTS</p>	<p>Establish a committee to make a formal recommendation</p>
<p>Contain the additional costs associated with full participation in the School’s co-curricular offerings by bringing more of those costs on budget and partnering with parents to reduce add-on costs</p> <p>ATTRACT GREAT STUDENTS</p>	<p>Determine the cost of the transformative student experience and ways to fund for all families</p> <p>Partner with parent volunteers to audit extra costs and levy only those essential to the student experience</p>
<p>Launch an apprentice teaching program for people of color and other under-represented faculty</p> <p>ATTRACT AND RETAIN GREAT EDUCATORS</p>	<p>Hiring of diverse faculty members who stay beyond internship</p>
<p>Create committee to review and determine most competitive compensation packages, including expansion of tuition remission, and how to fund</p> <p>ATTRACT AND RETAIN GREAT EDUCATORS</p>	<p>Determine cost</p> <p>Make recommendation</p> <p>Implement</p>
<p>Execute current Bold Action Campaign and extend other vehicles of development support to effectively address the School’s needs in support of the Strategic Plan priorities – including expansion of the campaign in support of the new athletic complex</p> <p>ENSURE RESOURCES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE</p>	<p>Success of campaign</p> <p>Annual Fund growth</p> <p>Endowment Growth</p> <p>Healthy PPSMM fund</p> <p>Planned Giving</p>
<p>Conduct a master facility plan to evaluate our facilities, grounds and technology infrastructure to determine optimal and sustainable use and safeguard longevity</p> <p>ENSURE RESOURCES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE</p>	<p>Production of the plan and fulfilling recommendations</p>
<p>Work with Facility Committee to develop a comprehensive vision of sustainability for MICDS, including integrating sustainable practices into all elements of the School’s educational program, facilities, and operation</p> <p>ENSURE RESOURCES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE</p>	<p>Development and publication of Vision</p>

**This is not a comprehensive list, and we recognize that more tactics will be developed as the plan is put into effect.*



THE WAY FORWARD

Following approval by the Board, the Strategic Plan will be introduced to the full community through a robust online presence, community events, presentations, *MICDS Magazine*, and *The Weekly News*.

The successful implementation of the plan will become the work of the entire School community. As we move forward, we'll continue to define annual action steps that enable us to reach our strategic goals and that will serve as a reference point for all that we do. New factors will emerge during the process that must be identified, assessed, and incorporated into our thinking.

MICDS

Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015

MICDS.ORG

