BRIGHTER. BETTER. TOGETHER.

Presented By: The Strategic Planning Steering Committee
February 2015
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.
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 Pfleger ’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 Pfleger ‘80, Past Board Chair
Stuart Campbell, Past Board Chair
Lisa Lyle, Head of School

Dear Board of Trustees,

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MICDS
Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School
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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.

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
## 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 Koplar ‘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 Wuertenbecher 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 Doorman ’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
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.
**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.

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**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**

**JAN / FEB**

**MARCH / APRIL**

**MAY / JUNE**

**JULY / AUG**

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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.
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 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 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 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TACTICS</th>
<th>METRICS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elevate advisor and mentor responsibilities as a fundamental obligation of faculty and increase accountability</td>
<td>Empower dean oversight of program Field Advisor Survey among students focused on performance of advisory and role of advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RELATIONSHIPS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and field a Young Alumni Survey to gauge effectiveness, performance, and impact of transformative programs</td>
<td>Partner with Lookout Management to conduct Performance Measurement Survey among young alumni</td>
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<td><strong>RELATIONSHIPS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Embed service learning in the JK-12 curriculum and require meaningful community service hours</td>
<td>Institute more intentional curriculum/program with required hours</td>
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<td><strong>CHARACTER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Map, develop and refine age-appropriate experiences that bring to life transformative experiences for all students</td>
<td>Create a committee to track all students’ access and engagement in transformative experiences beyond the classroom</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>COMPREHENSIVE AND CONCENTRATED KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Number of presentations and the variety of speakers and topics Level of engagement among students – as indicated in surveys Level of interest among adults to participate and present</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Curriculum development and advisory programming Faculty Training</td>
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*This is not a comprehensive list, and we recognize that more tactics will be developed as the plan is put into effect.*
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.

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.

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

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<tr>
<td>Articulate expectations for student engagement and ensure faculty partner effectively in that work <strong>GREAT TEACHING</strong></td>
<td>Faculty goals and reflection (fall and spring) to identify areas of strength and opportunity Observation and evaluation process Student surveys to provide feedback to faculty, coaches, and sponsors</td>
</tr>
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<td>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 <strong>GREAT TEACHING</strong></td>
<td>Summit Attendance Surveys – satisfaction survey of attendees regarding Summit and presenters</td>
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<td>Deepen faculty understanding of how standards, assessment, homework, and grading connect with effective instruction <strong>GREAT LEARNING</strong></td>
<td>Review of assessments by discipline to ensure all are aligned to curricular standards; incorporate table grading to promote discussion and common understanding of standards</td>
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<td>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 <strong>GREAT LEARNING</strong></td>
<td>Peer Observations, including cross division Feedback by administrators and department chairs</td>
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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.
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.
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Establish a committee to make a formal recommendation</td>
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<td><strong>ATTRACT GREAT STUDENTS</strong></td>
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<td>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</td>
<td>Determine the cost of the transformative student experience and ways to fund for all families</td>
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<td>Partner with parent volunteers to audit extra costs and levy only those essential to the student experience</td>
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<td>Launch an apprentice teaching program for people of color and other under-represented faculty</td>
<td>Hiring of diverse faculty members who stay beyond internship</td>
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<td><strong>ATTRACT AND RETAIN GREAT EDUCATORS</strong></td>
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<td>Create committee to review and determine most competitive compensation packages, including expansion of tuition remission, and how to fund</td>
<td>Determine cost</td>
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<td>Make recommendation</td>
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<td>Implement</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Success of campaign</td>
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<td>Annual Fund growth</td>
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<td>Endowment Growth</td>
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<td>Healthy PPSMM fund</td>
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<td>Planned Giving</td>
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<td><strong>ENSURE RESOURCES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE</strong></td>
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<td>Conduct a master facility plan to evaluate our facilities, grounds and technology infrastructure to determine optimal and sustainable use and safeguard longevity</td>
<td>Production of the plan and fulfilling recommendations</td>
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<td>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</td>
<td>Development and publication of Vision</td>
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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.