



# Strategic Plan 2021-2026





*Mission*

St. Joseph Montessori School is a Catholic Montessori community committed to a learning environment that respects the uniqueness of each child in reaching his/her full potential.

Founded nearly 55 years ago, SJMS has a long history of strategic collaboration. The Sisters of Notre Dame founded SJMS in 1968 as a Montessori preschool preparation program. Within a few years, parents and families recognized the value of Montessori education, and worked with the Sisters to expand into elementary grade levels. Following on this success, another expansion occurred in 1977 and transitioned SJMS to a private, pre-kindergarten through eighth grade Diocesan school, with non-profit status and an elected Board of Trustees. In 1985, SJMS moved to its current location on Hamlet Street in Italian Village in the heart of Columbus.

With strong Montessori foundations, SJMS continues to set itself apart from other private schools by offering a whole-child approach that values and focuses on the cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of each child. It is a safe, friendly, and welcoming community where students can confidently develop all aspects of their intelligence and their character. We guide children to develop sound values, to be respectful of and caring to all, to problem solve, to relate to others peacefully, and to develop a strong sense of responsibility for themselves and the world around them.

During the 2019-2020 school year, SJMS began the process of becoming fully accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS). As part of the process, our entire staff was divided into committees to evaluate our school based on the nine standards outlined by the AMS. Those standards are: Philosophy, Mission, and Vision; Governance, Leadership, and Continuous Improvement (Strategic Plan); Teaching and Learning (Educational Nature); Documenting and Using Results (Learner Outcomes); Personnel; Facility Resources; Finances and Stability; Records, Resources, and Support System; and Stakeholder Communication and Relationships.

Through the evaluation process, we identified strengths, challenges, and our plans and priorities for the future. These plans and priorities helped us formulate our strategic plan goals. With input from parents, teachers, staff, and the board, we finalized and adopted our strategic plan that will lead us through 2026.

**1**

### **Educational and Program Excellence**

Ensure and enhance continued educational excellence in support of our students, teachers, and families, guided by the Montessori Method.

**2**

### **Financial and Environmental Excellence**

Leverage our solid financial health to strengthen our facilities, support our faculty and staff, and plan for future growth,

**3**

### **Strong Community and Profile**

Nurture our community and build knowledge and awareness of the strengths and benefits of Montessori education, both internally and externally.

# Educational & Program Excellence:

*Ensure and enhance continued educational excellence in support of our students, teachers, and families, guided by the Montessori Method.*

Providing a comprehensive, rich, and exemplary academic program for our students, guided by the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori, is the highest goal for our students. We will foster an environment in which children love learning, aim high to reach their potential, and become curious and caring members of their communities. To achieve this goal, we will continually strive to improve the quality and breadth of the education our students receive.

Many elements contribute to fostering this goal. A strong academic program, an outstanding faculty, and a diversity of perspectives and experiences nurtured in the classroom are all vital. But even more, we must embrace an expectation that everyone - students, teachers, staff, and family members - are active participants in a process of continual educational development and enhanced knowledge about the Montessori method.

# Objectives

- Mission and Vision are student centered and guided by Montessori pedagogy
- Establish and communicate a shared philosophy that informs all facets of the school's culture
- Establish and communicate a shared philosophy that informs all facets of the school's daily operations
- Establish and communicate a shared philosophy that informs all facets of instructional decisions
- Promote student learning and school effectiveness through strong governance aligned with the school's Mission and Vision
- Establish, implement, monitor, and refine a strategic planning process to ensure continuous improvement
- Implement Montessori curriculum based on clear and measurable learner outcomes and benchmarks
- Students' actively engage in the learning process evidenced through joy of learning
- Students' actively engage in the learning process evidenced through application of knowledge to real-world situations
- Enact an ongoing assessment system that monitors and documents learning outcomes
- Enact an ongoing assessment system that uses the results to improve education effectiveness

# Financial & Environmental Excellence

*Leverage our solid financial health to strengthen our facilities, our Montessori environments, support our faculty and staff, and plan for future growth.*

Educational and program excellence must be supported by careful and diligent stewardship of our school's finances. From the strength of our current financial position, we will focus on the efficient use of all available resources to deliver on the school's daily environmental needs while also building toward the needs of the future.

We will make forward-thinking and broadly beneficial investments to improve program excellence, increase retention and enrollment, attract and retain superior faculty and staff, and enhance socio-economic diversity in our school community. Through a variety of methods, we will continue to strengthen our financial position, including but not limited to exploring grants and technology enhancements, and growing our endowment funds.

# Objectives

- Establish and follow policies and practices that ensure employees are well qualified and are assigned professional duties based on their qualifications
- Employees are provided support through ongoing evaluation and professional development
- Employees are sufficient in number to support the school's Mission and Vision
- States and follows fair, ethical, and non-discriminatory practices
- Provide facilities, equipment, and materials that meet and exceed optimum health and safety standards conducive to a safe learning environment and are in alignment with the Mission and Vision of the school
- Maintain strong and prudent financial management practices that support Mission, Vision, and programming
- Maintain strong and prudent financial resources to support the Mission and Vision
- Ensures that appropriate documentation, training, and human resources meet applicable federal, state, and local regulations, assure health and safety of faculty and students

# Strong Community Profile

*Nurture our community and build knowledge and awareness of the strengths and benefits of Montessori education and collaborate and develop partnerships within the community, both internally and externally.*

Montessori education and a strong community set SJMS apart from other schools. To nurture our community and strengthen the position of the school, we will find more ways to share knowledge of the rich Montessori learning that goes on in our classrooms. Programming, communications, and marketing will establish SJMS's Montessori leadership and advocacy, all toward the goal of a stable full enrollment every year.

Our approach must be both internal and external. Internally, programming and communications should solidify families' commitment to SJMS by highlighting the benefits of Montessori education from preschool through eighth grade, and forging a strong community. We must ensure parents are consistently and accurately informed of the specifics of their child's learning and development at SJMS.

Externally, our programming, communications, and marketing should promote growing, diverse enrollment, and establish SJMS as the school of choice in Columbus for preschool through eighth grade. We will raise SJMS's profile in the community by seeking strategic partnerships, sharing academic data, and finding opportunities that broaden awareness of the value of Montessori education.



# Objectives

- Enable all students to achieve expectations for student learning outcomes
- Fosters effective communications and relationships with and among all stakeholders
- Fosters effective communications and relationships with and among the greater Montessori community supporting the vision that Montessori is beneficial for all children

# Identity Statements

During the 2021-2022 school year, faculty and leadership came together to develop these identity statements. These statements reflect the beliefs of who we are as a school community.

- St. Joseph Montessori School is a high-fidelity Montessori School that prioritizes ethical and respectful practices.
- St. Joseph Montessori School is committed to respecting the individuality and potential of each person.
- St. Joseph Montessori School is a collaborative, cooperative, and inclusive community that supports the development of the whole child; spiritual, physical, cognitive, social, and emotional.
- St. Joseph Montessori School fosters the individual spiritual growth and well-being of the child within a Catholic framework.
- St. Joseph Montessori School is committed to providing an environment of empathy, compassion, and trust.
- St. Joseph Montessori School is committed to guiding children to be ambassadors of peace by respecting ourselves, each other, and the environment.





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