



Our *Guiding* Light

ST. MICHAEL'S 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

A photograph of four children standing on a path overlooking a lake in autumn. The children are seen from behind, looking towards the water. The trees are filled with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow that reflects on the water's surface. The children are dressed in casual attire; one boy in a white polo shirt and khaki pants, and three girls in striped shirts. The path they are on is covered with fallen leaves.

Our Mission

Adopted 2023

ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

nurtures the spirit, ignites the mind, and celebrates childhood in a community of love, affirmation, and belonging that fosters educational excellence.

*“To thee St. Michael’s,
raise we our voices,
guide and light of our early years.
As life goes onward,
long will we cherish
all you have taught us here.”*

(from To Thee St. Michael’s, St. Michael’s School Song)



FOR OVER SIX DECADES, St. Michael's Episcopal School has stood as a beacon, illuminating the early years and educational foundation of countless children. As we embark on the journey into the future, our Strategic Plan remains firmly rooted in the enduring principles that have defined St. Michael's for generations. At the core of our mission is an unwavering commitment to educational excellence, instilling values, and fostering spiritual growth. Our vision extends beyond the horizon, embracing innovative approaches to learning while preserving the timeless essence of a St. Michael's education.

In the constantly evolving landscape of education, we hold steadfastly to our DRAGONS' Values of kindness, respect, acceptance, integrity, responsibility, resilience, and compassion and our dedication to creating a community characterized by love, belonging, and support—where each child can flourish academically and as a compassionate and morally grounded individual.

As we shape our School's future, the Strategic Plan serves as an inspirational roadmap, ensuring that the guiding light of St. Michael's continues to shine brightly for generations to come.

The Plan's five goals encompass:

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FACULTY AND STAFF

CAMPUS AND FACILITIES

SUSTAINABILITY

Each strategic imperative is backed by specific steps to implement those goals. Every plan evolves along the way as steps are completed, and as such, St. Michael's will create an intentional sequencing of plan implementation so that initiatives will build upon one another. Task forces, composed of trustees, administrators, and faculty will examine existing practices and new opportunities to ensure that our activities are mission-appropriate and support the achievement of our key strategic imperatives.



Our Process

The process of developing this plan has been intensive and inclusive. As collaborative efforts and diverse contributions are crucial for the success of any organization's strategic initiatives, we are grateful for the input and support from our Board of Trustees, faculty and staff, and so many members of our School community who contributed to our Strategic Plan.

The planning process included:

- » Listening sessions with all faculty/staff and representative Middle School students
- » A comprehensive parent survey
- » A full Board planning session
- » Workgroups to revise the mission statement and articulate each goal
- » Review and edits to the draft by the full Board
- » A final review by the strategic planning committee
- » Final approval by the Board

At every step of the planning process, we discussed a desire to increase diversity, both in our students and our faculty and staff. We have woven intentional steps to attract a broad range of students and faculty, as well as efforts to increase a feeling of belonging for all community members. As an Episcopal school, we recognize that each person is precious and must be treated with dignity and respect.

As well, we honed our mission statement to precisely delineate our identity as an inclusive school, emphasizing our unique commitment to fostering the development of the whole child, encompassing spiritual and values-driven growth, and nurturing an environment of educational excellence that cherishes and honors the precious years of childhood.



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Educational Excellence

Academic excellence is central to St. Michael's Episcopal School's vision for the future. Building on a history of working with parents as partners to develop resilient and academically prepared children, St. Michael's Episcopal School will continue to implement curricular and co-curricular programs grounded in research of current best practices. Among best practices is the understanding that there is great value in diversity of point of view and in celebrating the broad richness of multiple cultures both historically and today. In tandem with academics, the individual attention students receive during these most important formative years supports each child as he or she grows physically, emotionally, and spiritually. By the time our students enter high school, they will be more than academically prepared; they will be confident and comfortable with who they are as individuals and will have developed an appreciation of the global community of which they will be contributing members.

GOAL: Be a safe place for students to develop academically, physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally.

1. Ensure that academic and religious curricula and co-curricular programs follow best practices based on current research and the needs of St. Michael's Episcopal School students to help them prepare for success in a global world, think critically, and consider multiple perspectives
2. Maintain a focus on wellness, with increasing attention to mental health
3. Foster strong partnerships with parents

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Community Engagement

Community engagement and trust are the bedrock of a strong school community. St. Michael's is committed to building authentic relationships and collaborative partnerships that contribute to the overall success of our School community. Engaging our community in two-way conversations brings a wealth of resources, expertise, and diverse perspectives that enrich educational experiences, inspire students, and foster a sense of belonging.

GOAL: Engage in open, authentic, and respectful communications that foster a sense of shared community and trust and build lasting relationships for every individual in the St. Michael's Episcopal School community.

1. Create an understanding of Episcopal Values throughout the St. Michael's Episcopal School community
2. Build trust through clear, open, and regular communications
3. Help parents and students develop personal connections with a variety of people within the St. Michael's Episcopal School community and the Greater Richmond community
4. Be intentional about increasing diversity as we recruit new students





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Faculty and Staff

For generations, St. Michael's has been synonymous with the excellence of our faculty and transformative teacher-student relationships. Supporting a vibrant, diverse, and dedicated faculty with meaningful opportunities for professional development, as well as intellectual and personal growth, is essential for fostering a dynamic and enriching educational environment where the educators' passion, creativity, and expertise are key drivers of student success.

GOAL: Attract, develop, and retain a diverse, professional, committed, and engaged faculty and staff who reflect the values and mission of St. Michael's.

1. Increase the awareness of St. Michael's Episcopal School as an employer of choice in the area, with a focus on increasing diversity among faculty and staff
2. Support formal and informal approaches to professional development
3. Provide the appropriate level of staffing given the current number of students and physical campus



OUR *Guiding* LIGHT

Campus and Facilities

At St. Michael's, we choose to embrace the “power of place”-- understanding that our unique nature-filled 70-acre surroundings of fields, forests, lake, and streams allow us to teach inside and outside of the classroom, and help to shape our faculty and students’ learning and social-emotional well-being. We will seek to further engage our School community in tangible, safe, and transformative ways with our campus and the engaging and innovative opportunities it provides.

GOAL: Maintain our current facilities and develop a capital improvement plan that supports the School’s mission.

1. Remain vigilant regarding the safety and security of students, faculty, staff, and visitors
2. Develop a Campus Master Plan that takes advantage of St. Michael’s Episcopal School’s 70 acres of fields and forest
3. Maintain and improve the current campus and facilities





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Sustainability

To compete in the very highly competitive independent school market, St. Michael's must work proactively to maximize revenue generation and manage existing and new resources in ways that expand philanthropic opportunities and foster sound financial stewardship. Our tuition is below market based on our competitive analysis, and our intent is to maintain a cost-effective alternative for families. At the same time, to maintain our excellence, we must attract and retain the best faculty and staff as they are our greatest resource. While we are in a stable financial position, succeeding in these goals requires filling the financial gap through philanthropy, so we will work to expand our culture of giving to support the School.

GOAL: Develop financial resources that enable St. Michael's Episcopal School to enrich student experience and to pursue full enrollment now and for future generations.

1. Create financial policies to provide guidance in the allocation of resources
2. Develop a conservative, forward-looking financial strategy to support diversity efforts
3. Strengthen the culture of giving to St. Michael's Episcopal School



**AS OUR GUIDING LIGHT, THIS STRATEGIC PLAN
ILLUMINATES THE PATH AHEAD WITH WISDOM,
INSPIRATION, AND CLEAR GOALS, STEERING OUR
SCHOOL CONFIDENTLY INTO THE FUTURE.**

2023 Strategic Plan Leadership

We are grateful for the significant time and effort that our strategic planning committee invested in this plan.

BOARD

Beth Murphy Rollins, *Committee Chair*

Philip R. Strunk, *Board Chair*

Vicki Latham Solomon

Christoper R. Gorman

Eric J. Nedell

Laura Hamlin Weiler '96

FACULTY AND STAFF

Robert "Bob" E. Gregg III, *Head of School*

Merrill Geier, *Lower School Director*

Jessica Stargell, *Middle School Director*

Andrea Amore, *Director of Communications*

Anne Bridgforth, *Lower School Division Assistant*

Mary King Coleman, *Senior Development Officer*

Mike Jackson, *Director of Finance and Facilities*

Alison Smith Roussy '92, *Director of Admissions*

In addition to the committee, the entire Board and many additional parents, faculty and staff, and Middle School students, participated in developing this plan.



St. Michael's Episcopal School

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