



# PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Parents of University School of Milwaukee students are partners with the school in ensuring a positive learning environment. Together, we are grounded in the mission to provide an exceptional PK-12 education in a supportive, inclusive community.

## PHILOSOPHY

**USM** is committed to hiring and retaining talented faculty, administrators, and staff and ensuring that every child receives individual attention. Multiple perspectives and experiences are core to educational excellence and strengthen a community, which is why the school welcomes diversity in its many forms. USM's distinctive philosophy is clearly and fully presented during the admission process, and dialogue that clarifies parent expectations and aspirations for their children is encouraged.

**Parents** who choose USM are seeking an education for their children as set out in the school's mission statement and guiding principles (listed on the reverse).

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

**USM** encourages a commitment to lifelong learning by regularly offering a variety of parent educational opportunities, presenting experts in many different areas who provide knowledge and information on parenting issues and other relevant and important topics.

**Parents** provide a safe home environment that supports their children's academic success and reinforces the tenets of the Common Trust, which is expressed in the following pledge. *"We, the members of the University School of Milwaukee, accept the Common Trust. We agree to relate to one another and the school with respect, trust, honesty, fairness, and kindness."*

## RESPECT

**USM** seeks, values, and listens to parents' perspectives and concerns regarding their children and the school. Faculty, administrators, and staff are accessible and responsive to parents and model civil, honest, and respectful dialogue.

**Parents** respect the expertise and professionalism of the school's faculty, administrators, and staff and, if there is a difference of opinion, communicate directly with the individuals who are best able to address their concerns. They use the proper channels—first the individual teacher or advisor, then the department chair or division head, and, finally, the head of school—and seek a collaborative solution to problems.

## PRIVACY

**USM** acknowledges and respects each family's right to privacy.

**Parents** acknowledge and respect the right to privacy of all individuals connected with the school.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

**USM** encourages parents to participate in campus life, whether through activities in collaboration with the Parents' Association or as part of school-sponsored events.

**Parents** are present, involving themselves in the life of the school and their children's experiences as much as they are able. Every parent is a member of the Parents' Association and is encouraged to volunteer their time. Parents are also requested to consider a contribution according to their ability to the USM Fund annual giving program and any special campaigns.

## COMMUNICATION

**USM** communications are comprehensive and timely. If a child is encountering academic difficulties, parents will be kept informed of follow-up plans and strategies to support the child. Additionally, the school will regularly update parents through e-communications, letters, meetings, publications, and other means about important information and events.

**Parents** are expected to read all communications from the school and respond in a timely manner as appropriate.

## FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**USM** faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees will be good stewards of the school's financial resources.

**Parents** and families accept their financial responsibilities to the school, including making all tuition payments on time.



# SCHOOL MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

University School of Milwaukee's mission statement and guiding principles were revised and approved by the school's Board of Trustees in 2014 to better coordinate and tie together several statements that existed previously.

## MISSION STATEMENT

University School of Milwaukee provides an exceptional PK-12 independent school education in a supportive, inclusive community built on the foundation of our Common Trust. By igniting a passion for learning, leadership, and service, the school prepares each student—as an individual—for success in higher education and a life of purpose. USM embraces a tradition of superior academic achievement through a commitment to expertise and innovation in our school.

In addition, educational decisions and goals at University School of Milwaukee are based on the following guiding principles:

## COMMUNITY

- A physically and emotionally safe environment provides students, faculty, and staff with opportunities to express their ideas and grow intellectually.
- Students, families, faculty, and staff are committed to academic excellence and behavioral standards and understand their responsibilities to the school and to their local and global communities.
- Faculty and staff cultivate connections that create meaningful and productive relationships among students, families, alumni, and their communities.
- Families provide valuable contributions to the school community through their involvement with and support of students, faculty, and staff.

## INCLUSION

- The uniqueness of every individual is celebrated.
- Recognition of and respect for the diversity of backgrounds and experiences is fundamental to building a learning community where students learn to think broadly, critically, and independently.
- All members of the school community feel empowered as they live and work equitably together.
- Students are prepared for the opportunities of a diverse world and are provided with a supportive environment in which to reach their full potential.

## STUDENTS AND FACULTY

- Students thrive when opportunities are provided that not only develop their knowledge and skills, but also allow them to make personal, meaningful connections to their learning.
- Students become independent, lifelong learners when exposed to a multitude of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that encourage active engagement and growth in academic, social, and personal endeavors.
- Faculty members, through engagement in ongoing professional development in their disciplines, are the cornerstones to building and supporting a community of learners.
- Faculty members are responsible for the development and implementation of a well-integrated, state-of-the-art curriculum that provides an impetus for each student's intellectual, social, emotional, ethical, physical, and artistic development.

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- A coordinated, meaningful, and challenging curriculum enables students to build on prior learning, discover their passions, and develop their individual academic potential.
- A relevant and innovative curriculum goes beyond literal learning to develop higher-level critical thinking and creative expression, utilizing the latest technologies and resources.
- Local and global connections enrich the curriculum and inspire students to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.
- Ongoing formative and summative assessments provide the basis for improved curriculum design and both individualized and group instruction.