



# *Courage & Confidence*

The Strategic Framework for  
Forest Ridge School

*Courage and  
confidence!*

**I cannot repeat  
this war-cry too  
often. We should  
make it our  
support in our life  
of conflict.**

- St. Madeleine Sophie Barat,  
Foundress of Sacred Heart Education

# A Letter to Our Community

Over 200 years ago, the Society of the Sacred Heart's foundress, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, believed in empowering girls with a solid academic foundation, a strong voice and the nurturing love of God. To that end, she began to educate the young women of France. Over the years, the Society expanded across the globe, and Forest Ridge continues to drive this mission. Since its founding in 1907, the School has empowered girls to find their voices, inspired girls to discover their interests and prepared girls to lead with confidence, changing the world—one girl at a time.

Maintaining excellence requires us to reflect on our values, goals and programs continually in the context of our ever-changing world and to periodically articulate a new strategic vision for our future. When we began our strategic visioning process in 2019, our goal was to listen to the voices of our many constituents, to hear what they believed Forest Ridge does particularly well, to identify opportunities we have for improvement, and, most importantly, to name the ways we can continue to prepare girls for their futures, while ensuring they experience each day with joy, curiosity and enthusiasm. The **four strategic initiatives** outlined in **Courage & Confidence - The Strategic Framework for Forest Ridge School 2021-2026**—Re-imagine Community; Ignite Curiosity, Creativity and Purpose; Invest in Our Educators and Secure A Vibrant Future—represent the desires of our community, communicated clearly and consistently by the School's stakeholders in community focus groups and survey responses. These strategic initiatives will guide the work of our Board of Trustees, administration and faculty over the next five years.

Our Strategic Framework is a living document—one that provides guidance and sets goals while remaining responsive to our rapidly changing educational landscape. Implementation of the Strategic Framework will require the School's commitment to translating the initiatives into concrete action plans. Some of this work has already begun, and some work will continue to evolve over the coming years.

**This is an extraordinary moment for Forest Ridge.** Educating girls has never been more important than it is today, and our Framework paves a bold and brave path for our future. We are immensely grateful to everyone who has participated in the visioning process, and we hope every member of our community feels ownership and pride, as the Framework represents our collective hopes and dreams for the School. We cannot do this work alone. Our success in bringing our aspirations to fruition relies on continued partnership between the School and our families, alumnae and friends. We invite all who love Forest Ridge to join us in the next phase of this remarkable school's adventures.

The future is bright for Forest Ridge. With the Strategic Framework as our guide, Forest Ridge will deepen our commitment to our mission, expand our programming opportunities and establish ourselves as the premier independent girls' school in the Pacific Northwest.

With enthusiasm and gratitude,

**Mary Rose Guerin**

Head of School

**Anne Romano Sarewitz '71**

Chair, Board of Trustees

**Ken Jaffe**

Chair, Strategic Planning Task Force

# Mission

Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart educates young women to think critically, embrace challenges, model resilience, confront injustice, seek equality and lead globally in the pioneering spirit of our foundress. Our alumnae change the world.

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# Vision

We are a leader in educating girls to be competent, confident and courageous women, ready to lead lives of purpose in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex world.



## COMPETENCE

Forest Ridge educates all students to the highest academic standards while providing them with diverse opportunities to explore new intellectual horizons, delve deep into their academic interests and take ownership for their learning. With a focus on uniting disciplinary knowledge and skills, while encouraging new ways of thinking, our academic and extracurricular programs ignite curiosity, creativity and purpose within our students, empowering each girl to pursue her intellectual journey.

## CONFIDENCE

At Forest Ridge, we empower girls to push their own limits and lead from the heart. Our curriculum and programs prepare students to be brave, resilient leaders who are fully equipped with the cultural competencies necessary to engage meaningfully as global citizens.

## COURAGE

Forest Ridge graduates demonstrate the curiosity necessary to boldly face the unknown. We know that our students face a future that is certain to be complex and competitive, and our programming, both in and out of the classroom, helps students develop the inner strength to follow their own convictions and be the very best version of themselves, no matter the odds.



To learn more, visit [www.forestridge.org/strategicframework](http://www.forestridge.org/strategicframework)

# Portrait of a Graduate



Our Portrait of a Graduate serves as a framework for realizing our vision of educating girls to be competent, confident and courageous women, ready to lead lives of purpose in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex world. With a firm commitment to our values, we prepare our students to think critically, embrace challenges, model resilience, confront injustice, seek equity and lead globally.

With this objective, our curriculum and programs are designed to advance development in five primary educational outcomes:



## SACRED HEART WOMAN

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- Lives with integrity from her core values
- Uses prayer and reflection to grow in faith
- Expresses respect, compassion, forgiveness and generosity
- Values and protects the dignity of others
- Develops significant and reciprocal relationships for service



## AUTHENTIC LEADER

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- Faces challenges with confidence and resilience
- Demonstrates autonomy over her own body, voice and choices
- Communicates authentically and effectively
- Supports and celebrates the success of others
- Practices personal well-being



## AGILE THINKER

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- Adjusts as new challenges and opportunities arise
- Adapts knowledge to make fresh connections
- Actively seeks opportunities to stretch learning
- Negotiates differences when collaborating with others on complex tasks
- Learns from and applies feedback



## INNOVATIVE PROBLEM SOLVER

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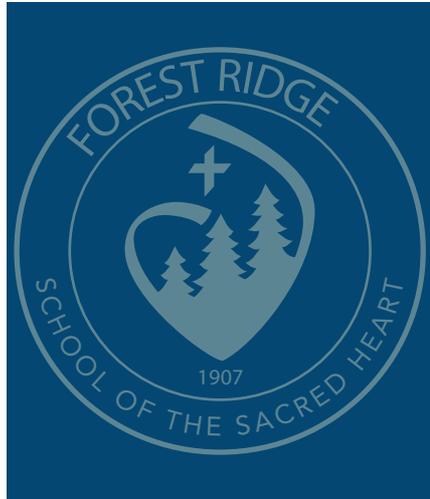
- Responds to real-world issues with original and useful solutions
- Examines issues from diverse and entrepreneurial perspectives
- Leverages technology to create new knowledge and understanding
- Takes appropriate risks and learns from failure



## GLOBAL CITIZEN

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- Seeks to understand the natural and cultural complexities of problems
- Advocates for equity and justice
- Demonstrates personal, social and civic responsibility
- Acts as a steward of the earth's resources
- Takes responsibility for her impact on the world





# Direction #1 | Reimagine Community

Forest Ridge is not just a campus, it's a community—a place where people belong and relationships matter. At Forest Ridge, we commit to building a shared space where interests are cultivated, authentic connections are made and empathetic and open communication is fostered. We engage our neighbors, creating opportunities for true partnership, establishing Forest Ridge as a contributing member of the wider community.

## *We will:*

### **Reinforce Our Sacred Heart Identity**

As a member of a world class network of Sacred Heart schools, Forest Ridge is rich with culture and tradition. We will continue to embrace our Sacred Heart identity, establishing stronger partnership with our Network schools and ensuring that our *Goals and Criteria* underpin our programs and culture in a way that is relevant to today's learners.

### **Foster a Sense of Belonging, Camaraderie and School Spirit**

Our school is more than just a campus. It is a second home—a joyous community that engages, supports and values its members for their unique gifts and talents. We will build an equitable and inclusive school community in which every member is proud to belong.

### **Establish Strong Partnerships between Home, Community and School**

Building strong relationships between home, school and the community is proven to have positive impacts on learning. We will inspire a culture of connection that unites our community and helps our girls excel.

### **Position Forest Ridge as a Contributing Member of the Wider Community**

Building mutually beneficial relationships with the wider Bellevue and Seattle communities is vital to helping our girls grow into strong leaders, responsible and empathetic citizens and women of purpose. Forest Ridge will find creative ways to engage our community, become active participants in the Seattle-area and communicate the Forest Ridge story beyond the boundaries of our campus.



# Direction #2

## Ignite Curiosity, Creativity and Purpose

Forest Ridge commits to educating all students to the highest academic standards, developing thoughtful women who exercise initiative in, and autonomy over, their learning; who demonstrate the curiosity necessary to boldly face the unknown; who embrace ambiguity and engage agile thinking; who exhibit the creativity needed for ingenuity and innovative problem solving; and who embody the sense of purpose required to make a positive impact on their world.

### *We will:*

#### **Empower Girls to Pursue Their Intellectual Journeys**

Our curricular program will empower our students to explore new intellectual horizons, delve deep into their academic interests and take ownership for their learning. We will provide a learning environment that fosters inquiry-driven and independent research, provides student choice and ultimately cultivates a love of learning.

#### **Inspire Excellence and Leadership in All Girls**

Diversity of experience and thought is a cornerstone of the School and an integral part of the learning process. At Forest Ridge, we commit to embracing each student as a unique individual, while fully preparing her with the cultural competencies necessary to thrive in an increasingly global and complex world. We will ensure our curriculum reflects our diverse student body and will equip our students with the tools needed to build inclusive and equitable communities.

#### **Integrate and Unite Disciplinary Knowledge and Skills to Encourage New Ways of Thinking**

In today's world, with easy and quick access to information, education is less about the imparting of knowledge and more about fostering its creation and application. We will provide our students with a strong multidisciplinary curriculum rich with integrated learning opportunities that push them to apply their knowledge and skills in a variety of cross-curricular ways.

#### **Connect Girls to Their Social, Ecological and Digital Communities**

To inspire our students to lead lives of purpose, opportunities to engage with communities both inside and outside the School are critical. We will build strong partnerships with our networks and alum, parent and business communities, to connect our students to the world around them, introduce them to a variety of perspectives and experiences, expose them to the interconnectedness of the world and instill in them the desire to make a positive impact on their world.



# Direction # 3 | Invest in Our Educators

At Forest Ridge, an effective member of our faculty, staff or Board of Trustees is not only a skilled professional steeped in best practices, but s/he must also serve as a prime example of our mission. We commit to building a community of exceptional professionals who are passionate about Sacred Heart education, providing them with the support and resources needed to successfully deliver our program.

## *We will:*

### **Recruit, Develop and Retain Mission-Aligned Faculty, Staff and Trustees of Diverse Backgrounds**

Our students must see themselves reflected in our adult community. We will enhance our hiring and retention initiatives to promote and support a more diverse community of mission-aligned educators, positioned to prepare our students as citizens of a multicultural world.

### **Recognize, Value and Support Our Faculty and Staff**

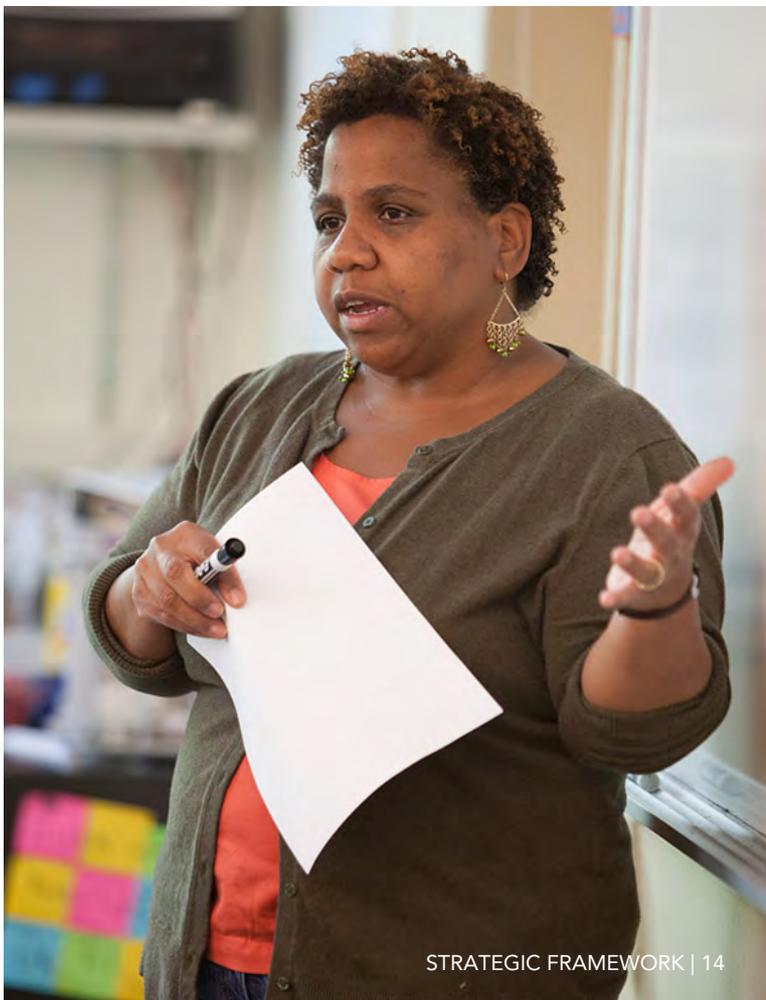
A school's greatest resource is its people. Recognizing that outstanding teaching is the single most important factor associated with

our school's success, we will ensure that our educators are rewarded and honored for their talent and expertise.

### **Reinforce a Culture of High Expectations and Empower the Continual Growth of Our Professional Community**

The most dynamic schools have a culture of excellence that encourages the continual growth of the adult community. Modeling the commitment of life-long learning to our students, we will set a clear standard for high professional expectations, create ample time and opportunity for the on-going development of our faculty and staff and further enhance our professional development programs to support their growth.

Recognizing that *outstanding teaching* is the single most important factor associated with our school's success, we will ensure that our educators are rewarded and honored for their talent and expertise.



# Direction # 4

## Secure a Vibrant Future

We commit to ensuring the School's long-term financial sustainability through careful and strategic stewardship of our resources, continued growth in giving, strengthening of our marketing and communication efforts and the development of a strategic enrollment management plan and processes.

### *We will:*

#### **Retain and Recruit Students by Demonstrating Our Competitive Advantage**

In an increasingly competitive 5-12 independent school market, we must clearly and confidently demonstrate the unparalleled value of a Forest Ridge education. We will strategically amplify our communication efforts to highlight the distinct advantages and exceptional opportunities offered to our student body.

#### **Expand Whom We Serve**

Changing geographic and demographic trends in our region, as well as the evolving needs of students and families, provide opportunities for us to engage new communities. Using our resources, we will focus on recruiting families from communities not currently represented in our student body, while cultivating a supportive and inclusive environment where they can succeed.

#### **Strategically and Judiciously Manage Our Resources**

Our school must manage its financial operations with integrity, discipline and ingenuity. We will develop a sustainable,

long-range financial plan that ensures ongoing support of our mission, shared values and strategic initiatives.

#### **Cultivate a Culture of Philanthropy**

Philanthropic support is critical to the success of independent schools. We will strengthen the organizational values and practices that support and nurture the School's philanthropic support through articulating the role of philanthropy in advancing our mission, demonstrating the impact of giving on the student experience, expanding and diversifying our fundraising priorities and investing in building strong and meaningful relationships with our community and supporters.

#### **Plan for the Future of Our Facilities**

The smart and creative use of our facilities enables us to design a powerful learning environment that supports the holistic growth of our girls. We will develop a comprehensive master facilities plan that provides a state-of-the-art learning facility that includes a vision for future growth and ensures appropriate funding to support and maintain facilities upgrades.





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## Strategic Planning Task Force

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Brandon Blazer

Mary Rose Guerin

Pam Lauritzen

Anne Romano Sarewitz '71

Michelle Whitten

*Courage & Confidence - The Strategic Framework for Forest Ridge School paves a bold and brave path for our future. Thank you to Ken Jaffe, Chair of the Strategic Planning Task Force, and to the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff, parents and alums for their participation in the strategic planning process.*



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK | 2021-2026  
FOREST RIDGE SCHOOL OF THE SACRED HEART

[www.forestridge.org/strategicframework](http://www.forestridge.org/strategicframework)