



STRONG *Values* | **STRONG** *Women*

2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

Since 2010, St. Joseph's Academy has been moving forward with a strategic plan that carved out focus areas for the school to address in order to solidify its place in millennial St. Louis' list of top independent high schools. With those goals accomplished and a new president in place, the Board of Directors in 2017 realized it was once again time to set new ambitious goals with an inclusive process and the same dedication to excellence for which St. Joe has been known.

In the fall of 2017, a committee was brought together, with representatives from all stakeholder groups, to forge a new plan for the next five to seven years capitalizing on goals previously achieved, while committing to strengthening the school with innovative new programs, modifications to the physical plant, strategies for increasing diversity, and creative ideas for sustainability.

This document presents the results of more than a year of working together to research, consider, and decide how to go forward. We have listed seven main priorities we strive to achieve. By attending to these priorities, we expect to accomplish a vast array of goals for St. Joseph's Academy. Both goals and priorities are listed in this document.

I am grateful to our Strategic Planning Committee members and to the consulting firm, Collaborative Strategies, Inc., working principally with Brian Hayden and Ellen McCreery '08.





As I look toward the future with this document as a guide, I am excited for our school community and the journey ahead. I hope you will be too.

Forward together,
Regina E. Mooney, Ph.D., President



PLANNING PROCESS

In 2017–2018, St. Joseph’s Academy developed a strategic plan. The process had four phases:

-  *Diagnostic:* evaluating SJA’s current operations and environment
-  *Planning:* establishing a shared vision for the future
-  *Action Planning:* determining how SJA achieves its goals
-  *Commitment:* committing to the plan and agreeing on a process for keeping score

Collaborative Strategies, Inc. facilitated the planning process. A committee, consisting of board members, faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders, reviewed diagnostic findings and created the overarching planning deliverables – goals and strategic priorities. Then the team divided into small groups to work on project plans for the seven priorities. Additional members of the St. Joseph’s Academy community joined the action planning teams to promote an inclusive process and engage appropriate subject matter experts.



Diagnostic

Collaborative Strategies facilitated an extensive diagnostic process that grounded the strategic plan in the reality of St. Joseph’s Academy’s current situation. Quantitative analysis covered the organization’s recent academic statistics, college admissions data, tuition trends, and key financial results, among other items. Qualitative analysis began with a survey of St. Joseph’s Academy’s current students and alumnae. The process also included focus groups with parents, alumnae, and faculty/staff as well as interviews with the school’s leadership. Assessment findings are documented in the planning committee’s meeting materials and notes, but some of the key takeaways listed below informed our plan.

Externally, the planning team acknowledged the declining enrollment trend at Catholic grade schools, and because of this, the team realized that the school will need to attract and recruit students from non-traditional sources. Building on St. Joseph’s Academy’s existing strengths, the planning team saw our balanced approach (i.e., excelling at academics, sports, arts, and more) as a key point of differentiation. The school will emphasize this approach in the years ahead. St. Joseph’s Academy operates today in an increasingly global world, and stakeholders expressed feedback that SJA could do a better job of introducing students to new and different populations. Keeping this in mind, the plan focuses on exposure to international communities as well as building a diverse student body. Internally, the planning team heard a need to improve college advising. Students and families today have higher expectations of college advising so the planning team viewed this as an important priority in the plan.

Strategic Planning Team

The strategic planning committee consisted of the following members:

- Karen Davis, *Principal of Student Affairs*
- Linda Holland Decker ’83, *Director of Institutional Advancement*
- Dave Farrar, *Technology Department*
- Jill Slay Garlich ’80, *Board Member, Past Parent*
- Scott Gates, *Director of Facilities*
- Sandy Kemp, *Director of Finance*
- Katie Lodes, *Science Department, Current Parent*
- Meghan Martin ’18, *Current Student*
- John Meersman, *Former Board Member, Past Parent*
- Dr. Regina Mooney, *President*
- Terry Holland O’Brien ’79, *Past Parent*
- Katie Kieffer Richardson ’99, *English Department*
- Cardelia Robinson, *Diversity Outreach Coordinator, Past Parent*
- Matt Stroble, *Board President, Past Parent*
- Jen Feise Sudekum ’93, *Principal of Academic Affairs*
- Michael Wade, *Director of Admissions*

Positions are listed for the 2017-2018 School Year

PLANNING DELIVERABLES

A PICTURE OF SUCCESS FOR ST. JOSEPH'S ACADEMY IN 2022

To create focus for our planning efforts, the team developed a series of goals that describe what success will look like for St. Joseph's Academy in 2022. The team was mindful of the need to differentiate the school and create a strong value proposition for students and families. Our goals provided focus for the rest of the strategic plan.



Positioning and Differentiators

- A culture and community grounded in the traditions and Catholic values of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (CSJ):
 - Students who make a profound impact on the world while in school
 - A uniquely welcoming and vibrant community
 - Offering a more diverse (and inclusive) Catholic secondary experience
- Offering the *most balanced experience* for students (e.g., academics, athletics, arts, critical thinking, faith formation) to hone their interests, passions, and abilities for long-term life success (college and beyond)
- *Bringing the world to the school* through global education initiatives, career exposure, and more
- Supporting girls with a *range of learning styles*
- Graduates who excel both in leadership and on teams

Target Students

- Embrace our CSJ and Catholic values
- Girls who can thrive at a four-year college and are ambitious and goal-oriented
- Increasingly from non-parochial schools and across the St. Louis area

Academic Hallmarks

- Integrated & cross-disciplinary learning
- STEAM (inclusive of computer science)
- Critical thinking skills
- International studies
- Fine arts, performing arts

Enrollment and Important KPIs

- Enrollment: 525 +/-
- Average ACT score: 28

Revenue Model

- Endowment commitments of \$8MM
- Tuition raises capped at 4% (average annual rate 2017-2022)

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY GOAL

In support of the 2022 vision, St. Joseph's Academy created organizational capacity goals. The goals below around human capital, systems and facilities are enablers to the school's success.

Faculty, Staff and Volunteers

- Faculty are well-versed in cutting-edge pedagogy
- College advisors get to know each student, and proactively conduct outreach to their "best fit" schools. They are also active in coaching parents and developing relationships with "top" schools
- Teachers are empowered to use their expertise to create courses unique to SJA

Systems and Facilities

- A new Student Success Center assists all students in improving their learning
- SJA has more space for collaboration, team-based learning, presentations and college advisors
- The former Convent is well-utilized



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To achieve the 2022 vision and goals, St. Joseph's Academy is adopting a short list of priorities. "Priorities" implies focus – so there can only be a handful. The planning team identified seven critical priorities for the school.

Priority 1: Enrollment

Build on our traditional recruiting efforts, reaching out to more families across St. Louis and to retain students and maintain a stable enrollment along with a diverse student body.

Priority 2: Academic Innovation

Expand our use of innovative curricula and pedagogy to prepare students for the evolving demands of 21st century careers.

Priority 3: International Studies

Launch a new program for international studies that will offer students unparalleled training for their global community and economy.

Priority 4: College Advising

Invest in strengthening our college advising capabilities to form deeper relationships with students and families that foster "best fit" college placements and maximize scholarship opportunities. Strengthen relationships with top schools, particularly outside the Midwest.

Priority 5: Student Success Center

Leverage the recently developed Student Success Center that supports the various learning styles of all our students.

Priority 6: Sustainable Stewardship

Build on our new philanthropic initiatives, elevate and expand a culture of philanthropy through a donor driven focus and a measurable program.

Priority 7: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Increase diversity, equity and inclusion with recruitment, training, courses, iconography, events, and programs, making SJA a school that welcomes and supports persons outside the current majority culture. Demographics include but are not limited to race, religion, color, sexual orientation, socioeconomic position and physical abilities.