



## STATE OF

# MITAMES CENTER

February 15, 2024

### Welcome to the State of Miriam

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Miriam's History
- 3. Mission and Values
- 4. Initiatives and Progress:
  - Shared Culture
  - Programming
  - Fund Development
  - Staffing
  - Financial Stability
  - Marketing and Public Relations
  - Support Services
  - Board Development
  - Communication
- 5. Celebrating Miriam
- 6. Next Steps: New Strategic Plan Development
- 7. Questions?





### **Introductions**

- Susie Luten, Head of the Strategic Planning Implementation Committee
- Meg Bamford, Head of the Miriam Organization
- Board of Directors
- Senior Administrators
- Elizabeth Pickard, The Rome Group





## Miriam's Rich History of Service





## The Heart of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan

#### **Our Vision:**

A world where children and young adults who are unique learners have the opportunity to be successful.

#### **Our Mission:**

To empower unique learners by building confidence and a foundation for success.







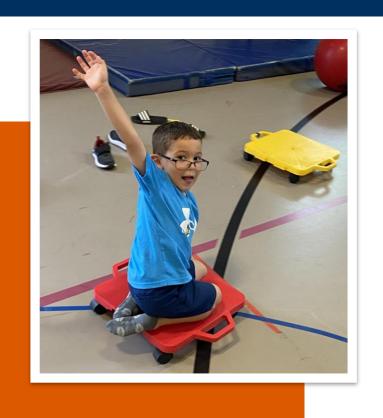
## The Core Values Guiding the Organization's Strategic Plan

- **✓**Learners First
- **✓**Working in Partnership
- **☑**Commitment to Excellence
- **☑**Respect for All



## NINE INITIATIVES DRIVING MIRIAM'S 2020-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

SUMMARY OF
WHAT WE
ACCOMPLISHED
IN FOUR YEARS







## Initiative #1: Shared Culture



#### Miriam will have a culture based on its core values.

- 1. The Miriam community provided impactful input into the organization's core values.
- Miriam continues to instill core values through all of our work together. Core values are the fabric of our admissions, hiring, onboarding, and evaluation process.
- 3. Miriam has a cultural competency plan that helps ensure everyone at Miriam feels like they belong.
- Miriam continues seeking feedback, creating forums, and working to ensure higher quality experience for all parents, employees and everyone involved with the organization.
- 5. In line with our core values is the notion that every child, family member, staff, board member, and volunteer know that they matter, that they have a voice, and we value their history. Belonging was added to the DEI philosophy in January 2022 as central to all that we are. Our DEIB Committee has shared survey results, created plans to go forward, and worked to have DEIB activities for members of the organization so they can learn and grow in their DEIB journey.







# Initiative #2 Programming



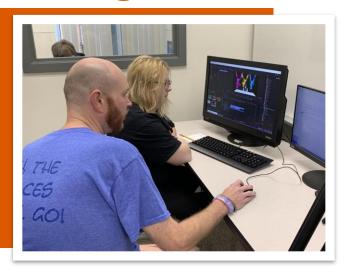
Miriam will expand its leadership in its field by growing aligned high-quality education programs for students with learning challenges.

- Miriam provides training to teachers through professional development to ensure they are equipped to teach unique learners.
- The Learning Center provided home schooling during the pandemic to students and teaches students in other parts of Missouri through online services.
- Miriam just started the Gen Ed to Special Ed Teacher Training program to get more teachers Special Ed certified.

Miriam will provide seamless programming and positive customer experiences across the organization.

 MLC created a five-year financial model and generated a profit for the past several years.

### **Learning Center**



- Teleservices were added prior to the pandemic so the transition was seamless when we went virtual.
- 3. MLC received a three-year national accreditation through CARF.
- A program evaluation system with outcome measures was developed.
- 5. MLC partnered with several agencies during the pandemic to ensure unique learners had in-person services.





### **Miriam School K-12**

United by mission, expectations, the student profile for admissions, a strength-based approach, personalized learning plans, integrated therapies and the urgency to optimize student potential, we have:

- Hired a Director of Enrollment to oversee the admissions process, marketing, and promotion of Miriam School K-12.
- Hired a counselor/school psychologist for each campus to meet the social and emotional needs of our students.
- Focused on our students' reading instruction and schedule. Small group reading instruction
  occurs at the K-8 campus during a school-wide reading block and we have hired a part-time
  reading and writing specialist. Our teaching assistant has been trained at the high school to
  continue to remediate reading challenges.
- Began working on our first combined self-study for the ISACS accreditation process.
- Started working on finding a universal measure to monitor student progress to further enhance our instruction and optimize their time with us.



#### MIRIAM'S ELEVATOR SPEECH



#### Who Are Our Students?

## Our students often have learning challenges that include;

Reading, writing or math disabilities, Autism, social skills issues, speech and language impairments, ADHD, anxiety, and sensory processing disorders. We do not serve children with behavior issues or those with significant medical needs.

Miriam's mission is carried out in two ways.

*Miriam Learning Center* works with over 1,500 students from the age of 2-18 years of age throughout Greater St. Louis. We provide special education evaluations, services such as tutoring, therapies and counseling for private clients, and professional development and trainings for teachers. We work closely with 100 private, charter, parochial, and public schools by contracting service providers such as special educators, therapists, counselors and paraprofessionals.

*Miriam School K-12* has over 160 students. These complex learners come to Miriam because they either have one significant learning difference or more than one challenge that requires specialized instruction and support. Traditional school environments have not been successful for our students.

#### Students flourish at Miriam School, due to:

- ☐ Small class sizes (our average size is about 8 students)
- ☐ Specialized instruction
- ☐ Personalized, meaningful curriculum
- ☐ Integrated speech/language and occupational therapies
- ☐ Counseling and social skills
- ☐ Highly trained personnel
- ☐ A strengths-based approach
- ☐ A collaborative partnership with families and outside providers
- ☐ A nurturing environment.

Students are with us to gain confidence in themselves and competence in their skills.



Miriam will provide seamless programming and positive customer experiences across the organization.

- Miriam's lower and middle school is swiftly moving towards the expected enrollment goal of 114 with a current enrollment of 109. We had a wait list this year for children who would like to attend Miriam K-8.
- 2. The lower and middle school in collaboration with MLC identified program success measures using empirically-based academic and social emotional testing and customer satisfaction ratings.
- Miriam K-8 created a Curriculum Committee that examines 2 curricular areas each year and pilots new programs annually.
- 4. Miriam has implemented a school-wide social emotional programming called "Restorative Justice".

## Lower & Middle School





## Miriam will provide seamless programming and positive customer experiences across the organization.

- Miriam High School has a clear identity and brand in terms of the type of students we serve and what separates us from other schools. We want our diploma to signify completion of academic criteria as well as a rich portfolio of skills and experiences to ensure independence, well-being, and happiness after high school.
- 2. Miriam High School has three fluid, meaningful pathways (Core/Concepts/Challenge classes) for students to graduate with a personalized diploma.
- 3. We are currently piloting Miriam High School's curriculum called "Miriam Essentials (ME)", which provides students with daily instruction in executive functioning skill building, knowledge of themselves as a learner and person, skills for life, wellness and healthy living skills, creating and maintaining healthy relationships, and college and career readiness skills.
- 4. Enrollment in the high school has fluctuated from 53 students to 70 students. We have a robust enrollment plan to thoughtfully bring enrollment up to 85 students.
- 5. Due to lower than expected enrollment number this year, we delayed hiring a full time transition counselor. Once enrollment reaches 62, we will hire for this position.
- 6. We have developed our transition planning and services with partner with colleges and programs, to help students as they graduate from high school.

## **High School**











# Initiative 3: Fund Development



Miriam will attain the necessary sustainable funding to allow it to continue to provide high quality programs to all its constituents.

- 1. Prior to the pandemic, the Switching Post revenues were increasing. We are working to problem-solve how to optimize SP revenue.
- 2. The Switching Post is using Ebay and social media to increase sales.
- 3. We have 43 volunteers currently giving their time at the Switching Post and 3.5 FT staff members.

### **Switching Post**



- 4. An annual marketing plan was developed to reach more shoppers and donors.
- 5. The Switching Post is collecting data to analyze where our shoppers come from and why they shop at the Switching Post.



Miriam will attain the necessary sustainable funding to allow it to continue to provide high quality programs to all its constituents.

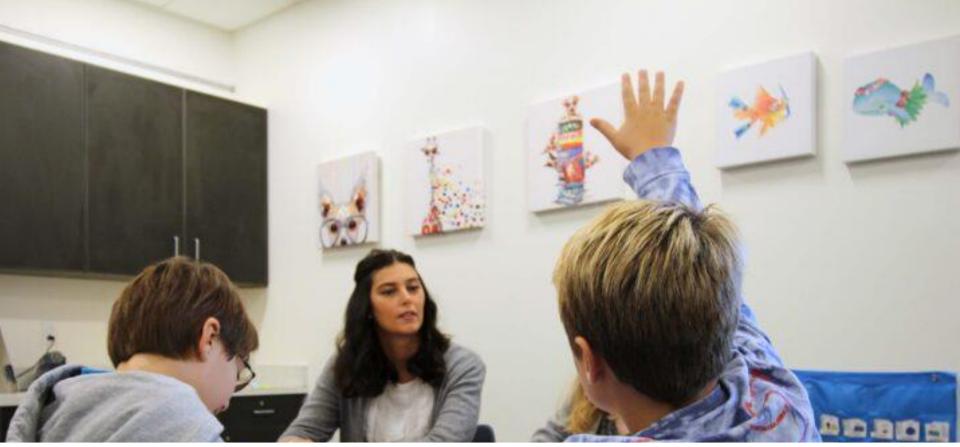
- A five-year development plan was established to support high quality programs through increased donors.
- The Building on Success Campaign successfully concluded to support the permanent location for Miriam High school and the business office.
- 3. A Planned Giving/Legacy plan was determined to increase donors.
- 4. A plan is in place to actively engage alumni and their friends and families with Miriam.
- 5. Miriam Maintainers launched which allows donors to give monthly.

#### **Advancement**



- 6. The Young Professionals were formed to increase involvement of the next generation of supporters.
- 7. An annual gala and #MiriamGivingDay were added to events to increase scholarship funds for students.





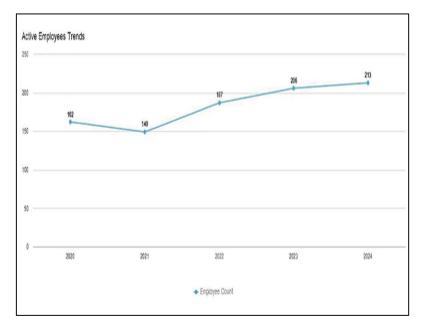
## Initiative # 4: Staffing



## Miriam will have a quality and highly skilled, right-sized staff.

- Staffing models for each program are evaluated annually to accommodate changes in programming, funding, and community needs.
- 2. Miriam continues to grow, resulting in the need for additional staffing:
  - Growth rate: 36.5%
- 3. A part-time recruiter was added to MLC to support rapid growth.









# Initiative # 5: Financial Stability



## Miriam will continue to be a financially sound organization.

- Variable Tuition, endowment growth, and Support a Scholar programs are breaking down financial barriers.
- 2. Miriam evaluates staffing resources to meet programming & new initiatives. Additional staff hired: school counselors, reading specialist, recruiter, transition services, and MLC staffing to equal growth.
- 3. Strengthened employee relations and minimized risk resulting from HR consultant's recommendations, most importantly HR specialists on staff.



- 4. Miriam forecasts a timeline to breakeven to reach financial sustainability for new programs.
- 5. Annually, Miriam receives an unmodified audit report with no deficiencies, which supports accreditations, grants, and overall community trust.





# Initiative # 6: Marketing & Public Relations



Miriam will be a well-recognized and respected brand both locally and nationally, while increasing both enrollment and fundraising numbers.

- A comprehensive Miriam marketing plan was developed to increase brand awareness and ultimately get more students enrolled in our school and Learning Center.
- 2. Customer satisfaction surveys are distributed to families in all three Miriam programs. That information is used to drive program changes and to add new services.
- 3. Success measures were established to determine if marketing efforts are successful.

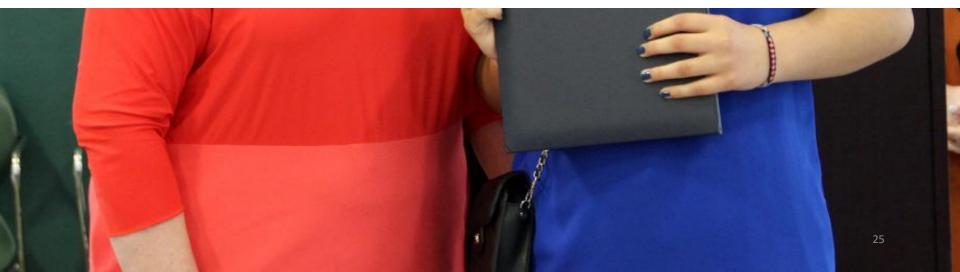


- 4. The website was updated for easier access for families.
- 5. Monthly electronic newsletters allows donors and families to stay connected to Miriam more frequently.





## Initiative # 7: Support Services



Miriam will continue to maintain administrative excellence to support its excellent programming.

- Miriam added a new database that consolidated many different data programs. It unified the school's student records and offered new donor software.
- 2. Four years ago, Miriam's turnover rate was 51%, compared to 14% this year.
- Miriam is in the process of combining all personnel program handbooks into one organization handbook.
  - We partner with legal counsel who specializes in education to review the handbook annually.

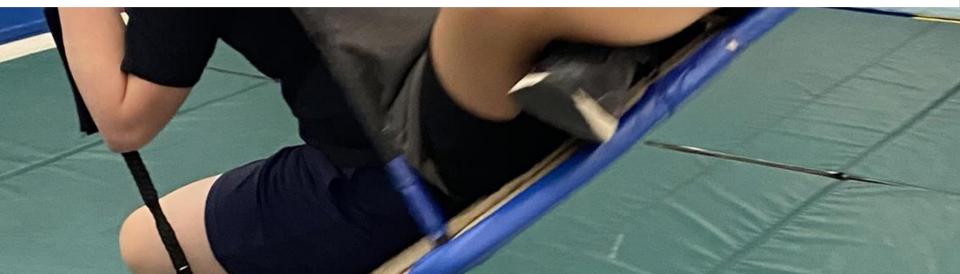


- 4. Miriam completed faculty and administrative compensation studies to ensure that we attract and retain top-tiered employees.
  - Miriam's compensation philosophy is to match the market at the 50th percentile with respect to base pay in the St. Louis area.
  - New insurance/benefit offerings and updated paid time off work policies have been added to enhance Miriam's total compensation package.





## Initiative # 8: Board Development



## Miriam will continue to have an engaged and impactful Board of Directors.

- 1. Board members participate in annual training so they can be ambassadors of Miriam.
- 2. Board members were provided an elevator speech so they have talking points about Miriam.
- 3. Miriam is still continually looking to diversify the Board so that it reflects the community we serve.
- 4. The Board established a Facilities Committee in 2023.
- 5. The Board remains very active in fundraising activities.



- 6. The Board is invited to staff celebrations and student events.
- 7. The Board was reorganized and it moved to a governance model last year to better meet the needs of the organization.





## Initiative # 9: Communication



Miriam will have an open communication network throughout the entire Miriam family.

- 1. We have open and transparent communication as a part of our core values.
- Management supports an open door policy for staff, students, parents, volunteers, and donors.
- 3. Management holds a yearly DEIB forum for the Miriam community to provide progress updates.





#### **CELEBRATING MIRIAM**



Miriam has many things to look forward to in the future because of our past successes.

- 1. Each year, 100% of our 12<sup>th</sup> grade class receives a high school diploma.
- 2. We help 1600 children annually through the Learning Center and 166 additional students through Miriam School K-12.
- 3. Miriam is financially secure and has been sustainable for over 100 years.
- 4. We are recognized in the St. Louis community as the expert in special education.



### **NEXT STEPS**

#### THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Miriam community may be asked to participate in
a survey.
You may be included in a focus group to solicit your
feedback about Miriam's future.
You may request to be included in the process to
ensure your opinion is heard about Miriam's future.
The Rome Group will take all of the information from
constituent groups and will make suggestions to
management about strategic initiatives.
Feedback will be formalized in a strategic plan with
action steps.
The Board will review the plan and will approve it in
the June Board meeting

## **QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?**

