

MSGH STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2025

MISSION: The Montessori School of Greater Hartford fosters a strong foundation for confident, compassionate participation in the world by nurturing each child’s unique gifts, passion for learning, and independence. As a community, we enrich families, live our diversity, and embody the Association Montessori Internationale standards of excellence.

VISION: Montessori School of Greater Hartford will cultivate future generations of capable and compassionate individuals who have the courage to pursue their convictions and be catalysts of peace.

VALUES: The Montessori School of Greater Hartford’s core values guide the work both inside and outside our school to accomplish our vision, mission and strategic goals. We are committed to

- delivering authentic Montessori pedagogy and providing a continuum of learning from the earliest age through adolescence that is dedicated to developing the academic, social and emotional potential of our children to its fullest
- maintaining a diverse community of families, staff, and contributors that is inclusive, welcoming, safe, supportive and joyful
- cultivating an intentional climate of respect in the classrooms and school community by modeling patience, kindness, and honesty in all our interactions and by supporting children in their role as future catalysts of peace in the world
- sharing our knowledge and expertise on child development with the broader community while continually looking inward to improve so that we can be a beacon of Montessori best practice.

GOALS:

1. Build and Strengthen the MSGH Community

This goal focuses on both internal and external activities to build an intentional community and school brand. We strive for an engaged, diverse, creative and supportive community of parents, grandparents, students, faculty, staff and alumni. Parent engagement is a key indicator of school health. Programs and processes will be viewed through the lens of the parent as a customer. Through strategic marketing and communications, we will increase the awareness and reputation of MSGH and its unique educational value leading to stable enrollment, i.e., increased enrollment and retention.

Select Objectives:

- Redesign website and implement a data-driven digital marketing strategy

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- Develop a compelling articulation of the value of an MSGH education and consistently communicate that value proposition online and in traditional communications
- Pursue strategic marketing opportunities to increase MSGH's visibility and community awareness of the school with targeted audiences
- Implement a multi-prong parent engagement strategy that is timely, personal and proactive
- Implement a retention strategy focused on key transition points (from Primary and Upper Elementary) and the educational value of completing a program cycle
- Research and evaluate options to extend MSGH to lower income families

2. Improve Financial Stability

This goal focuses on building a financial model that will support MSGH's mission and future. It is highly dependent on the success of Goal 1 objectives regarding enrollment. We are committed to keeping MSGH accessible and affordable to a diverse community of families. We also recognize that salaries and benefits are the major drivers of expense as we strive for competitive compensation to attract and retain outstanding staff. Tuition and philanthropy are the two major sources of school revenue. Those revenue streams together with disciplined expense management will lead to increased net income and financial reserves. We will continue to foster a culture of giving. Investments and reserves will be managed in a fiscally responsible manner per Board policies.

Select Objectives:

- Research alternative tuition and financial aid models to increase enrollment, retention and diversity; implement as appropriate
- Manage net annual giving income by growing participation in the Children's Fund across all constituents, increasing leadership giving and using other effective and creative fundraising strategies
- Research "small" capital campaign for campus improvements; implement if feasible
- Strategically manage the school's debt (mortgage) and investments
- Develop a risk management plan

3. Deliver an Exceptional Educational Experience

This goal focuses on the faculty, staff and pedagogy that make MSGH so unique. It also addresses parents' desire to better understand their child's academic progress and provide them a broader range of enrichment programming. We recognize that our teachers are the most critical element in delivering our mission. They are the primary

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face of the school to parents and a daily presence in guiding students' growth and development. They must be supported and equipped in this important role. We recognize that MSGH parents have embraced the "non-traditional" Montessori pedagogy when enrolling their child. However, they want to understand their child's progress in more traditional ways. We will strive to provide more information on student progress and outcomes. We also understand that parents would like broader extracurricular programming. We must decide on the optimum size for the school including the program levels and ages it serves.

Select Objectives:

- Attract, retain, competitively compensate and provide professional development to faculty and staff
- Cultivate a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion within the school community
- Implement strategies to support faculty in understanding their critical role in student retention
- Improve communication with parents and their understanding of their child's progress and assessments in areas such as reading, writing and math.
- Evaluate and enrich in-school and after-school programming (e.g. class trips, Spanish Program, community service projects, clubs, after-school enrichment programs, sports)
- Research and decide on the feasibility of opening a NIDO (infant) program and expanding the Adolescent Program

4. Optimize Use and Condition of the Campus and Buildings

This goal focuses on maintaining and preserving our physical assets. We are fortunate to own a 24,000 square foot building on 7.1 acres in West Hartford. The building is about 65 years old and, as such, has recurring maintenance challenges. The school does not use all of the available space and therefore seeks to rent some of the vacant space to enhance its revenue. Tenants will be selected based on their educational mission and alignment with our school's mission and values. Since purchasing the building in 2015, significant improvements have been made including a new roof and two new boilers. Continued efforts to improve the safety, energy efficiency and aesthetics of the school will be pursued. The Adolescent Program is run on leased space in New Hartford. The lease expires in June 2021 necessitating a longer-term strategy for the location of this program.

Select Objectives:

- Develop and implement a five-year Master Facilities Plan focused on energy efficiency, safety, aesthetics and general maintenance needs
- Use available space to enhance programming

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- Maintain and improve the Natural Playground
- Lease available space to appropriate and compatible tenant(s)