

# MERCY HIGH SCHOOL



## Strategic Plan 2023-2027



EDUCATING WOMEN WHO  
*Make a Difference*

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## Strategic Plan Outcomes: Operational Plan 2023 – 2027

- Priority 1    The Board of Trustees, the administration, faculty, and staff will integrate our Catholic identity and mission into all aspects of the school and for all stakeholders, supporting the Profile of a Graduate.
- Priority 2    Mercy High School leadership, faculty, and staff will meet the diverse needs of students, practicing data-driven decision-making for curricular adjustments and providing resources to enrich learning experiences.
- Priority 3    Mercy High School leadership, faculty, and staff will support the Mercy Education Profile of a Graduate including values and attributes to develop the whole young woman through offering robust programming to address the spiritual, social-emotional, physical, behavioral, and overall well-being of each student.
- Priority 4    Mercy High School's Operational Resource Management will strengthen the mission and serve stakeholders while assuring the sustainability of the organization.
- Priority 5    Mercy High School Mission Advancement will support the school's mission by expanding awareness of, advocacy for, engagement in, and giving to Mercy High School.
- Priority 6    Mercy High School will maintain a governance structure and develop a system of leadership based on the requirements of Mercy Education System of the Americas (MESA) in order to effectively support the school's mission.

### **Mission Statement**

Compelled by our Catholic faith and the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy High School is a premier college preparatory school that educates and nurtures young women of diverse backgrounds to excel academically, serve compassionately, and lead courageously.

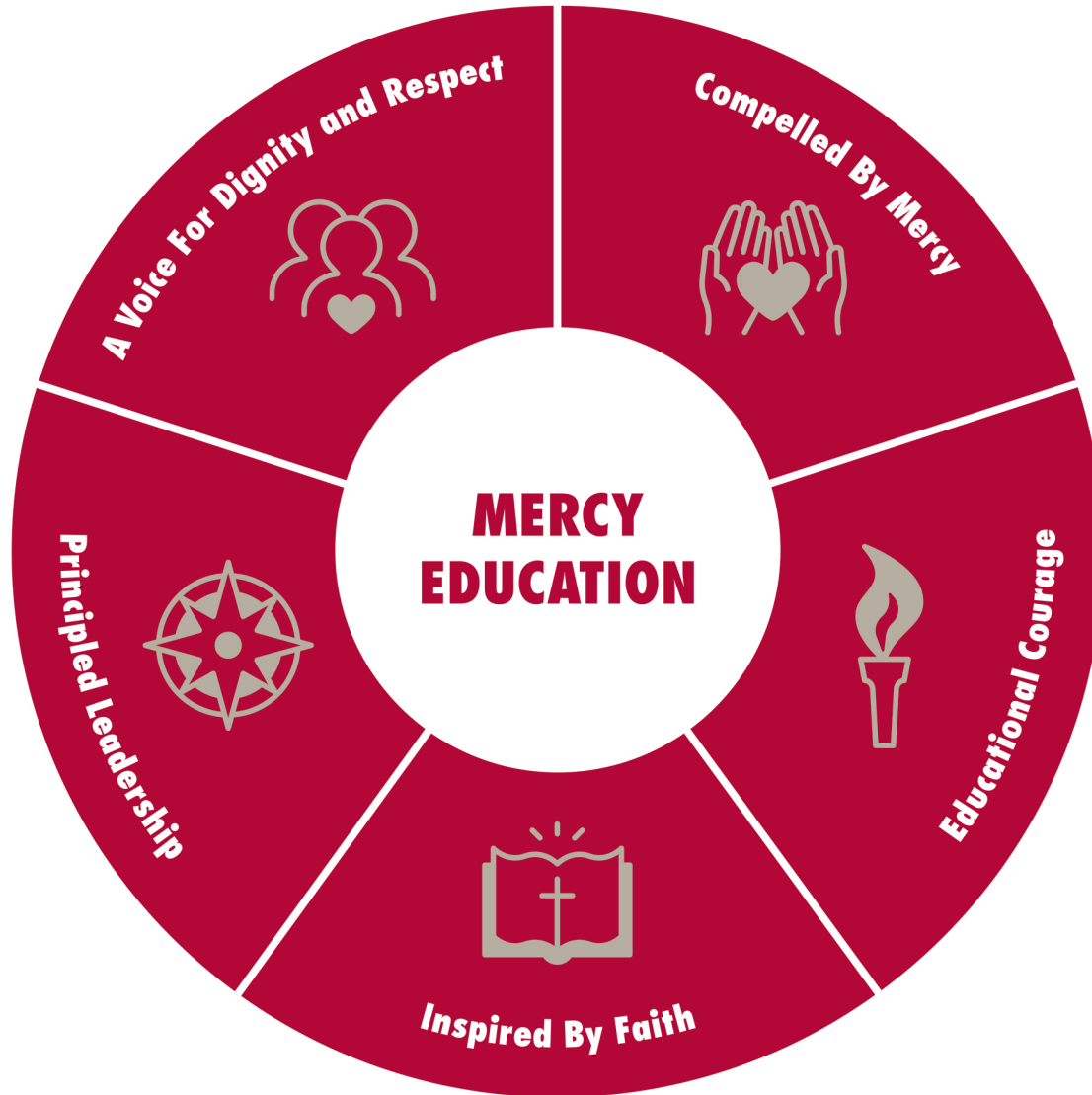
### **Vision Statement**

As a shining lamp of Catholic education, Mercy High School inspires young women of diverse backgrounds to lead faith-filled lives, use their voices, and achieve their goals. Our graduates exemplify unity, empathy, knowledge, and leadership to make a difference in the world.



Mercy  
Education

Courageous Action. Selfless Spirit.™



# Core Values

Our Core Values are the hallmarks of a Mercy Education. These are the ideals we stand up for and strive to live up to. We hold ourselves to these standards as an institution, as a community and as individuals. Each value is interconnected and necessary as we take Mercy into the world.





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# Core Values



## Compelled By Mercy

Mercy students, in the spirit of our founder Catherine McAuley, are steadfastly determined to take Mercy into an interconnected world. Our shared sense of social consciousness is fortified by universal empathy and a conviction that all are worthy of God's mercy. This deep awareness and compassion move us to take principled action and serve the needs of others.



## Educational Courage

Mercy students welcome the challenge of pursuing their full potential in a culture of excellence, critical thinking and curiosity. Their multifaceted journey builds character while it builds essential skills. Our holistic program expects engagement, a thirst for knowledge and personal responsibility, while preparing students to thrive for a lifetime.



## Inspired By Faith

Mercy students become living models of faith and forceful advocates for Gospel values. Grounded in our Catholic identity in the Mercy tradition, we welcome all faiths and are strengthened and shaped by these relationships. As we pursue a personal relationship with God, we strenuously follow Jesus Christ's example of social justice, love and service.



## Principled Leadership

Mercy students are poised to lead with their unique gifts. Prepared with an ethical and moral compass, we put Mercy values into action and work assertively for what is right. We're equipped to make difficult choices, learn from our mistakes and develop high emotional intelligence. As an international community, we're confident in our ability to make a positive difference and push for systemic change.



## A Voice For Dignity and Respect

Mercy students honor the intrinsic value of the individual and recognize God's presence in each person. We embrace a global vision and value differences of opinion, and are unafraid to confront hostile or hurtful attitudes. By standing up for those who can't, we go beyond acceptance to help make sure everyone feels recognized and heard.

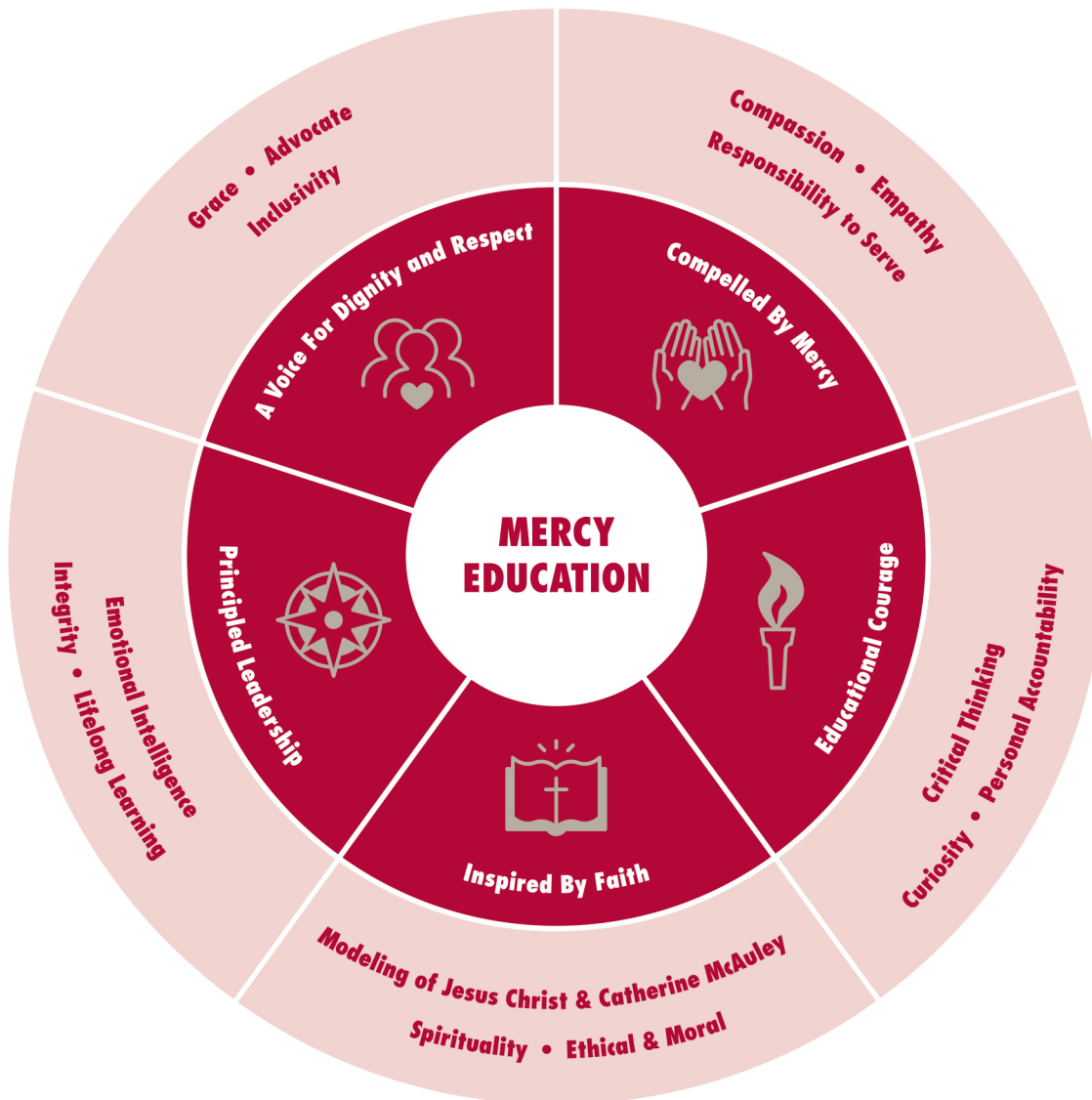


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# Profile of the Graduate



Our Profile of the Graduate is how students come to manifest and embody our Core Values. It's the culmination of everything a Mercy Education hopes to achieve. Throughout the student's journey, this blueprint defines the attributes they're expected to acquire and the steps they'll take to gain them. With the Profile of the Graduate, every experience and academic opportunity is linked to and aligned with our Core Values.



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# Profile of the Graduate

## CORE VALUE • STUDENT ATTRIBUTES



**Compelled  
By Mercy**

**Compassion.** Having concern for the needs of all, including those outside our immediate circle.

**Empathy.** Putting yourself in someone else's shoes to understand their feelings and perspectives.

**Responsibility to Serve.** Fulfilling the duty to not just care about other, but to take action on their behalf.



**Educational  
Courage**

**Curiosity.** Being open to other ways of seeing the world and exploring new ideas.

**Personal Accountability.** Staying disciplined in decision-making, proactive in correcting mistakes and self-motivated in our studies.

**Critical Thinking.** Gathering and objectively evaluating and analyzing information through reflection and reason.



**Inspired  
By Faith**

**Spirituality.** Developing a personal relationship with a loving, merciful God, expressed in service and respecting other faiths.

**Modeling of Jesus Christ & Catherine McAuley.** Living life with abundant love, compassion, generosity and hospitality, demonstrating the strength of infinite mercy.

**Ethical & Moral.** Following a personal code based on Gospel values that guides action and choices.



**Principled  
Leadership**

**Integrity.** Standing up for or doing what's right, including when it's difficult or unpopular.

**Lifelong Learning.** Always learning something new, gaining skills and wanting to know more, in all walks of life.

**Emotional Intelligence.** Recognizing and welcoming emotions within ourselves and others to build resilience and healthy relationships.



**A Voice For  
Dignity and  
Respect**

**Grace.** Allowing others to be fully human without judgment, while honoring what is God-like within each person.

**Advocate.** Being a forceful defender, supporter and sometimes spokesperson for the values and people we hold dear.

**Inclusivity.** Going beyond tolerance to embrace diversity, while accepting and serving with open arms.

## Environmental Scan

### *Internal Review*

#### Strengths

- A diverse learning community with rigor, breath, excellent academics, high-performing students, comprehensive curriculum, programs that encourage critical thinking, curiosity, leadership ability, and commitment to meet student needs
- Strong Catholic, Mercy identity with the charism of respect, dignity, hospitality, inclusivity, service, and the practice of Mercy values creating a spirit of sisterhood and community
- Mercy Education System of the Americas (MESA) sponsorship and participation in the global Mercy educational ministry
- Engaged, committed leadership at all levels (Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, students, parents, alumnae, donors) that advances the mission
- Solid financial base through investments, endowments, annual funds, fundraising, planned giving, major gifts, and grant opportunities to fund projects
- Technology integrated into the curriculum, learning, and operations: designation as an Apple Distinguished School
- Intentional effort to develop a safe and responsive environment for all: social, emotional, physical, and spiritual intelligence
- Excellent athletic, fine arts, performing arts, and extracurricular programs
- Beautiful facilities and grounds support student life and extended opportunities

#### Weaknesses

- Financial challenges: declining enrollment and future growth; rising operational and tuition costs, competitive compensation to attract and retain teachers, donor challenges, and aging, declining facilities
- Public relations and recruiting challenges with a negative perception of MHS's identity as a Catholic school
- Hiring and retention of diverse teachers, staff, and administrators
- Greater racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity among administration and staff
- Capacity to meet and enhance diverse learning needs of the student population
- Accommodating student needs and challenges: mental health, academic pressure, attendance, substance abuse, social, emotional, and behavioral realities
- Building relationships in support of the Mission Advancement effort to promote Mercy's mission and secure funding for its future
- Need for professional development opportunities for all staff



## ***External Review***

### **Opportunities**

- Building relationships that support Major Gifts, Planned Giving, Endowment and Annual Fund, Capital Campaign, and specific projects/campaigns
- Address perceptions of MHS's Catholic faith and identity by communicating its intentionality regarding Gospel values
- Building respect and affection of graduates and families for Mercy charism that supports mission advancement efforts
- Increase the pool of alumnae available to build relationships/mentor students
- Communicate about Mercy graduates who are “cracking the glass ceiling” for marketing, fundraising, celebration
- MESA: opportunity to collaborate with other Mercy schools of the Americas
- MESA Profile of the Graduate as a marketing/donor communication resource
- Leverage the use of a pool of dedicated Mercy alumnae, benefactors, parents, and others to promote MHS
- Collaboration potential with other academic institutions, civic and government entities, and nonprofit organizations
- Utilize the Mercy network to provide opportunities and experiences for growing Mercy's identity, and professional and social development
- Southeast Michigan's cultural, ethnic, racial, and international diversity offers the opportunity for enrollment growth
- Social and print media offers opportunities to promote knowledge and understanding of the value of a Mercy education
- Commitment to Catholic Social Teaching and witnessing to Mercy charism

### **Threats**

- Financial realities: Declining student population in Southeast Michigan, rising tuition, enrollment challenges, compensation and benefit costs, recruitment and retention at student and quality staff levels
- Perception of MHS and its Catholic identity
- Fostering Catholic identity and tradition in a rapidly changing and diverse religious population and secular nation
- Polarization of individuals/groups over political and religious points of view
- Competition for students and teachers from other Catholic schools, charter schools, public school districts, and online learning
- Aging facility and grounds
- Teacher shortage on the national level
- Overall social, political, economic, cultural, religious, and secular trends (exclusion, cultural intolerance, religious bias, social media pervasiveness)
- Safety challenges in light of societal climate of violence
- Cultural, familial, and societal pressures on youth, especially with mental health issues, social media, and technology

### **Critical Issues 2023 - 2027**

- Catholic Identity
- Learning
- Profile of the Graduate
- Operational Resource Management
- Mission Advancement
- Governance/Leadership

### **Planning Assumptions**

The Mercy School Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 is:

- comprehensive in scope
- representative of internal and external stakeholders
- mission-driven and transformational
- directional and priority setting
- designed for implementation
- foundational for future plans and decisions

## Strategic Framework

This Mercy High School Strategic Plan sets out the priorities, actions, and responsibilities of MHS during 2023 - 2027. It builds on present strengths, addresses internal weaknesses, and identifies external opportunities and threats that can affect mission capacity.

This MHS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 was developed following valued consultation with the Board of Trustees, Administration, Teachers, Staff, Mission Advancement Team, and Parents/Guardians. Students, parents, guardians, faculty, staff, donors, and community stakeholders were invited to participate in a survey regarding future directions. The Strategic Plan Committee convened for four sessions and sub-committees developed vision, mission, core value drafts, and operational planning efforts for the full committee meetings.

### Results we expect:

- Responsible, productive world citizens who demonstrate moral character, civic responsibility, leadership, and service.
- Graduates who are compelled by mercy and inspired by faith; give voice to dignity and respect, and exemplify educational courage and principled leadership.
- Self-directed, life-long learners, and curious, critical thinkers who exercise personal responsibility, and ethical behaviors.
- Cultural competency and inclusive behaviors.
- Sustainability for the mission.

### Actions we will take:

- Achieve excellence in curriculum, instruction, learning, assessment.
- Advance professional development at all levels.
- Nurture Profile of the Graduate development by supporting each student's cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical development.
- Grow and retain student enrollment.
- Achieve long-term financial sustainability.
- Develop a culture of leadership, and collaboration at all levels.
- Build and achieve strong internal and external relationships to sustain the MHS mission and vision.

## **Planning Participants**

### ***Board of Trustees***

Cheryl Delaney Kreger '66, President  
Humphrey O. Atiemo, MD  
Nancy Auffenberg  
Robert F. Casalou  
Margaret Dimond '76  
Dave Hall, Chair  
Susan Hartmus Hiser  
Sharad P. Jain  
Brigid Johnson, RSM '53  
Karla E. Middlebrooks '76  
Virginia Minolli '82  
Sharon Sanderson  
Aaron Sikora  
Paul E. Swanson  
Rita Marie Valade, RSM '72

### ***Administration***

Patricia Sattler, Principal  
Gary Bank  
Tom James  
Christopher Janusch  
Alison Kline-Kator '97  
Colleen M. McMaster '81  
Maria Siciliano Mueller  
Traci L. Smith  
Eleasha Tarplin '94  
Marlene Wojcik

### ***Athletic Director***

Brandon Malinowski

### ***Mission Advancement Team***

Maureen Duncan '96  
Julie Earle  
Laura Everett '98  
Jo Ferrari  
Gina Gray '91  
J'aime Law '00

### ***Teacher / Staff***

Mary Kate Becker  
Holly Markiecki-Bennetts  
Kristin Casey '93  
Kristine Daley  
Ebonne English  
Gillian Herold  
Andrea Kowalyk '92  
Brandi Lavelly  
Sara McGavin  
Susan Smith '84  
Lauren Marquard '06

### ***Parents/Guardians***

Deborah Koehler '86  
Jeremy Pecora  
Anita Sevier  
Robert Sherwin, MD  
Stephanie Surowiec '91  
Kathleen Walker

### ***Mercy Education***

Kim Baxter

### ***Consultant / Facilitator***

Carmelita Murphy, OP



## Stakeholders

- Students
- Parents, guardians, and families
- Board of Trustees
- Mercy Education System of the Americas (MESA)
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- Archdiocese of Detroit
- Administrators, Faculty, Staff
- Alumnae
- Donors: private, corporate, foundations, and others
- Community service organizations that MHS students serve
- Catholic feeder schools
- Surrounding school districts and charter schools
- Parent organizations
- Professional Education Associations
- City of Farmington Hills, MI
- Local, state, and federal governments and their legislators
- Vendors / Service Providers
- Colleges and universities receiving MHS graduates
- Media: social, electronic, and print

## Evaluation

The President will bear responsibility for the overall implementation of the Mercy High School Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027. In turn, the President will make appropriate delegation of authority and practice collegiality to assure coordinated implementation of the plan. The Board of Trustees will be vigilant in holding the President accountable for overall institutional performance.

Mercy High School will work in a collegial and consultative environment, encourage ideas and questions, and actively engage others in the ongoing implementation of the strategic plan. There will be reporting on events, activities, and decisions to each other, and the plan and its implementation will be integral to departmental meetings.

An annual planning event is recommended to review the MHS Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 for implementation progress and continuous improvement in light of changing internal and external environments.

## Acknowledgement

Consultation and facilitation for the Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 was given by Carmelita Murphy, O.P., President, LEAD, Inc., Grand Rapids, Michigan. (LEADcm@aol.com)



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