



# Highland Community School

## Strategic Plan 2019-2022

### **PREAMBLE**

Highland Community School's board, staff and families participated in our strategic planning process to review the challenges and opportunities before us during the next three to five years. They reaffirmed our mission, vision and values during that process. The Strategic Plan that you have before you represents the direction for Highland as we celebrate 50 years of peaceful Montessori education. For us, the education and development of the whole child will take center stage as we deepen the relationships with you, our incredibly dedicated stakeholders, and continue to stand for social justice while strengthening the excellence and professional development of our trusted staff. To achieve excellence in all we do, the Board of Directors is committed to aligning the resources to fully implement this ambitious and exciting plan as the next decade unfolds for Highland's youth and families.

**Bold Past, Bright Future** is still our mantra as we move forward together.

### **MISSION**

We are a community of diverse families and educators working together to offer quality Montessori education in a nurturing environment that enriches, empowers and inspires the whole child to reach his or her potential. We encourage and support parents to be responsible for, and involved with, their children's education.

### **VISION**

Changing the world by nurturing children and their families to be informed, compassionate, life-long learners who are a force for change in education, the community, and society.

### **GOALS**

1. Provide our students and families a high-quality Montessori education that emphasizes the holistic development of all children.
2. Value and celebrate all members of the Highland community as equal and integral partners in our mission and services.
3. Teach and practice social justice as a core component of classroom lessons, co-curricular life and student experience.
4. Build capacity of staff and teachers to better serve student learning and leadership.
5. Align resources to support Highland's Plan to ensure a stable and thriving future for children and families.

**Goal 1: Provide our students and families a high-quality Montessori education that emphasizes the holistic development of all children.**

**Objectives**

- 1. There is consistency in Montessori instruction and materials throughout the school.**
- 1.1. A Highland Montessori Guide will be compiled following the Montessori scope and sequence that includes key Montessori lessons and experiences at each level. *June 2022*
  - 1.2. Develop a physical education curriculum for each level and equipment will be maintained for those lessons/activities as follows: K4, K5 (2020), 1, 2, 3 (2021), 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8 (2022) *June 2020*  
*June 2021*  
*June 2022*
- 2. There are consistent performance expectations across levels.**
- 2.1. Teachers will ensure that instruction and student performance meet the state academic standards at each level and develop specific expectations where no state standards exist focusing on content areas. *June 2020*  
*June 2021*  
*June 2022*
  - 2.2. The school will ensure that capstone projects (3rd, 6th, 8th grades) are aligned to and meet the academic and human development goals of our students. *June 2022*
- 3. Transitions between levels are seamless and lead to continued growth of the child.**
- 3.1. The “Family Model” will be strengthened to increase communication within each family so that all teachers are familiar with all students and their abilities and designated meeting times reinforce the model. *June 2021*
  - 3.2. Adolescent teachers will be included in family discussions to improve the transition between elementary classrooms and the adolescent program and ensure individual needs are met. *June 2022*
  - 3.3. Appropriate materials will be identified and be made available in classrooms for students to successfully bridge transitions and teachers will acquire and be trained in bridge materials and strategies. *June 2021*
- 4. The adolescent program is a natural continuation of the Montessori approach.**
- 4.1. Learning outcomes for various student projects will be identified, assessed, and documented. *June 2020*
  - 4.2. Specific learning outcomes for the Community Café, micro-economy, will be identified, assessed and documented. *June 2022*

**5. Social-emotional development of children is included as an important part of the child’s education.**

- 5.1 All teachers will use a common social-emotional curriculum in the classroom as tier 1 and 2 instruction. *June 2021*
- 5.2 Social-emotional tier 3 intervention will be provided by someone outside the classroom. *June 2021*
- 5.3 Social-emotional development of each child will be recorded in the Transparent Classroom. *June 2021*

**6. We nurture environmental stewardship in children.**

- 6.1 Highland’s grounds will be developed and maintained using a defined, strategic plan to provide an engaging educational experience for children and use of grounds as workplace option for students will be fostered. *June 2022*
- 6.2 Clarity and strengthening of the role of the science and natural ground specialty teacher will be explored to maximize the offerings available while building individualize instruction for greater student capacity in the field. *June 2020*
- 6.3 Adults will monitor resources uses throughout the building and involve children in decisions about the best use of resources like materials, energy and water. *June 2020*
- 6.4 Students at elementary and adolescent levels will have at least three opportunities throughout the year for field trips to visit natural places and develop a sense of place within the local environment. *June 2020*

**7. Going-outs are a regular part of a child’s experience.**

- 7.1 A system including tracking is in place for the process for going-outs including a database of attendees, responsibilities, progress/leadership and updated resource options so all children are developing toward participation. *June 2022*

**8. Art, music, and second languages are integrated into the Montessori curriculum and specialty areas are defined annually.**

- 8.1 Bilingual staff support an immersion approach to second-language instruction and will begin with the 7th and 8th grade. *June 2021*
- 8.2 Clarity and strengthening of the role of the Arts and Theatre specialty teachers will be explored to maximize art and theatre within the Montessori curriculum and as extracurricular enhancement for our students. *June 2022*

**9. Families are included as an important part of the child’s educational continuation of the Montessori approach.**

- 9.1 Teachers will inform families about what skills each child is working on weekly through Transparent Classroom and encourage families to practice those skills at home. *June 2020  
June 2021  
June 2022*
- 9.2 Develop recurring and frequent parent educational opportunities throughout the school year. *June 2020  
June 2021  
June 2022*

**Goal 2: Value and celebrate all members of the Highland community as equal and integral partners in our mission and services.**

**Objectives**

**1. Students are valued members of the Highland community.**

- 1.1 Incorporate “student voice” in the development of consistent expectations for classroom community, student behavior and adult interaction throughout the school; implement plans. *June 2020  
June 2021*
- 1.2 Professional development will include refreshers in Montessori to foster respectful interactions with children. *June 2020  
June 2021  
June 2022*

**2. Staff members are valued members of the Highland community.**

- 2.1 A professional training and human resource plan created with staff input will be developed and implemented on an annual basis to strengthen the capacity of all employees to reach individualize and professional goals. *Sept. 2020  
Sept. 2021  
Sept. 2022*
- 2.2 The Voices Committee will be utilized to ensure representation of staff at all levels within the school environment. *June 2020  
June 2021  
June 2022*
- 2.3 Create opportunities and incentives to promote leadership within the community; and implement defined plan. *Sept. 2021*

**3. Family members are valued members of the Highland community.**

- 3.1 Continue to create opportunities and incentives to involve families in their children’s education. Consistently document and encourage parents to be engaged. *June 2021*
- 3.2 Highland will develop a family mentorship program that will assign existing families as mentors to new families. *June 2022*
- 3.3 Highland will organize parent discussion groups to facilitate conversations among families with common concerns and special interests. *June 2022*

**4. Alumni are valued members of the Highland community.**

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| 4.1 Highland Family Fund will offer post-secondary education scholarships to alumni.            | <i>April 2020</i><br><i>April 2021</i><br><i>April 2022</i> |
| 4.2 Alumni are invited to volunteer at Highland events and share their expertise in classrooms. | <i>June 2020</i><br><i>June 2021</i><br><i>June 2022</i>    |

**5. External community members are valued members of the Highland community.**

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| 5.1 Highland will maintain a database of community members who we consider part of the Highland community and offer strategic relationships to school to facilitate regular communication and opportunities for collaboration. | <i>Sept. 2019</i><br><i>Sept. 2020</i><br><i>Sept. 2021</i> |
| 5.2 Community partners will be identified (2-3 per year) and cultivated to deepen relationships to increase greater volunteerism among our families, staff and student body within these organizations and settings.           | <i>June 2020</i><br><i>June 2021</i><br><i>June 2022</i>    |

**Goal 3: Teach and practice social justice as a core component of classroom lessons, co-curricular life and student experience.**

**Objectives**

**1. There is a common understanding of what social justice means at Highland.**

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| 1.1 We will define what social justice means at Highland and find common language for talking about it with children.  | <i>June 2021</i> |
| 1.2 Students, parents and staff will be educated about Highland’s long-term commitment to social justice and learn how it has been integrated into the on-going Montessori curriculum for Toddler through K-8 to promote social justice. | <i>June 2022</i> |

**2. The theme of social justice is included in key Montessori lessons and experiences.**

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| 2.1 Teachers will identify key lessons and experiences where social justice is included across levels. | <i>Oct. 2020</i><br><i>Oct. 2021</i><br><i>Oct. 2022</i> |
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**3. Instruction and classroom materials are culturally relevant.**

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| 3.1 Teachers will be trained in culturally relevant pedagogy.  | <i>June 2020</i>  |
| 3.2 Teachers will integrate culturally relevant instruction and materials into the key Montessori lessons and experiences. | <i>Sept. 2021</i> |

**4. The diversity of the Highland Community reflects the diversity of the external community.**

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| 4.1 Establish a fund to provide scholarships assistance for Highland’s Toddler Program to ensure diversity and equity in student recruitment at all levels. | <i>June 2021</i> |
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## **Goal 4: Build capacity of staff and teachers to better serve student learning and leadership.**

### **Objectives**

#### **1. All teaching staff (classroom teachers, enrichment teachers, comprehensive academic teachers, special education teachers) are fully trained at the appropriate levels and hold the required licenses or credentials.**

- 1.1 All new staff will be hired as fully trained and possessing the required licenses or credentials, and when not possible, staff will develop a plan to achieve required license or credentials within a specific time frame. *June 2021*
- 1.2 All existing teaching staff will engage in professional development to become fully trained at the appropriate level and hold the required licenses or credentials. *June 2021*
- 1.3 Coaching will be implemented to provide high-quality, one-on-one peer support for teachers and staff to ensure full Montessori implementation. *Sept.– June 2020- 2022*
- 1.4 A new system “Child Study” for early intervention to assist students with developmental concerns will be implemented. *June 2021*
- 1.5 Financial resources will be made available to further the professional development of staff including licensing and securing the necessary credentials for Montessori certification. *June 2020-2022*

#### **2. All staff continually improve their professional capacity.**

- 2.1 All staff will participate in an in-house Montessori orientation within the first six months of employment. *June 2020*
- 2.2 Highland will utilize outside Montessori consultants to provide internal and external technical assistance and consultation to strengthen overall capacity and audit program quality. *Sept. – June 2020-2022*

#### **3. Highland administration and board members guide and support Montessori implementation.**

- 3.1 All administration and board members will receive a Montessori orientation, learn how to support Montessori implementation and engage in ongoing professional development. *Sept. 2021*

#### **4. All assistants play an integral role in the classroom.**

- 4.1 All assistants will complete a Montessori Assistant’s course and meet monthly to discuss ways to improve instruction in the classroom. *Sept. 2021*
- 4.2 Highland will secure resources to provide all assistants with professional development opportunities and explore collaborative partnership in the process. *Sept. 2021*

#### **5. Teachers are evaluated on a protocol designed to support fully implemented Montessori practice.**

- 5.1 Teachers will be appraised using an appropriate evaluation protocol. *June 2020*

## **Goal 5: Align resources to support Highland’s plan to ensure a stable and thriving future for children and families.**

### **Objectives**

#### **1. Highland has a strong and vital governance model that supports the mission and development of the school.**

- 1.1 Develop and implement a board and staff leadership succession plan. *June 2021*
- 1.2 Establish a Board of Trustees comprised of 12 well-connected community members to advocate and promote Highland including at least one Parent Board member and the Director of Community Resources. *June 2022*
- 1.3 The Board of Trustees and Parent Board will expand and diversify the revenue base to achieve short and long-term financial security. *June 2020*  
*June 2021*  
*June 2022*

#### **2. Resources are secured for plan implementation and mission advancement.**

- 2.1 Strategic alliances with Montessori Schools and other sector entities to collaborate on new initiatives and improve program offering will assist to solidify annual funding. *June 2020*  
*June 2021*  
*June 2022*
- 2.2 Identify and cultivate a donor pipeline to increase major individual support for Highland’s Strategic Plan. *June 2022*
- 2.3 Develop a marketing and PR editorial calendar for greater communication and engagement in advancing the mission. *September 2020-2022*
- 2.4 Solidify our MPS charter renewal and relationship that preserves Highland’s core values while ensuring a contingency plan is in place to address adjustments. *February 2020*
- 2.5 Create new opportunities for funders to support our student gap by becoming benefactors of individual students. *Sept. 2021*

#### **3. Financial resources support current and future infrastructure needs to enhance Highland’s future.**

- 3.1 Clearly define our cash reserve and plan for unanticipated short and long-range changes. *June 2020*
- 3.2 Develop responsible investment policies that offer options for growth and ensure fiscal integrity. *June 2020*

#### **4. Financial, technological and physical assets necessary for Highland’s quality, effectiveness and growth are integral to our plan.**

- 4.1 A responsible and comprehensive solution for space needs for all Montessori age groups beginning with Adolescents with a clearly defined implementation timeline is developed and approved by the Board of Directors. *June 2022*