

The Future is in our Hands: Opportunities 2021-2026



**A Strategic Vision for
The Sacred Heart School of Montreal**

The Sacred Heart School of Montreal
sacredheart.qc.ca
3635 Atwater - Mtl, QC - H3H 1Y4 - 514-937-2845



Introduction

Founded in 1861, the Sacred Heart School of Montreal (SHSM) is the only all girls English Catholic high school (Grades 7-12) in Montreal which educates women to have independence of judgment, personal freedom and strength of character so that they can become leaders with broad intellectual and spiritual horizons. The school offers a diverse and inclusive environment and welcomes students of all races, socioeconomic backgrounds and faith traditions.

Our programs are designed to develop the whole child – mind, body and spirit - and to provide students with the skills necessary for lives of purpose, meaning and success, regardless of their chosen path. As a result, Sacred Heart graduates are resilient, thoughtful innovators and life-long learners ready to seize opportunities as they arise and to meet the challenges of an ever changing global community.

In September 2020, the Board of Directors and the Senior Administration of the SHSM embarked on a strategic planning process to map the strategy for the school's future direction while preserving its legacy of graduating young women who become transformative leaders.

The Strategic Planning Committee was appointed to manage this exercise and based on its recommendation, John Littleford and Associates was hired to facilitate a strategic planning session for the school. John Littleford and Associates is an international management consulting firm for independent and international schools, colleges, non-profit organizations and for-profit companies founded by John Littleford in 1994.

Mr. Littleford conducted a series of focus groups capturing the insights and opinions of the school's many stakeholders including: RSCJs, current parents, past parents, students, staff, faculty, alumnae, donors, City House Foundation trustees and members of the Board of Directors. Thereafter, the Board and the Senior Administration participated in a one-day workshop where they reviewed and discussed the most frequently mentioned topics and concerns expressed by the focus group participants. The themes were further refined until five main priorities were established and sub-teams were convened to elaborate action plans for each of the priorities. The Strategic Planning Committee compiled the contributions of the sub-teams and drafted the Strategic Plan which was subsequently approved by the Board and is now being distributed to the community and available for viewing on the school's website.

Message from the Head of School and Board Chair

We are enthusiastic about the prospects envisioned in this plan. The Board and Senior Administration identified the areas on which we will focus our efforts over the next five years to ensure that the SHSM thrives and continues to offer the unique Sacred Heart educational experience for which it is known. The focus of our Strategic Plan, *The Future is in our Hands: Opportunities 2021-2026*, is to chart the path to:

- long-term financial sustainability and a robust bursary program
- maximizing our physical plant to meet the needs of our evolving educational experience
- outstanding academic programming delivered by way of stimulating and non-traditional means
- engaging our community in ways that are meaningful to each of the various constituents
- using our momentum to solidify a culture of philanthropy and giving back to the school.

Building on the work of our previous plan, we know who we are and we know what we stand for but we must continue to evolve, anticipate future demands on our graduates and grow our academic curriculum so that it remains relevant. The academic experience we deliver must meet the highest standards, but also adapt to new curricular ideas, evolving instructional models and emerging technologies. In order to best position the school to thrive, we must also ensure enrollment stability by exploring various enrollment opportunities in light of the changing demographics, maintain our financial health, maximize our physical plant and solidify a culture of giving in our community.

We are confident that this plan will energize and inspire our various constituents, enhance our educational offering and preserve the value of the Sacred Heart educational experience for generations to come.




Shawn O'Donnell
Head of School




Tania Tretiak
President, Board of Directors

Vision - Mission - Goals and Criteria



Vision

The SHSM prides itself on its commitment to social justice and aims to empower girls to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world.

Mission

Our mission is to nurture the mind, body and spirit of each student in a supportive and caring environment.

Goals and Criteria

The SHSM is a member of the worldwide network of Sacred Heart Schools with 150 schools across some 41 countries that offer an education that is marked by a distinctive spirit. It is that warm spirit that has led generations of Sacred Heart alumnae to send their children to receive the education they themselves value so highly.

The truly international character of a Sacred Heart School aids in fostering global education and citizenship in our girls. Each Sacred Heart School around the globe shares five Goals that govern its mission and guide its educational philosophy. The Goals and associated Criteria express the values, the intentions and the hopes of the Sacred Heart tradition, honed to meet the needs of our rapidly changing world.

Schools of the Sacred Heart commit themselves to educate to five common Goals:

- A personal and active faith in God
- A deep respect for intellectual values
- A social awareness which impels to action
- Building of community as a Christian value
- Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.

***“Your example, even more than your words,
will be an eloquent lesson to the world ”***

St. Madeleine Sophie Barat



**The following five priorities
were identified as the 2021-2026
strategic pillars for our school:**

- Financial Sustainability
- Physical Plant
- Academic Programming
- Community Engagement
- Culture of Giving.

Financial Sustainability

Pillar I - Financial Sustainability

In order to ensure and increase financial sustainability the SHSM must continue long-range financial planning and decision-making, explore the possibility of becoming a learning institution that is free of public subsidies and consider different enrollment opportunities, all with the goal of ensuring that a Sacred Heart education is available to any qualified student.

In order to achieve this, we commit to:

- Develop 5- and 10-year Financial Plans
- Evaluate new enrollment opportunities
- Develop a transition strategy as we explore the possibility of an independent SHSM.





Pillar II - Physical Plant

Teaching and learning have evolved and therefore our physical spaces must evolve accordingly. In order to provide students with the very best Sacred Heart educational experience, it is imperative to offer state of the art facilities and resources. An environmental audit and annual maintenance plan, in conjunction with the development of a 10-year Capital Project Plan, will allow us to prioritize and guide improvements, renovations and future construction projects in order to maximize the full potential of our Physical Plant.

In order to achieve this, we commit to:

- Conduct a Facility audit and create a checklist to help in annual inspections of the Facilities
- Update the Maintenance Plan taking into consideration the Facility Audit Report
- Develop a 10-year Capital Project Plan
- Continue to transform existing classrooms and common areas to reflect the evolution of teaching and learning and to enhance the Sacred Heart experience
- Conduct an Environmental Audit
- Undertake a Building Use Study
- Complete construction of a Wellness Centre, that will provide a modern space for exercise, fitness and wellness programs to support the overall health of our community.

Academic Programming

Pillar III - Academic Programming

Top-quality, innovative and dynamic academic programming combined with an extensive sports program and a solid technology plan is critical to attract and develop women leaders of tomorrow. The evolution of academic programming, in line with the school's Goals and Criteria, will allow for initiatives that will enhance the learning experience of all students and reshape the traditional classroom.

In order to achieve this, we commit to:

- Continue our focus on the development of the whole student: social, emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual
- Develop the profile of a Sacred Heart Graduate and mitigate any program gaps in order to ensure the development of the character traits of this profile in each graduating student
- Develop a 3-year plan to identify, implement and support innovative pedagogy and professional development to strengthen teaching and learning
- Create and implement a 5-year technology plan based on a needs assessment
- Grow our Grade 12 Program, including the Alumnae mentoring component
- Be at the forefront of girls' education and design evidence-based programs that empower girls to be leaders and change-makers.



Community Engagement

Pillar IV - Community Engagement

The SHSM has a rich history and relies on the engagement of its many constituents to provide a unique educational experience. The school shall continue to cultivate partnerships and interact with its constituents in ways that are meaningful to them and that will result in an increasingly engaged, involved and supportive Sacred Heart community.

In order to achieve this, we commit to:

- Plan, create, and conduct an engagement needs assessment for current families and alumnae
- Analyze the data from the needs assessment
- Use the data to change the way we plan events, programs and engagement opportunities
- Connect alumnae to the School and to each other through multiple engagement channels.



Culture of Giving

Pillar V - Culture of Giving

In order to build on our financial sustainability, the school must continue to grow its culture of giving by improving awareness of our funding priorities, developing a strong fundraising plan and deepening donor loyalty. Sustained support of the bursary program is needed and continued funding of special projects designed to improve the student experience and enhance innovative academic programming is required.

In order to achieve this, we commit to:

- Create a Fundraising Plan demonstrating short and long term major support required
- Identify new donors and deepen the loyalty of current donors by engaging them in regular, meaningful opportunities for giving
- Emotionally engage and improve data on alumnae and our broader community
- Develop a Culture of Giving with students from their first day at the school in order to foster a tradition of giving
- Continue to seek donors with a capacity for major gifts.

