



Visitation School

Strategic Plan

2022-2027



**INSPIRING LEADERS
SINCE 1873**



Intro

For 150 years, Visitation School has sought to educate students in the Salesian philosophy inspired by our founders St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane de Chantal. Throughout our history, we have thoughtfully crafted robust and innovative academic programs that integrate the search for truth with intellectual pursuits directed toward a faith-filled vision of life. From this position of strength, Visitation School launched a strategic planning process during the 2021-22 school year. Our process was led by Ian Symmonds & Associates, one of the premier firms in the field of strategic planning for independent schools. This strategic plan reflects the values of the Visitation Sisters while calling for bold and forward-thinking to ensure that Visitation School is well-positioned to prepare our students for the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

We believe in the lifelong value of a Catholic, Salesian education. Through the passion and dedication of an extraordinary faculty and staff, Visitation pursues the highest standards of academic achievement, spiritual growth, service to others, leadership development and artistic and athletic endeavors to deliver a world-class education.

Visitation's unique structure is intentional by design: a co-ed Lower School followed by all girls Middle and Upper Schools. Our Lower School empowers students to explore while developing a natural love for learning in a nurturing and innovative environment. Each Visitation student is an integral part of a warm and strong faith community connected by heart-to-heart relationships that are core to the Visitation experience.

In our Middle and Upper Schools, we remain committed to cultivating highly motivated and engaged students. We are experts at teaching girls and at developing confident, bold leaders. We are committed to expanding our global leadership

development programming through our Catholic, Salesian values, and to establishing Visitation School as an expert in girls' education and leadership development in the Twin Cities and beyond. Visitation resolves to expand our community partnerships in order to further highlight our commitment to women's leadership, developing women leaders of faith, vision and purpose who will make an impact on the world around them.

Visitation's Salesian legacy underpins every aspect of our school. A continual emphasis on living the Salesian virtues of kindness, gentleness, humility and simplicity permeates our school environment, where faculty, staff, and students respect the uniqueness of one another and foster inclusive, caring communities. By establishing a Salesian Center, Visitation will honor our legacy and share the Sisters' life-changing wisdom with the broader community. We will enhance our academic excellence while remaining rooted in our little virtues and Visitation Portrait.

We've reached a critical juncture, as we mark our 150th anniversary of educating our students in the Salesian tradition – a time to thoughtfully reflect on our past and boldly chart our future. We are grateful to be guided by this strategic plan and excited to share its goals with you. In the next several years, as the plan is implemented, we will continue refining our already outstanding programs. Visitation will make great strides forward, becoming an even more exceptional place. We look forward to taking this journey with you!

Live Jesus!

Rene Gavic
Head of School

"Be who you are and be that well in order to bring honor to the Master Craftsman whose handiwork you are."

St. Francis de Sales

Portrait

Of a Visitation Learner

*"Non Scholae, Sed Vitae;
Not for School, but for Life."*



The Portrait of the Visitation Learner describes the skills, qualities, attributes and virtues cultivated in each Visitation student. Underpinning this Portrait is the school's mission to provide an excellent education in a Catholic community permeated by Salesian Spirituality. As educators, in partnership with parents, we work diligently to ensure that each student has the opportunity to develop each aspect of the Portrait to his or her fullest potential. Through their experiences students will be described as:

SUSTAINED BY FAITH

ROOTED IN SALESIAN COMMUNITY

INSPIRED TO LEARN

ENGAGED GLOBALLY

POISED TO LEAD

Visitation School Mission

Visitation School provides an excellent education within a Catholic environment permeated by Salesian spirituality and the living tradition of the Visitation Sisters.

Academic Excellence



We have thoughtfully crafted robust academic programs throughout our history that integrate the search for truth with intellectual pursuits directed toward a faith-filled vision of life. The ever-changing world will demand much of our graduates. Over the past two pandemic years, we have learned that now more than ever, it is vital that we remain agile as educators, flexible and prepared for whatever the future may bring.

Strategic Priority

Enhance our curriculum, programs and services to fully embody our Portrait of a Visitation Learner

Initiatives

- Examine and enhance our academics and support our faculty in innovating instructional and curricular practices to ensure ongoing readiness for the future of education
- Evaluate and redesign programming and existing spaces to increase opportunities for creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration.
- Articulate and amplify the intentional leadership program in M-12, building a distinctive and world-class student experience.

Women in Leadership

For 150 years, Visitation has prepared young women who are poised to lead and be catalysts for positive change in our world. We are committed to expanding our leadership development opportunities in grades 6-12 through our Catholic, Salesian values. Through the following strategic priority and initiatives, Visitation ensures our commitment to women's leadership, developing women leaders of faith, vision and purpose who will make an impact on the world around them.



Strategic Priority

Claim, leverage and expand our expertise in educating young women poised to lead in a global world.

Initiatives

- Expand women's leadership development opportunities in grades 6-12, leveraging our network with other Visitation/Salesian schools.
- Solidify our position as experts in all-girls education by expanding connection and access to leadership initiatives and partnerships both globally and locally.
- Expand alumnae programming focused on women's leadership.

Catholic, Salesian Identity

We believe in the lifelong value of a Catholic education. The realities and complex global challenges our students will face require the intellectual and transformational Salesian leadership rooted in our Catholic faith that a Visitation education provides. With our legacy leading the way, we remain committed to our Salesian traditions and to sharing the Sisters' life-changing wisdom with the broader community.

Strategic Priority

Remain clearly committed to our Catholic, Salesian identity.

Initiatives

- Expand the Salesian Center to be a vibrant, well-connected and dedicated space with comprehensive programming for all constituencies.
- Amplify the welcoming spirit of Visitation and our unwavering belief in the dignity of each person as defined by Catholic, Salesian heritage.
- Embody the Visitation Sisters motto of "Live Jesus" by incorporating the Little Virtues in all we do.



Vibrant Community

Each Visitation student is an integral part of a warm and strong faith community connected by heart-to-heart relationships that are core to the Visitation experience. These efforts create a sense of belonging that in turn supports a welcoming school community that extends beyond the walls of Visitation School. Whether it is our students participating in service projects or athletics, the arts, or other extracurriculars, our Salesian tradition calls us to expand our heart-to-heart relationships and partnerships in the broader community.



Strategic Priority

Expand and leverage our influence to better connect with and build stronger communities.

Initiatives

- Build, implement, and promote collaborative community partnerships as part of our robust student experience.
- Promote the rich Visitation Salesian educational tradition and experience, enhancing visibility in service of the broader community.
- Enhance and clarify our single-gender school perception in the community through meaningful community engagement and activity.

Investing in our Future

The long-term sustainability and success of Visitation School will rely on effective governance, leadership and financial planning. We are called as a Catholic, Salesian school to intentionally increase access to our academic learning experience to students who have financial barriers. Our commitment will allow us to continue to attract a diverse student body. Building on our 150 years of educating students in the Salesian philosophy, we will create innovative and meaningful learning experiences so that each student can find his or her place in the world for generations to come.



Our Strategic Planning Process

During the 2020-21 academic year, Visitation School launched a comprehensive strategic planning process. The strategic plan was developed to provide a long-range view of future school priorities created through a highly inclusive and participatory process. More than 60 members of our community participated in our design teams and steering committee. Our entire school community was able to provide feedback through valuable survey tools.

In order to build a base of sound information and to guide the planning process, the school enlisted the assistance of a research and planning firm, Ian Symmonds & Associates. The strategic planning steering committee worked collaboratively through a series of exercises designed to establish priorities based upon the findings of the research and the work of the design teams.

We want to thank our entire school community, Board of Trustees and Steering Committee for your guidance and insight. We are excited to share this strategic plan with our community and for the future of Visitation School.

Strategic Priority

Expand our long-term financial sustainability to preserve and advance our mission.

Initiatives

- Maintain Visitation’s conservative approach to financial decisions.
- Increase the size of the endowment.
- Ensure our optimal enrollment and maintain retention to support our mission and expand our impact and sustainability.
- Identify and evaluate alternative revenue sources that can supplement our income and advance our mission.



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visitation.net/strategicplan



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