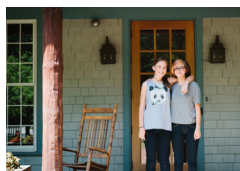
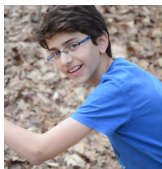


Strategic Plan

2016





LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Hershey Families and Friends,

Our mission, vision, values and core aspirations guide us in our strategic growth while deepening the Montessori experience for our children.

We continue to thrive in sustaining the Montessori vision at Hershey Montessori School, and we value the collective wisdom and creativity of our community in helping us to do so.

In September 2015, more than 100 individuals representing every facet of the Hershey Montessori School community gathered for a facilitated day of visioning. Participants brought constructive energy and optimism to share ideas about what is important and what is possible for children and our school in the long term. The group also considered the near future with discussion of how to ensure that we are prepared to respond to short-term opportunities and inevitable change.

Following this gathering, a committee of volunteers joined our board facilitator, Candace DeSantis, to synthesize these ideas into a set of aspirations for the future of our school. Committee members represented program staff from both campuses, administration, parents and the board. Each member brought passion and energy to the work of reviewing the school's mission and contemplating the language that speaks to our core values. Throughout the process, the committee remained dedicated to honoring the contributions of all who participated in the visioning day exercises. This document is the result of that work.

THE PROCESS CONTINUES...

Now that our aspirations have been defined, it's time to develop action steps to achieve them. We hope to continue the momentum of engaging community to work together toward this shared vision. To that end, anyone with an interest or expertise in one or more of the stated aspirations is invited to participate in this process.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



Individuals who are able to invest time and energy to the work will be grouped together in Aspiration Circles. These “circles,” one for each of the seven stated aspirations, will meet to design and propose short-term action steps and to aid the implementation and evaluation of those steps.

Working together deepens our community relationships, and our resilience lies within those relationships. Please contact any of the following founding committee members if you would like to join in the work on an Aspiration Circle: Cassie Ciarlillo, Alyssa Conklin-Moore, Candace DeSantis, Danielle Hayes, Rachel McKinney, Lynette Ruple or myself.

Margaret Wheatly appeals that we might “trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.”

It is my pleasure to join in these conversations with you.

Paula Leigh-Doyle, Head of School





Mission.

Grounded in the tradition of Dr. Maria Montessori, Hershey Montessori School provides carefully prepared learning environments for children from birth to 18 years. Our community fosters personal and academic growth, independence, confidence, responsibility and joyful lifelong learning.

Vision.

Children will develop as whole human beings with a strong sense of self, community and the natural world, reaching adulthood as leaders, models and contributors to peace.





Core Values.

We believe human beings construct themselves by interacting with their social, intellectual and physical environments. Infants, children and adolescents develop through structure and freedom while nurtured in an atmosphere of beauty and respect in our intentionally prepared learning environments.

We value:

- the individuality and potential of each child
- the innate desire to learn and create
- interaction with the natural world as an essential component of the individual's development
- purposeful activity and engagement in the wider community
- genuine Montessori practices and materials upholding the standards of AMI (Association Montessori Internationale)
- highly skilled Montessori guides dedicated to serving children and adolescents
- continued personal and professional growth for all of our staff
- a culture of creativity, fulfillment and trust
- collaborative work among children, adolescents and adults
- families engaged in their children's learning and the school community
- mindful stewardship of our natural environment
- education for a just and peaceful world



COMMIT to pedagogy and student experience

Our pedagogically sound programs are a foundation for life. They reflect opportunities for experiential and individualized learning, community participation and stewardship of our natural environment.



“The child's development follows a path of successive stages of independence, and our knowledge of this must guide us in our behaviour towards him. We have to help the child to act, will and think for himself. This is the art of serving the spirit, an art which can be practised to perfection only when working among children.”

–Dr. Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*



ENGAGE our community

The children, families, staff and alumni of Hershey Montessori School value our interdependence as we actively lend our unique strengths for the benefit of all.





ADVANCE fiscal sustainability & development

Hershey Montessori School has short- and long-term fiscal plans that respond to the growth and the priorities of the school community while maintaining fiscal responsibility and program sustainability.





PROMOTE staff vibrancy

Our Montessori culture seeks to enhance the well-being and growth of our diverse and inspired staff.

“The real preparation for education is a study of one's self. The training of the teacher...is something far more than a learning of ideas. It includes the training of character; it is a preparation of the spirit.”

—Dr. Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*



LOVE our lived spaces & natural surroundings

We embrace our role as the responsible stewards of our two campuses and ensure that the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of these spaces — both indoor and outdoor — support our mission. We will create and care for the physical environment in which those who seek knowledge, well-being and meaningful connections can flourish.

“There is no description, no image in any book that is capable of replacing the sight of real trees, and all the life to be found around them, in a real forest. Something emanates from those trees which speaks to the soul, something no book, no museum is capable of giving. The wood reveals that it is not only the trees that exist, but a whole, interrelated collection of lives. And this earth, this climate, this cosmic power are necessary for the development of these lives.”

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—Dr. Maria Montessori, *From Childhood to Adolescence*



EXTEND

our community

By building relationships locally, regionally and globally, we enhance understanding of Montessori values.



“We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe and are connected with each other to form one whole unity.”

—Dr. Maria Montessori,
To Educate the Human Potential





SUPPORT more Montessori for more children

Hershey
Montessori
supports the
accessibility
of quality
Montessori
education for
more children.



“An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking; it involves the spiritual development of man, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to understand the times in which they live.”



—Dr. Maria Montessori, *Education and Peace*