

Building Our Future Together

Strategic Plan 2018 - 2021



Montcrest School

Introduction

We are a JK – 8, co-educational school community focused on providing student-centred learning in a caring and nurturing environment. We combine our nearly 60 years of experience with leading-edge teaching and learning practices. Now more than ever, we know that our approach to academic and social-emotional development is what elementary school children need to grow and thrive.

This Strategic Plan builds on the remarkable achievements we made in our previous 2012-17 plan through which we established an even greater level of professional expertise in our faculty and staff, deepened our progressive teaching and learning practices across all programs, and launched a \$12 million campus renovation that will be completed by the end of 2018.

As we approach our 60th anniversary, we are confident in our abilities to meet the needs of children today thus helping them to realize their unique potential to contribute to the world that awaits them.

Don Durno
Chair, Board of Governors

David Thompson
Head of School

Our Vision

To be recognized as the leading elementary school community in Canada in realizing the unique potential of each child.

Our Mission

Montcrest School is a co-educational community, small enough to honour the individual and big enough to provide an exceptional academic experience with balanced opportunities in leadership, the arts, and athletics.

Our school challenges children to discover and acknowledge their own voices, so they can understand and make meaningful connections with the world.



Our Guiding Principles

We are a co-educational, JK – 8, independent school.

We work at the forefront of global-educational best practices by combining research and experience with leading-edge innovation and tried-and-true practices.

We embrace a diversity of learners and prepare them for academic and social success in high school and beyond.

We cultivate a caring and nurturing community, including our faculty and staff, parents, alumni, and neighbours, in which students can discover, develop, and thrive.

We develop our five “Standing for Character” values of respect, responsibility, integrity, compassion, and courage in our students.



Our Exceptional Educational Experience

We develop within our students an intrinsically motivated love of learning and a belief in themselves as learners within an environment that balances rigour and joy.

We take an approach to teaching and learning which is both dynamic and responsive. In our classrooms, teachers combine research and experience with rich lessons, pose good questions, and guide the learning process. Our teachers carefully listen to and observe their students in order to continuously reflect, respond, and adapt their teaching practice to meet evolving student learning needs. By creating such learning environments, we motivate, engage, support, and stimulate curiosity through hands-on, minds-on, and deep learning experiences.

We understand that academic learning alone does not determine a child's future success. Our teachers go beyond mathematics and literacy to support collaboration, problem-solving, creative thinking, and empathy. In our classrooms, we promote academic mastery, nurture social-emotional learning, and encourage students to pursue their areas of interest.

We rely on two key pillars: **a caring and nurturing learning environment and student-centred teaching and learning.**



Pillar 1: Caring & Nurturing Learning Environment

The creation and maturation of a caring and nurturing environment has been a pillar of our school since its inception.

Over the 2018-21 Strategic Plan, we will continue to ensure that:

- We are intentional in our approach to social-emotional learning, character development, and wellness.
- We attract a faculty and staff who demonstrably support and care for each child.
- We create a nurturing physical environment. Our campus incorporates historic homes with modern renovations in a welcoming neighbourhood adjacent to Riverdale Park, which we use to complement our physical education and outdoor learning.
- We cultivate meaningful partnerships with parents in many aspects of our school. For example, the Montcrest Parents' Association is a vital element of our community. The members create events and facilitate volunteerism and support for our faculty and students.
- We build relationships with our alumni, always looking for more ways to have them participate in school life.
- We participate in our local community and cultivate a culture of service and giving in our students.
- We use the outdoors as an extension of our classroom. We integrate nature-based learning, and cultivate an environmental ethos.

By 2021, our goal is to fully embed social-emotional learning in the student experience by taking our culture of caring and nurturing to a deeper level.

We will identify and implement a core model for social-emotional learning that will span the developmental stages from Kindergarten through Grade 8. We will invest in professional development to equip our teachers with effective and consistent language, tools, and approaches to support the children as they grow. We will also provide parents with support to help them address the social-emotional development of their children at home.

Pillar 2:

Student-Centred Teaching & Learning

At Montcrest School, the student is at the centre of what we do. This means truly knowing the students as learners – their interests, strengths, areas of challenge, and learning profile. Our students need to know that we care about them as individuals and that we appreciate their uniqueness. We want each student to feel like we “get them.”

Building on our success in the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan, over the next three years we will continue to ensure that:

- We have a highly qualified faculty, most with advanced degrees and/or specialist qualifications, as well as extensive experience working with elementary school learners. We will continue to encourage a growth mindset in all our faculty and staff and support their continued professional learning and growth.
- Our academic program draws upon a wide variety of approaches to teaching and learning including differentiated instruction, inquiry and project-based learning, and authentically integrating various subjects together to reflect real-world problem solving.
- We have a low student-to-teacher ratio that allows our learners to receive the support and attention that they need to meet their learning goals.
- Students are able to participate in a broad range of cocurricular activities in leadership, arts, athletics, and special interest clubs.
- We work closely with our senior students and their parents to ensure they are prepared for high school.

By 2021, we will have created a defined path of growth for academic and social development for each student.

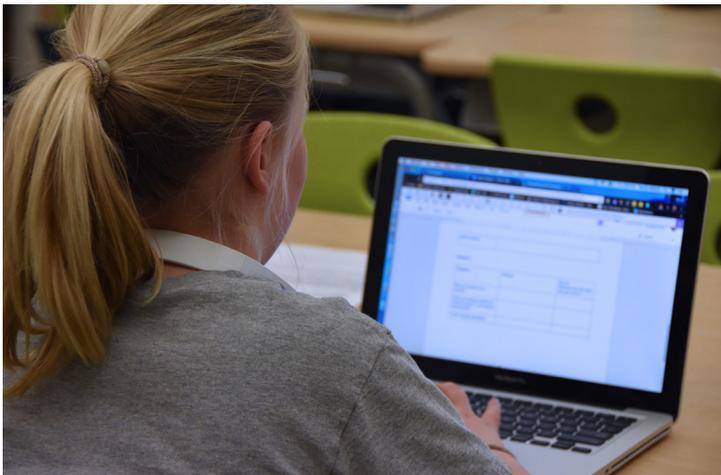
We will consult across the grade levels, with our teachers and parents, review current research, and visit other leading elementary schools.

We will build on our Grade 7-8 program to create an enhanced high school preparedness program.

Supporting Initiatives

To support the 2018-21 Strategic Plan, we will be investing in the following areas. We will:

- Enhance our communications with our stakeholders.
- Expand our kindergarten entry, maintain gender balance, and extend the diversity of our student population.
- Activate our entire community in supporting a culture of philanthropy: complete the Building Together campaign, further increase teaching and learning spaces, and build the bursary.
- Strengthen our connections with our alumni.
- Broaden our digital capabilities in all facets of our teaching and learning and administration.
- Prepare a long-term financial plan that will ensure sufficient revenues to meet the demands of this plan.





Since 1986, Kite Day has been one of Montcrest's most cherished traditions.



Montcrest
discover • develop • thrive

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