



CHALLENGES WE FACE IN LIVING OUT THE MISSION AS CATHOLIC/URSULINE SCHOOLS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The vision of St. Angela Merici will continue to form the context in which Ursuline schools plan for the future. What does this vision provide for us as we collaborate in shaping Ursuline schools of the future?

1. SCHOOL CULTURE

School culture is the heart of every Ursuline ministry, and Ursuline schools of the future will continue to face the challenge of emphasizing the value of community and cooperation over that of individualism and self-centeredness. We will need to continue to:

- Create environments of respect and empathy
- Provide environments that support cooperation and collaboration
- Promote a spiritual vision of the world in the face of materialism, a concern for others in the face of egoism, simplicity in the face of consumerism, and the cause for the poor in the face of social injustice

2. LEADERSHIP

Leadership in Ursuline schools has been a topic of major interest for many years. Leadership challenges include:

- Cultivating people's leadership potential at all levels of the school
- Forming future leaders who are moral, spiritual, discerning decision-makers
- Preparing our students to be leaders in the Catholic Church
- Creating and maintaining staff development programs that focus on forming imaginative, collaborative, well-informed, and discerning leaders in service
- Encouraging collaborative learning with others outside the school community

3. PEACE, JUSTICE & DIVERSITY (CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE)

Ursuline schools have always been leaders in Catholic social justice. We will continue to face challenges in:

- Preparing faculty, staff, and students to become change agents working for peace and justice in the world
- Modeling a commitment to being cross-culturally competent within the curriculum and in the school
- Opening doors to greater diversity and inclusivity
- Educating students to be global leaders
- Being advocates for at-risk people within our communities
- Broadening a sense of what it means to be "Catholic" (or more universal) in building Christian community
- Being socially responsible in relationships with local communities

4. RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Religious formation is central to the mission of Ursuline schools. Challenges we face in meeting the changing needs of our students in terms of religious formation include:

- Invigorating the Catholic identity of our schools
- Integrating religious formation and education to constitute the cornerstone of the school's curriculum
- Integrating Catholic social teachings in school formational programs
- Connecting social action and religious worship
- Evaluating service and retreat programs to meet the changing needs of students
- Articulating the standards of belief and behavior of the Catholic Church in ways that young people can understand

5. TEACHING AND LEARNING

The context of education changes rapidly, and that leads to many challenges for Ursuline schools of the future...challenges that include:

- Developing vision and processes to create new learning cultures
- Expanding college preparatory curriculum to include skills of reflection, discernment, listening, adaptability, teamwork, etc.
- Building interdisciplinary connections
- Making systems thinking, teaming, metaphorical thinking, and creativity dynamic dimensions of academic programs
- Examining evaluation from different perspectives
- Encouraging flexibility and risk-taking in the acquisition of knowledge
- Helping others understand that coping with failures and dealing with limitations are key components in the pursuit of excellence
- Maximizing technology's potential for enhancing the educational process
- Emphasizing interpersonal communication skills in an increasingly technological and impersonal world

6. ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

- Adequate compensation for teachers, staff, and school leadership
- Increased need for technology infrastructure to adapt to the changing world
- Maintaining, updating, and building new facilities
- Operational vitality of schools depending on factors such as family income, school size, and location
- Ensuring effective governance of individual schools and Ursuline education as a whole