



**SACRED HEART ACADEMY  
BRYN MAWR**

Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

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**HEAD OF SCHOOL**

Start Date: July 1, 2022

[shabrynmaur.org](http://shabrynmaur.org)



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES



# SACRED HEART ACADEMY

— BRYN MAWR —

## MISSION

*Sacred Heart Academy Bryn Mawr educates college-bound women by cultivating their self-confidence, guiding them to realize their personal and scholastic potential and their responsibility for others, and by preparing them to meet life's challenges — all within an academic and religiously diverse community that focuses on spiritual values and the individual student.*

## GOALS

*As a member of the Network of Sacred Heart Schools, Sacred Heart Academy Bryn Mawr commits itself to educate to:*

*GOAL 1: a personal and active faith in God;*

*GOAL 2: a deep respect for intellectual values;*

*GOAL 3: a social awareness which impels to action;*

*GOAL 4: the building of community as a Christian value; and*

*GOAL 5: personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.*

## OVERVIEW

Sacred Heart Academy (SHA) seeks a visionary, entrepreneurial, and accomplished leader to inspire and lead a high-performing team of committed educators and a community of brave and joyful hearts, and to champion a compelling vision for SHA's future built on its legacy of excellence in independent, all-girls, K-12 Catholic education. The successful candidate will be a thought leader, community builder, and skilled communicator who visibly celebrates and models the Mission and *Goals and Criteria* of a Sacred Heart Academy education, and enthusiastically embraces opportunities within the independent school landscape to create demand for the extraordinary gifts of a Sacred Heart Academy education.

As a member of the International Network of Sacred Heart Schools, Sacred Heart Academy is faithful to the goals of a Sacred Heart education: to produce self-confident women, provide a challenging intellectual education, foster an active faith in God, and create a desire to help others. SHA is a school rich in the traditions of its historical foundation in France and shares these traditions with students at Sacred Heart Network Schools in the United States/Canada and around the world.

Founded in 1865, SHA is an independent, all-girls, K-12 Catholic school Located in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania in the heart of the Philadelphia Main Line, serving students of all faiths.

Sacred Heart, ranked as one of the top independent schools in the region, has a long, impressive history of encouraging girls and young women to expand their minds, examine their hearts, understand their emotions as powerful gifts, and discern the way to use these gifts for good. Teachers here are

## FAST FACTS

- Founded: 1865
- Total students: 193
- Non-Catholic students: 29%
- Zip codes represented: 50+
- Total faculty: 34
- Average faculty tenure: 10 years
- Faculty with advanced degrees: 65%
- Student/teacher ratio: 6 to 1
- Annual operating budget: \$5.5M
- Financial aid budget: \$1.08M
- Students receiving aid: 45%
- Administrative team of 3 Division Heads (Lower, Middle & Upper School), and Directors of Academics, Admissions, Advancement, Marketing and Communications, Finance, Campus Ministry, and Athletics



highly experienced and dedicated to providing engaging, meaningful, and varied classroom instruction that best meets the needs of every learner and prepares them well for college and life beyond.

After serving the Sacred Heart community as Head of School since 2015, Deirdre V. Cryor has announced the 2021-22 school year will conclude her tenure. When Ms. Cryor travels on from SHA, she will have left her mark on every inch of the school. Among Ms. Cryor's numerous achievements, however, perhaps none will be so lasting as her shepherding of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic and her close work with the Board of Trustees to envision, create, and achieve unanimous approval for the school's new Strategic Plan: *Courage for the Journey*.

Sacred Heart Academy seeks its next Head of School starting July 1, 2022. The successful candidate will be an experienced leader devoted to the school's Mission and programs. The Head of School will report to the Board of Trustees and is expected to provide leadership across the student experience, including spiritual growth and formation. SHA is seeking a visionary who is inspiring, relatable, accessible, and able to connect joyfully with students, faculty and staff, parents, alumnae, and the broader community; a thoughtful listener to the needs of the community; and a compelling storyteller able to share the school's long history and relate it to the present. SHA is a school with a tradition of engaging its students and its community in "Courageous Conversations," and its next leader must excel in navigating challenging conversations with a respect for all voices.

This is an exceptional opportunity to lead a forward-thinking school with an unwavering commitment to its Mission.



## SCHOOL HISTORY

Founded by the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sacred Heart Academy Bryn Mawr traces its roots to 1865, when Bishop James Wood, who in 1875 would go on to become the first archbishop of Philadelphia, petitioned the religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart – who operated schools worldwide – to open a school for, “Catholic young ladies,” in the city of Philadelphia.

Madeleine Sophie Barat, RSCJ foundress in France in 1800 and Superior General of the Society, who was later canonized, gave the institution her blessing. In 1865, the Society of the Sacred Heart founded The Philadelphia Day School of the Sacred Heart in a rented house in Philadelphia. Shortly thereafter, the school moved to the Edwards House at 1334 Walnut Street in Philadelphia. The school remained on Walnut Street until 1886, when it moved to a newly constructed building at 1819 Arch Street and was renamed Convent of the Sacred Heart.

The school remained at Arch Street until 1924, when it moved to its Overbrook campus at the corner of City Line Avenue and Haverford Road. In 1969, the Religious of the Sacred Heart found it necessary to discontinue operations in Philadelphia and to close Overbrook.

A great point of pride in the school’s storied history that illustrates the “brave heart” attitude that a Sacred Heart education aims to cultivate, a committed group of Overbrook parents, alumnae, faculty, and staff successfully petitioned the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Superior General of the Society to continue Sacred Heart education under a lay board and faculty. For over two decades, the leadership of the school stewarded and promoted the mission, goals, and traditions of a Sacred Heart education



independent of the Network. In 1999, under the leadership of Sister Matthew Anita MacDonald, SSJ, the school was readmitted to full membership in the Network of Sacred Heart Schools, reuniting the school with its roots and strengthening its connection to the sister Sacred Heart schools, now 25 in North America and more than 150 Sacred Heart schools in over 40 countries around the globe. As a governance matter, Sacred Heart continues to operate independently of the Society and the Archdiocese; SHA is organized as a PA non-profit corporation governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees.

In 1978, the school moved to Hillbrook House, a 16-acre estate in Bryn Mawr, once owned by the Blabon-Dixon family. The new campus consisted of a Tudor Mansion, built in 1908, and a red brick building known as the School House. In 1982, the Marie Cornelia Dooley Building was built to house classrooms, laboratories, a multimedia center, and a gymnasium. In 2000, the campus underwent a major expansion to add classroom space and a dining room followed by another renovation to include a fitness center.

## THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart Academy is a small school that celebrates and nurtures in each young woman and girl entrusted to its care the goals of a Sacred Heart education while connecting her to something much larger — the Network of Sacred Heart of Schools — and cultivating her confidence to shape and lead her own bold path in the world. The size of the school provides each student with access to unique opportunities and the comfort of an environment that values each student as an individual.



Sacred Heart Academy believes in the transformative power of education. To this end, SHA is faithful to the goals of a Sacred Heart education — including a personal and active faith in God, a deep respect for intellectual values, and a social awareness that impels to action. Students and alumnae are encouraged to commit to the building of community as a Christian value and to personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.

The Sacred Heart academic program is rooted in the liberal arts and taught in contemporary ways. Overall, SHA aims to empower girls to develop their potential as scholars and leaders. In this process, it strives to recognize and affirm each student's unique gifts and encourages students to speak courageously in an intellectually safe atmosphere. SHA's academic program not only prepares its graduates for academic success in college, but also guides students to become active global citizens with diverse perspectives and critical consciousness.

In the fall of 2020, SHA adopted its [Strategic Plan](#), *Courage for the Journey*, focused on evolving the school's approach to teaching and learning with greater emphasis on innovation, collaboration, leadership, student-directed learning, and faculty professional growth. The plan also focuses on strengthening community and ensuring sustainable institutional growth.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion at Sacred Heart Academy is supported through curricular and co-curricular opportunities and is a key pillar of the Strategic Plan. The school believes that an inclusive learning community is integral to achieving academic success and individual growth. In our diverse world, SHA prepares and inspires students to be active, informed, and responsible citizens at local, national, and global levels.



SHA, while independent, is part of the Network of Sacred Heart Schools that includes 25 schools in the U.S. and Canada linked by mission and history. SHA is a member of and accredited by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools. SHA is also a member of the Association of Delaware Valley Independent Schools, the National Association of Independent Schools, has been designated a No Place for Hate School by the Antidefamation League, and is currently undergoing its Self Study for continued accreditation by the Sacred Heart Commission on Goals (SHACOG) for the 2021-22 academic year.

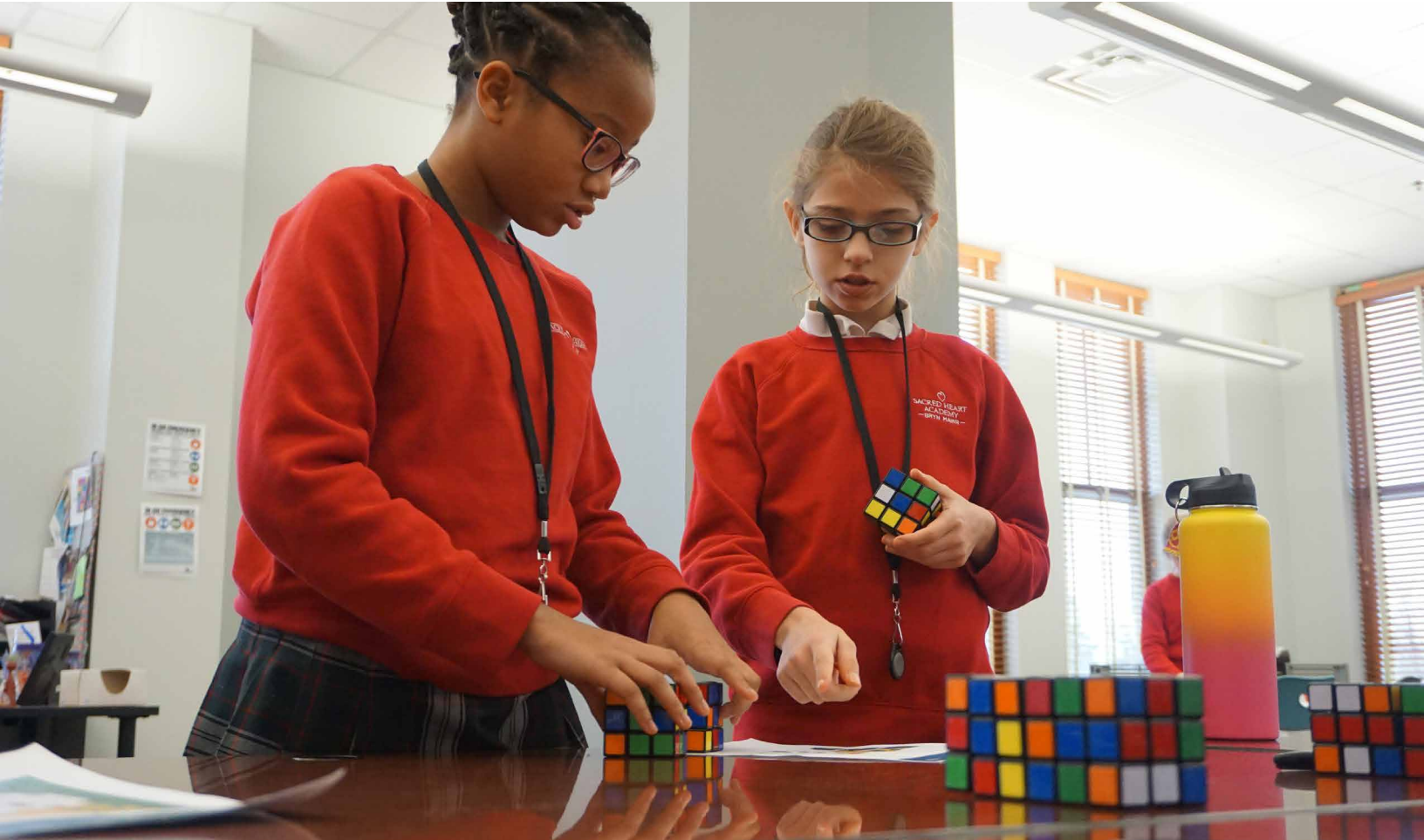
## ACADEMICS

SHA offers a robust college-preparatory curriculum that emphasizes communication, analytical thinking, collaboration, and the practice of “wise freedom.” Whether in kindergarten or grade 12, Sacred Heart Academy students take initiative and are active participants in their own learning. The integrated humanities approach offers a plan of studies that presents the literature, history, music, and art history of

## COLLEGE MATRICULATION

All members of the Class of 2021 were admitted to four-year colleges and universities, with the class collectively receiving millions in scholarship funds. Recent graduates are attending the following colleges and universities, among others:

Arizona State University  
Boston College  
Boston University  
Catholic University of America  
Clark University  
Clemson University  
Colgate University  
College of Charleston  
Columbia University  
Dickinson College  
Drexel University  
Fordham University  
George Mason University  
Goucher College  
Howard University  
Johns Hopkins University  
Lehigh University  
Loyola University Chicago  
Marymount University  
Pennsylvania State University  
Pepperdine University  
Sacred Heart University  
Savannah College of Art and Design  
Seton Hall University  
Syracuse University  
Trinity College  
University of Michigan  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
University of Connecticut  
University of Hartford  
University of New Hampshire  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Richmond  
University of Vermont  
University of Virginia  
Villanova University  
West Chester University  
Widener University



a period concurrently. The curriculum is based on an understanding that students learn best when they are engaged with the subject matter and can make connections, and it is supported by other initiatives such as Sacred Heart Academy's innovative Courageous Conversations program that encourages and trains students to engage in respectful and meaningful dialogue about important issues.

The Lower School curriculum (kindergarten-grade 4) is steeped in language arts, mathematics, science, religion, and social studies, with added focus on public speaking, art, music, world languages, and wellness. This literature-rich academic environment is designed to foster a love of reading, writing, and public speaking. Math is mastered through a flexible, hands-on program that encourages confident and strategic thinking. The progressive science curriculum promotes learning through discovery. Lower school students enjoy regular STEM lessons that emphasize peer collaboration, learning from mistakes, and determining the many ways to solve a problem or design.

Girls in the Middle School (grades 5-8) also focus on core classes in language arts, mathematics, science, religion, and social studies, with additional classes in world languages, physical education, and global citizenship. Students have opportunities to work independently and in small groups, enabling them to develop their independence and confidence. STEM activities, through the Innovation Center, are essential to the Middle School curriculum.

The curriculum culminates in engaging independent and integrated classes in the Upper School (grades 9-12). In addition to core studies in English, mathematics, science, social studies, theology, world languages (French and Spanish), and art, students are required to take eight electives as well





as classes in physical education, wellness, and college counseling. The program includes numerous Advanced Placement courses. Upper School students can also enroll in full-year and semester courses offered asynchronously online by Sacred Heart Network instructors across North America. Seniors have the opportunity to take college-level classes at nearby Villanova University.

Through the exploration, study, and management of wetlands on campus, the school's signature Wetlands and Wonder program offers students in all divisions the opportunity to make real-time connections between the earth science curriculum and the natural world.

## THE ARTS

The visual and performing arts are integral to a Sacred Heart education. Students produce original artwork, take part in the choir and various musical ensembles, and perform in drama productions. Writers express themselves through student publications, with Upper School students publishing a newspaper, a literary magazine, and the yearbook. Students in all grades collect and publish original stories and essays.

The overall goal of the visual arts program is to help students cultivate an artistic awareness of the world around them through creativity, abstract and analytical thinking, and self-expression. Classes range from the fundamentals to advanced visual arts and AP Art Studio.



Music is offered throughout the curriculum and in extracurricular programming. In Lower School, students are introduced to music, learn violin basics, and participate in the choir. The Middle and Upper school music programs serve as comprehensive study of music, with courses covering a variety of musical forms and periods, music techniques and theory, and related topics. Students also participate in the choir and various instrumental ensembles.

Each year, the theater program offers full theatrical productions involving students from grades 5-12 in both the performance and the production.

## **ATHLETICS**

The energy and school spirit of Sacred Heart Academy students is cultivated through a vibrant athletics program. The program is defined by how SHA athletes embrace the core values, good character, and Mission of Sacred Heart Academy. Student-athletes develop confidence, comradery, leadership, sportsmanship, and discipline.

As a member of the Athletics Association of Catholic Academies League (AACAL) and the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), Sacred Heart competes in 10 sports and sponsors a variety of intramurals. Team sports (varsity and junior varsity) include field hockey, volleyball, golf, tennis, cross-country, crew, basketball, lacrosse, and track and field. In 2021, SHA Basketball won its fifth straight PIAA District 1 Championship. SHA Volleyball was crowned District Champs for the fourth consecutive year in the fall of 2020.



Sacred Heart Alumnae athletes are playing at the college level, coaching at the college level, and leading college and high school athletic departments. As in the past, the Sacred Heart Network of Schools sent several alumnae to the 2021 Summer Olympics in Tokyo to represent the United States and several other countries.

## SCHOOL LIFE

With clubs and activities in all three divisions, SHA students have numerous opportunities to explore their talents, gifts, and abilities, as well as take on leadership roles. Lower School clubs range from Chess and Science Explorers to Irish Dance and Creative Arts & Crafts. In Middle and Upper School, clubs are regularly organized to accommodate evolving student interests and have included in recent years “SHA-Capella,” Space Club, Pre-Med Club, Fitness, Art & Design, Choir, Drama, Engineering, Girls in Science, Guitar, Model UN, the Multicultural Club, and the Black Student Union. Middle and Upper School students can join the Student Council.

Lower School students learn about four specific charitable organizations each year and work throughout the school year to raise money or supplies for each organization. Middle School students are required to participate in 10 community service events during the school year. The service requirement for Upper School students is 25 hours per year. Each division has days in the academic year dedicated to service. As a benefit of membership in the Network of Sacred Heart Schools, students may participate in week-long Network Service opportunities at various Sacred Heart schools. In addition, the Network

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Exchange program offers each student the opportunity to experience a new culture by spending two or three weeks in another Network school, nationally or internationally.

Guided by the *Goals and Criteria* of Sacred Heart Schools and rooted in Catholic faith, Sacred Heart Academy Bryn Mawr is also committed to fostering a community that acts in the interests of equity and justice for each student. Through the Service and Social Justice (Goal III) program, students are engaged in direct service, advocacy, outreach, and partnerships to work for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

## CAMPUS

Sacred Heart Academy is located on 16 acres in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. The Tudor mansion, built in 1908, serves as the main administrative building and houses the school's chapel. The Mansion is connected to the Academic Classroom building by a spacious and airy dining room that overlooks the campus and provides a flex-space for community gatherings and functions. The Dooley Building, built in 1986, was later expanded in 2000 to include more classroom space. Along with state-of-the-art classrooms, the facilities include the Innovation Center, a dynamic space for collaborative STEM activities. Recent grant approvals allow SHA to continue its commitment to updating technology resources. Campus facilities also include the gym, fitness center, athletic fields, and a well-managed three-acre wetlands that serves as a center for outdoor environmental education.



## **BRYN MAWR, PENNSYLVANIA**

Located in the middle of the Main Line, a collection of villages around Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr is a small suburb of around 3,800 people. Bryn Mawr is known for its beautiful setting and walkability with small shops and cafes to explore. One of the more popular suburbs of Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr offers a quieter alternative to the city, while providing an entry point to the ‘Eds & Meds’ economy of the region. Neighboring colleges including Villanova University, Bryn Mawr College, and Haverford College are some of the area’s top employers. Many people living in Bryn Mawr choose to commute to Philadelphia for work which has major employers like the University of Pennsylvania and its Health System, Thomas Jefferson University and Jefferson Health, Comcast, Vanguard, and Tower Health.

With fantastic art galleries, scenic parks, and historic homes, it’s easy to get lost in the charm and beauty of this small town. Weekly outdoor concerts and open-air farmers markets add to the area’s small-town feel. Top sights in Bryn Mawr include the Main Line Art Center with beautiful galleries and high-quality art instruction; the 29-acre Ashbridge Park with open green space and historic structures and an arboretum with trails and hills for sledding, jogging, and playing; and Harriton House, an historic house originally known as Bryn Mawr or “Great Hill.”



Only 14 miles from Bryn Mawr is the major city of Philadelphia. As a thriving economic center, it is home to some large U.S. corporations, including Comcast, Cigna Insurance, Sunoco, Aramark food service, GlaxoSmithKline, Urban Outfitters, and others. The city is also growing as a center for biotechnology and information technology. Of course, Philadelphia's historic and cultural sites make it one of the nation's major tourist destinations.

Philadelphia offers a plethora of cultural amenities. Museums include the Franklin Institute, the Museum of the American Revolution, the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Rodin Museum, and the impressive Barnes Foundation, which promotes the advancement of education and appreciation for the fine arts. With its historic neighborhoods, parklands, and remarkable building murals, Philadelphia is a wonderful city for walking. It's also a great city for dining out and features lots of sidewalk seating reminiscent of European cities.

In education, the city is home to some of the oldest independent schools in the country and has the nation's third largest concentration of college students — including at the University of Pennsylvania, Saint Joseph's University, Temple University, and Drexel University.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Sacred Heart Academy cherishes its sense of community and family. The traditions and values of a Sacred Heart education are woven into the fabric of daily school life, and SHA is described as “A Place to call Home.” The school has a powerful message to share with the greater community and strives to broaden its outreach to new families in order to increase enrollment. Among the challenges and opportunities facing the school are:

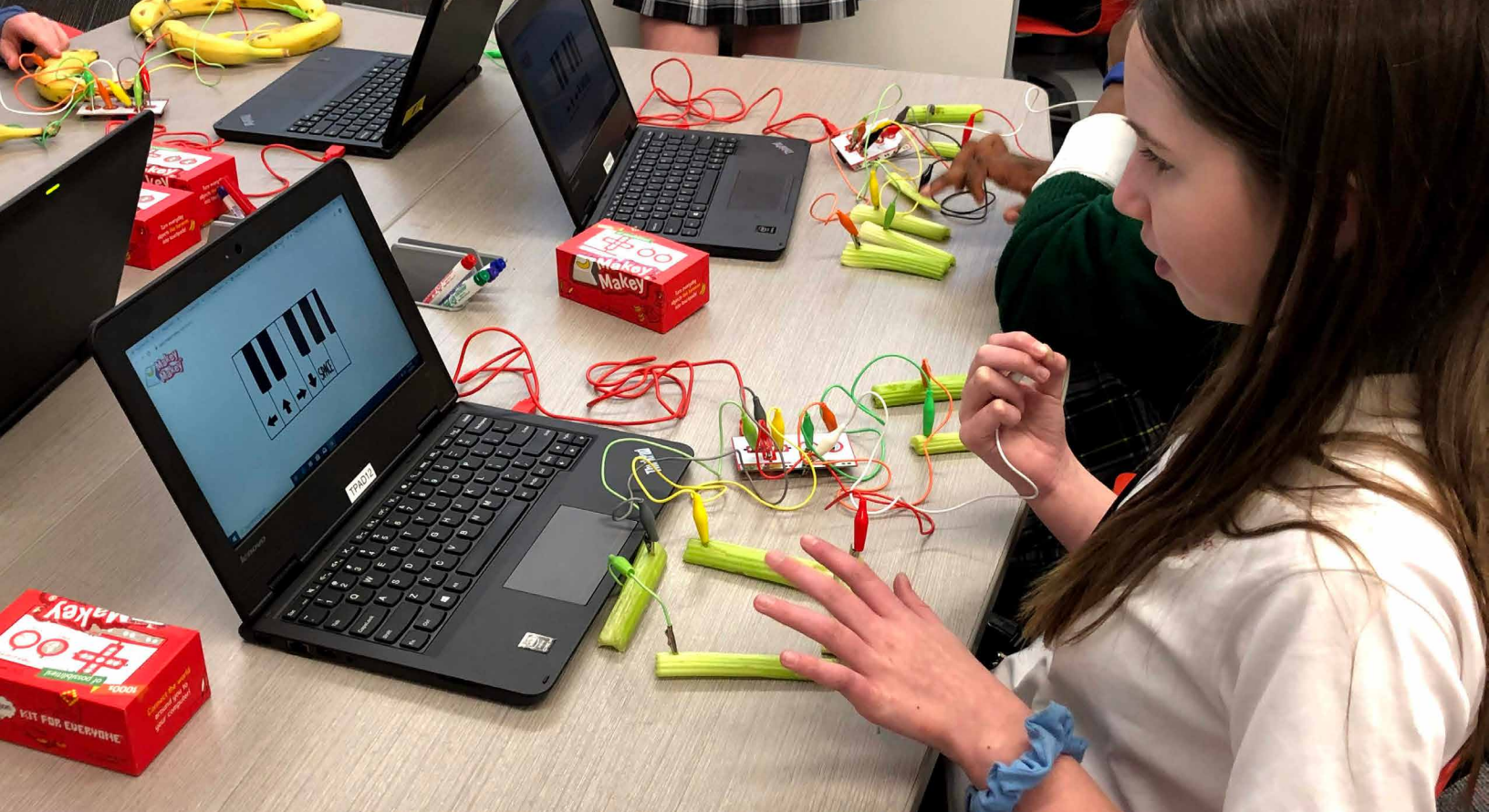
- Restoring historic enrollments with a focus on the financial sustainability of the school.
- Animating and executing SHA's Strategic Plan.
- Increasing marketing and branding efforts to distinguish the school from its strong local competitors.
- Fundraising and friend-raising, especially with alumnae.
- Increasing diversity and inclusion at all levels.
- Capitalizing on the global network of Sacred Heart Schools as a value-added differentiator.
- Creating a master plan of capital and endowment improvements.

## DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The next Head of School will be a team builder who, in partnership with the Board and faculty, will be able to articulate clearly the value proposition of a Sacred Heart Education to the larger community. Some qualities and characteristics include:

- Visionary, dynamic, courageous leader.
- Effective fundraiser/friend-raiser.
- Outward facing leader with outstanding poise, presence, and communication skills.
- Energetic and enthusiastic leader who can develop people, motivate teams, and strategize excellence.
- Strong listener who can make tough decisions.
- A business savvy leader who can animate and lend creative vision to the broad goals of the strategic plan and execute with discipline.
- Thought leader who embraces challenges and opportunities in a competitive independent school environment with energy and vision.

The new head of school will embody the five goals of Sacred Heart education and has a proven track record of success and passion for all-girls' education. The Board welcomes candidates from other educational institutions (religious, independent, public) as well as accomplished leaders from other mission-critical career venues such as higher education; non-profit foundations, associations, and charities; or the corporate, civic, and professional services arenas. While knowledge of education and school operations is strongly desired, other qualities and experiences will also be greatly valued, especially visionary, entrepreneurial leadership and the ability to inspire, lead a high-performing team, and create demand for the extraordinary gifts of a Sacred Heart Academy education. Diverse candidates and those sharing a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion are strongly encouraged to apply.



## TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing interest in this particular position;
- A current curriculum vitae;
- A one-page statement of educational or leadership philosophy and practice;
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

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