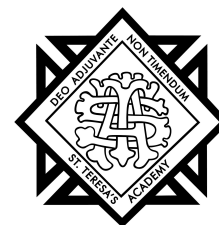


# St Teresa's Academy

## Strategic Plan 2026-2031



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## **St. Teresa's Academy Board of Directors Strategic Planning Committee Members**

Dr. Elizabeth Baker, STA Principal for Student Affairs  
Dr. Siabhan May-Washington, STA President  
Barbara McCormick, STA Principal for Academic Affairs  
Tim Saxe, STA Board of Directors Committee Liaison  
Dr. Ron Slepitz, STA Board of Directors Vice Chair  
Dana Tippin Cutler, STA Board of Directors Chair

## **Steering Committee Coordinator**

Dr. Mandi Sonnenberg, STEAM Projects & Education

## **Steering Committee Leaders**

Dr. Elizabeth Baker  
Dr. Siabhan May-Washington  
Barbara McCormick  
Kaliyah Meriwether, Community & Campus Inclusion

## **Steering Committee Members**

Jane Clark, Admissions  
Amy Cooper, Learning Center  
Kelly Finn, Innovation & Advanced Interdisciplinary Education  
Becky Flores, Facilities  
Jaqui Haskins, Human Resources  
Debi Hudson, College Counseling  
Maurine Kierl, Marketing & Communications  
Adrianna Knifong, Campus Ministry  
Chris Newman, Finance & Operations  
Kaylee Peile, Philanthropy & Engagement  
Renee Schultz, Campus Ministry  
Dr. Mandi Sonnenberg, STEAM Projects & Education  
Matt Stewart, Information Technology  
Katherine Williams, Athletics  
Academic Department members

## President's Foreword

Dear St. Teresa's Academy Community,

For more than a century, St. Teresa's Academy has been a leader in educating and developing young women in Kansas City. Since 1866, the Academy has empowered thousands of graduates who leave prepared, confident, and ready to thrive in college and beyond. Here, education extends beyond the classroom - we form women of purpose.

Our Portrait of a Graduate framework (p. 11) defines how we equip our students for success. These tenets - Confident, Critical Thinker, Objective Communicator, Faith-Inspired Woman, Balanced Individual, and Inspired Changemaker - reflect the enduring strengths of an education at St. Teresa's Academy.

Grounded in our Catholic faith and committed to excellence in service to our community, we are proud to present our 2026-2031 Strategic Plan. This plan is centered on four priority domains: Mission-Driven Faith Formation; Financial Stewardship and Campus Excellence; Wellness, Belonging, and Community Connections; and Teaching, Learning, and Digital Innovation. Each domain represents a strategic priority with clear objectives to guide the Academy boldly into the future.

Together, these domain priorities reflect our focus on elevating student learning, supporting faculty growth, and strengthening our diverse campus community. As Kansas City's oldest school, founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and sponsored by St. Joseph Educational Ministries, we are honored to continue the school's legacy. Our founders' charism to love God and the dear neighbor without distinction remains our guiding principle.

This strategic plan was developed through a collaborative process, shaped by the voices of faculty, staff, students, the STA Board of Directors, and parents, whose insights were gathered through a survey in the spring. We are confident these strategic domains will position St. Teresa's Academy for meaningful and lasting impact.

Our plan serves as a clear blueprint for advancing the Academy's vision and mission as a leading high school for young women, rooted in academic excellence, faith, and purpose. We will pursue every goal assiduously. Each domain and objective in our plan has equal importance. Domains and objectives are not listed by priority or rank.

St. Teresa's Academy's promising future will be realized through the intentional alignment and execution of this strategic plan. We invite all members of our community including faculty, staff, students, and partners to join us in bringing this vision to fruition.

In the words of St. Teresa of Avila, *With the help of God, we need not fear.*

God Bless,

Dr. Siabhan May-Washington

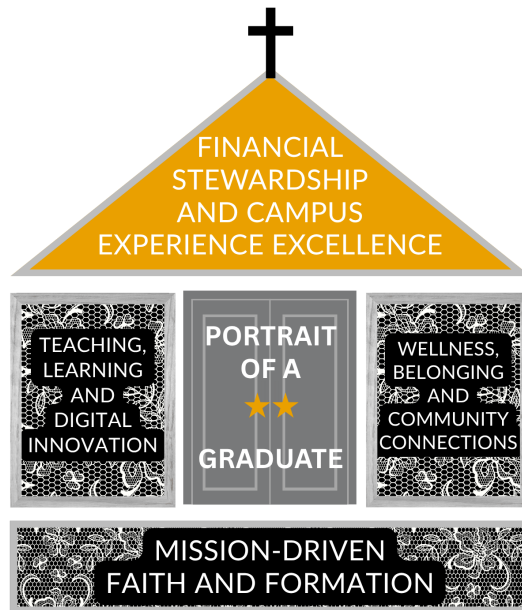
### **ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY'S VISION:**

Our vision is for St. Teresa's Academy to be the premier leader in high school education in the Kansas City area, forming graduates who are empowered by their Catholic, college-preparatory education and recognized as women who make a profound impact in the world.

### **ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY'S MISSION:**

Our mission is to educate young women to think critically, encourage them through Catholic values to love the dear neighbor without distinction, and empower them to change the world.

## St. Teresa's Academy Priority Domains at a Glance



Kaitlyn Stanley '26

The image above represents the Academy's **strategic plan priority domains**, thoughtfully structured around the guiding words of St. Teresa of Avila: *In this house, all must be friends, all must be loved, all must be held dear, all must be helped.*

Our mission-driven commitment to faith and formation serves as the foundation, grounding all that we do. The walls reflect the environments we intentionally cultivate - innovative teaching and learning, and wellness, belonging, and meaningful community connections. The roof represents our dedication to financial stewardship and the creation of positive, supportive campus experiences for our community.

The lace woven throughout symbolizes the enduring traditions of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, whose legacy continues to shape our values and vision. Finally, the doors represent the welcoming of all students and families - prospective and current - guiding students along their academic journeys, and sending graduates forward equipped with the skills, character, and confidence defined in our Portrait of a Graduate (p. 11) competencies - prepared to lead, serve, and thrive in the world beyond the Academy.

# Domain 1 - The Foundation: Mission-Driven Faith & Formation

**Steering Committee Leader:** Dr. Elizabeth Baker

**Steering Team Member:** Adrianna Knifong, Renee Schultz

## Domain Overview

As a Catholic school rooted in the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph and sponsored by St. Joseph Educational Ministries, we are committed to our mission of “moving toward a profound love of God and neighbor.” This mission is lived out across all areas of school life, including faith formation, liturgy and sacraments, academics, advisory, co-curricular and athletic programs, and school policies. We strive to create a unified and authentic expression of Catholic identity that is clearly reflected in our culture, our relationships, and the daily life of our community.



### **Objective 1**

We will strengthen and consistently integrate our Catholic identity, grounded in Catholic Social Teaching and the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph, by developing, adopting, and implementing a clearly articulated formal Catholic Identity statement.

### **Objective 2**

We will increase student participation in faith and ministry formation activities through the intentional expansion of student leadership opportunities within Campus Ministry.

### **Objective 3**

We will deepen student understanding of the Mass and foster greater reverence during school liturgies through structured catechesis in the theology curriculum and Campus Ministry formation with clearly articulated norms, and intentional, mission-centered communication.

### **Objective 4**

We will implement a comprehensive Catholic identity branding strategy, aligned with faculty formation, to integrate Catholic identity across all disciplines to ensure consistent, mission-centered communication.

## Domain 2: Financial Stewardship & Campus Excellence

**Steering Committee Leader:** Dr. Siabhan May-Washington

**Steering Team Members:** Jane Clark, Becky Flores, Chris Newman, Kaylee Peile

### Domain Overview

St. Teresa's Academy is committed to exceptional community and financial stewardship in support of our mission and long-term sustainability. We provide high-quality campus experiences by investing in our people, facilities, and resources, and by fostering strong engagement with our students, families, alumnae, and the broader community.



### **Objective 1**

We will complete the objectives of the Ignite the Future capital campaign - namely completing construction of the St. Teresa's Center to meet the educational needs of the 21st century and beyond.

### **Objective 2**

We will develop a comprehensive, centralized facilities capital budget that incorporates maintenance schedules, campus enhancements, replacement costs and timelines, and responsibility details.

### **Objective 3**

We will pursue multiple partnerships with additional organizations and third-party vendors during the off-season for additional revenue.

### **Objective 4**

We will increase the Academy's endowment and planned giving initiatives, reducing reliance on annual fundraising alone.

### **Objective 5**

We will deliver mission-driven marketing and engagement strategies that strengthen enrollment and philanthropy by authentically engaging students, parents, and donors, expanding and diversifying our prospect pipeline, and increasing participation, giving, and multi-channel engagement across the community.

## Domain 3: Wellness, Belonging & Community Connections

**Steering Committee Leader:** Kaliyah Meriwether

**Steering Team Members:** Jaqui Haskins, Debi Hudson, Maurine Kierl, Katherine Williams

### Domain Overview

STA is committed to fostering an environment where every individual feels a sense of value, safety, and inclusion. Rooted in the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph, we believe that our mission is most powerfully realized through intentional, faith-filled connections and collaboration.



This domain centers on the holistic wellbeing and belonging of our students and staff, while intentionally engaging the broader STA community - including prospective parents and students, current and future donors, alumnae, and local partners. By strengthening these relationships, we cultivate a vibrant, inclusive community that reflects the diversity of those we serve and expands opportunities for connection and support.

Through these efforts, we build a strong, interconnected network that empowers our students to grow, lead, and thrive, while engaging the broader STA community in understanding and supporting the STA Portrait of a Graduate.

### **Objective 1**

We will cultivate and sustain a culture of wellness and diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging by examining and strengthening practices across all departments. In addition, there will be a focus on implementing mission-aligned programming that fosters meaningful engagement among students and staff. It will be a priority to expand access, opportunity, recruitment and participation for individuals from diverse backgrounds. Ultimately, we will strengthen student, staff, and parent engagement, as well as satisfaction and retention.

### **Objective 2**

We will strengthen community connections through strategic marketing and cultivate a high-quality, user-friendly digital presence. In partnership with Admissions and Philanthropy & Engagement, we will develop aligned, external-facing marketing and engagement strategies with staggered planning cycles to support effective implementation and optimization. We will also establish an ongoing, cross-departmental review process to ensure the STA website remains accurate, relevant, and consistently updated to best serve our community.

### **Objective 3**

We will sustain a stellar, competitive athletics program by maintaining high student-athlete participation and strong year-over-year retention. Our goal is to complete targeted enhancements to athletic facilities and increase engagement with families, alumnae, and community partners to expand leadership development opportunities for coaches and student-athletes and enhance overall program success.



### **Objective 4**

We will support each student's academic, social-emotional, and post-secondary readiness needs by scheduling one-on-one meetings each semester through our ongoing advisory, counseling and academic programming. We will share relevant class and school information with students and their parents. Our work will ensure student preparedness and engagement in post-secondary planning.

## Domain 4: Teaching, Learning & Digital Innovation

**Steering Committee Leader:** Barbara McCormick

**Steering Committee Team Members:** Academic Department members, Amy Cooper, Kelly Finn, Dr. Mandi Sonnenberg, Matt Stewart

### Domain Overview

St. Teresa's Academy cultivates intellectually curious, confident young women who think critically, communicate effectively, and engage deeply in their learning. Grounded in Catholic values and a commitment to educating the whole person, instruction advances our Portrait of a Graduate by challenging students to integrate knowledge across disciplines and thoughtfully reflect on purpose, ethics, and responsibility. Technology is intentionally integrated as a tool to enhance inquiry, creativity, collaboration, and real-world problem solving, preparing students to navigate an increasingly complex and digital world. Teaching and learning practices promote student agency, balance, and wellbeing while encouraging intellectual risk taking and resilience. The Academy will continue to refine its instructional and digital practices to graduate faith-inspired women equipped to lead, serve, and create meaningful change.



### **Objective 1: Curricular Alignment and Standards-Based Mastery**

We will establish a school-wide framework for academic excellence by ensuring all faculty departments implement vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum maps, pacing guides, and assessments. This objective focuses on meeting Portrait of a Graduate competencies and national and state standards while explicitly integrating Catholic and CSJ values into all instructional units to ensure a consistent, high-rigor experience across all grade levels.

### **Objective 2: Interdisciplinary Innovation, Research, and Career Readiness**

We will cultivate globally conscious, research-ready, and career-prepared graduates by integrating interdisciplinary units that feature experiential learning on and off campus. Our standards-based curriculum will integrate AI literacy and global ethics. Digital portfolios will showcase 21st-century skills, which reflect each student's unique journey.

### **Objective 3: Digital, Data-Driven, and Modernized Learning Ecosystem**

We will leverage ethical, secure, and innovative technology guided by data-informed decision making to modernize infrastructure and enhance privacy and security in physical and digital learning environments. Responsible integration of emerging technologies, including AI, will be fostered through intentional training, aligned academic expectations, and flexible,

technology-enabled spaces. All students and staff will be equipped to thrive in adaptable, future-ready environments that support diverse learning needs.

**Objective 4: Professional Growth and Instructional Leadership**

We will empower faculty and staff to grow in spiritual, pedagogical, and specialized expertise to meet the evolving needs of students. This objective aims to increase faculty and staff engagement through intentional and professional learning that directly influences student growth, aligned with the Portrait of a Graduate competencies. We promote faculty and staff leadership pathways by leveraging their expertise in professional settings.

# 



| CONFIDENT, CRITICAL THINKER                                                                                                             | OBJECTIVE COMMUNICATOR                                                                                                             | FAITH-INSPIRED WOMAN                                                                                                                                                    | BALANCED INDIVIDUAL                                                                                                             | EMPOWERED CHANGEMAKER                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative and independent problem solver</li> <li>Visionary, forward-looking thinker</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assured and adaptable communicator</li> <li>Respectful and creative collaborator</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empathetic and inclusive neighbor</li> <li>Prayerful and reflective disciple</li> <li>Healthy and holistic individual</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ethical and flexible global citizen</li> <li>Passionate and courageous leader</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competent and resilient risk taker</li> <li>Disruptive and creative technologist</li> </ul> |

*St. Teresa's Academy educates young women to think critically, encourages them through Catholic values to love the dear neighbor without distinction, and empowers them to change the world.*

# St Teresa's Academy Board of Directors - 2025-2026

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Partner

James W. Tippin & Associates Law Firm

**Ronald Slepitz, Ph.D.**

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St. Teresa's Academy

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Strategic Visioning

**Leo Andrew Benedict, M.D., FACS**

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Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

**Nikki Newton**

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Diversity Telehealth, LLC

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**Tim Saxe, P.E., MBA**

Senior Director of Development Services

VanTrust Real Estate

**Mary Jane (Groff, '99) Judy, J.D.\***

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Polsinelli

**Kathleen (Aylward, '80) Wiedeman, M.Ed.\***

Educational Professional

**Marilyn Lott, CSJ**

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

\*STA Alumna

\*\*Ex officio