

# Cultivating Potential. Inspiring Change.



TRAILS TO TRANSFORMATION: STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2021-26

# Our Mission

Maumee Valley Country Day School cultivates an inclusive community of intellectual excellence where learners creatively explore their passions and boldly inspire positive change in the world.



# LIVING OUR LEARNING LEGACY.

---

At Maumee Valley Country Day School, we are beholden to an innovative spirit and tradition of excellence that has defined our school for well over a century. We remain undeterred in our collective commitment to educate and inspire tomorrow's leaders by cultivating creativity and encouraging exploration. We also recognize that the strategies, methodologies, partnerships, and resources needed to not only embrace but advance our mission are ever evolving. This plan serves to provide the pathways that best position us to meet our goals and realize our potential—from curriculum to community, funding to facilities, people to processes, and communications to collaborations.



# Trailblazing:

[trāl blāziNG] **adjective.**

introducing new ideas or methods;  
boldly creating one's path.



## Dear MV Community,

**After more than a year of strategic planning, we are excited to share our direction for the next five years.** The planning process challenged trustees and administrators to think creatively about the world today's preschoolers will face when they graduate. The process also compelled us to dig deeper into our past and present to clarify where we now stand. Many of you—more than one hundred alumni, parents, students, faculty, and other community members—also helped the school name its core strengths and purpose, those tenets which we should take with us as we move into the next several years. Additionally, we engaged the consulting services of Independent School Management to help us marry our strategic and financial plans such that they are sustainable and take advantage of best practices. Thank you to everyone who participated. You have assisted the school in finding its way forward.

Our theme for the next five years is trailblazing. At an institutional level, trailblazing means continuing the school's long tradition of innovation while cultivating our natural and financial resources and our people. At a more personal and programmatic level, it means providing both the safety and challenge needed to support all learners as they take risks and find their own paths. You can expect to see more focus on leadership development, college counseling, faculty development, and parent education. You may also see the school strengthening connections across grades within our student body, inviting more parents to participate in school events, forging new ties to the business community in our region, enlarging our campus, and helping students navigate beyond our walls. Even here in the description, you will notice a strategy of inclusion to strengthen ties and promote access to ideas and educational resources in our community. The plan is an ambitious one that gives the Board of Trustees and administrators many avenues to choose from over the next five years; the school will not follow every offshoot of the plan in the foreseeable future. What remains consistent and paramount across all of these options is our commitment to helping learners explore their fullest potentials by granting them access to a broader scope of resources.

What we offer you here is a scenic outlook, a high point clear from the underbrush where you can see much of the path behind us as well as the road ahead. This is our roadmap for the next five years, as well as an updated mission statement and guiding principle. It reflects the hearts and minds of not only the board and administration, but faculty and staff, students, parents, and alumni as well. We would not have reached this point without you. Please enjoy this strategic direction. We look forward to seeing you on the trail ahead.

Warm regards,



**Diana Block**  
*President, Board of Trustees*



**Lynn D. Casto**  
*Head of School*

# Transforming Traditions.



1925: CAMPUS LIFE; RECREATION



ca. 1938



1945-46: JUNIORS

While Maumee Valley Country Day School is rich in tradition, our history is anything but traditional. In fact, a chronicle of our key milestones reads like a record of “firsts.” It’s precisely this progressive approach that remains our compass today, continually guiding us even as we explore new and unique ways to educate and inspire.

---



ca. 1918

# A Timeline of Transformations.

1848  
1879  
1884  
1887  
1893-1909  
1911-13  
1929-30

The Smead sisters assume full responsibility of the seminary as several prominent families impressed by the education propose the Smead sisters move the school to Toledo.

1879

The entire school moves to Woodruff Avenue, featuring a classroom building, as the Smead House becomes a residence for some faculty, a kindergarten, dining hall, administrative offices, as well as a place for school plays, dances, and luncheons.

1887

The school becomes a non-profit corporation, establishes a board of trustees, and is divided into Montessori (preschool), Primary, Intermediate, and High School departments. The school is the first in the country to incorporate Montessori school principles into an existing school. Boys are allowed for the first time in younger levels.

1911-13

1848

Ms. Bryan's Seminary in Batavia, New York, has local girls attend — including Miss Marina and Miss Mary E. Smead.

1884

The school moves to 1983 N. Summit St. in Toledo and is renamed *Misses Smead's School for Girls*, opening with 35 students and eight faculty members.

1893-1909

A graduate enrolls at the University of Michigan, opening the door for some of the first women to enter college across the country, as the school becomes the first in Toledo to be accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

1929-30

New Head of School Miss Leslie Leland transforms Smead School into one of the first Country Day Schools in Ohio. The board purchases 27 wooded acres on Reynolds Road, which is seen as the most significant turning point in the school's history.



ca. 1915



1934: FIELD HOCKEY TEAM (ORANGE)





ca. 1939

Willis Stork becomes Head of School, overseeing general additions to the school over the next decade, including a classroom wing and dining hall. Boys are accepted into the Upper School in 1939 and eventually enrolled at all levels.

**1939**

Maumee Valley is the first educational institution in Toledo to be granted a charter by Cum Laude Society, a nationwide academic honor association. James Henderson, Jr. is appointed Head of School.

**1954-55**



ca. **1975**

Parents purchase 28 acres south of the school and donate them to Maumee Valley. In 1959, the school enlarges its facilities and builds a separate Upper School gymnasium, 600-seat stadium, new playing fields for sports teams, and a Lower School playground.

**1956-59**

CONT'D  
ON NEXT  
PAGE. →

**1933-34**

The newly renamed *Maumee Valley Country Day School* opens its doors at its new (and current) site on Reynolds Road, exactly 50 years after its inception. "Progressive education" supplants textbook study with the use of field trips, and the sharing of experiences between students, their families, and teachers.

ca. **1950**



1954: SOPHOMORE CLASS

**1960s**

New Head of School Gordon T. Schofield institutes "A Better Chance" (ABC) program, welcoming socially and economically disadvantaged students to Maumee Valley. The senior work-study program is adopted, the first attempt of its kind nationwide. An open school plan in the Lower School urging students and faculty to integrate new ways of learning into daily routines becomes a boon to enrollment, which reaches an all-time high, at that point in history, with 515 students.

**1970-73**

A new Lower School is built without walls, with classrooms lining the perimeter of the resource center. Faculty members learn open/integrated teaching methods abroad and classes become more individualized in approach. Global programs are introduced and Maumee Valley becomes one of only five U.S. high schools to participate in a Model United Nations program at the Hague in Holland.

# A Timeline of Transformations.



A new 7,500-square-foot science wing costing approximately \$800,000 is completed. The board adopts a five-year long-range plan including planned enrollment and facilities expansion, promoting staff excellence, and providing challenging academic programs and community involvement.

**1984**



1981: JUNIOR CLASS

Phineas Anderson is hired as Head of School and during his tenure, Maumee Valley has eleven of its most productive years including an enrollment boon, development of a long-range plan, and a facilities master plan.

**1994**

The 300-seat Millennium Theatre with a 50-foot stage and lighted clocktower are completed as part of a \$9.6 million project which also includes a new Middle School and common area and the Johnson-Bayer Physical Education Complex Gym and Weight Training facility.

**1999**

← CONT'D FROM PREVIOUS PAGE.

**1976-77**

The school temporarily moves to the Secor Hotel, courtesy of hotel owner and alumnus Henson Jones Jr. when a natural gas shortage forces the closure of the campus. The original building is renovated and renamed Smead Building, and the auditorium is renamed Millhon Auditorium in honor of former Head of School Jerry Millhon.

**1978**

*Winterim*, a month-long program of individualized study on and off campus debuts for Upper School students. The board sells four acres of the school's property at Glendale Avenue and Reynolds Road to alleviate budget problems.

**1990**

New Head of School Dick Cadigan maintains a balanced budget in the midst of uncertain economic times and guides the entire school through the seven-year reaccreditation from the Independent School Association of the Central States (ISACS). A fine arts facilities project is completed, including the Wolfe Gallery, the Plaza, a fine arts studio, and drama rooms.

ca. **1985**



FORMER HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

# 2020



2011

The Under One Roof \$15 million campaign officially kicks off replacing a 50-year-old Upper School, renovating the Smead Building, and creating four different endowment funds. The Kasperzak Center, Deichert Family Connector, and Anning Lawn are also constructed as part of the work.

A \$750,000 gift makes the construction of the Dayal House possible and expands the international program. The home has room for 28 international students and four house parents.

Lynn Casto is hired as Head of School. A Forest School-inspired initiative launches with children in the Early Learning Center spending up to five hours a day outside and bringing nature into the classroom. The initiative expands through third grade by 2021.



Board approves changes to mission and strategic plan launches.

2009

2013

2018-19

2021

# 2021

2006

Gary Boehm is named Head of School after spending 15 years as Head of the Middle School. He launches a strategic plan with seven strategic initiatives, including the Global Education Program, and the Under One Roof Campaign.

2012

Gary Boehm develops the vision of Personal, Experiential, and Global education for all students that remains our core vision today.

2015-16

New schedule implemented. Upper School *Winterim* expands to three intensives per year, interspersed with two terms of rotating core academic classes. The three-year *MV2020: A Vision for the Future* campaign also begins.



2007: FACULTY ON LOW ROPES COURSE



2019



# One of the things **I love most** about Maumee Valley is...

"... how the teachers help the students see their **potential in themselves.**"

"... the **individual attention** each student receives."

"... how well the teachers teach the students to **overcome challenges.**"

"... the opportunities for students to **develop leadership skills.**"

"... the **diversity of people and perspectives** my child encountered."

"... that students get to **explore their passions** and identify what they like."

"... their attention to **educating the child as a whole.**"



“With the low student-to-teacher ratio, the teachers can make a true connection with children, which allows them to work with student’s strengths and help them with their areas of opportunity.”

**“The school values students for who they are and encourages them to pursue their interests.”**

*“Students are treated with respect and allowed the autonomy to develop.”*

# STEPPING STONES TO STRATEGY.

A board-appointed strategic planning task force spent two years researching educational best practices and future trends while gathering data and insights from students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni, and alumni parents to inform their work. The resulting mission, vision, guiding principle, and strategic direction found here will inspire Maumee Valley's future path.



1

## Workshops conducted

with Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and administration to determine what students graduating in 2035 will need to be successful in a rapidly changing world.

8/19–2/20



2

**Surveys sent** to students grades 5-12, current parents, and faculty regarding the MV experience.

12/20 and 12/21



3

Strategic plan put on **pause** due to COVID.

3/20



5

**Mission/Vision survey collected**, with over 121 respondents: 17 alumni parents, 42 alumni from the classes of 1957-2019.

2/21



6

Board of Trustees **approved** the new mission statement and guiding principle created by the Strategic Planning Task Force.

4/21



4

**Board voted** to approve the preliminary strategic plan.

1/21





**“There is an emphasis on kindness, critical thinking, and the development of good character.”**



# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Solidify our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as community standards.

---

1. **Examine our systems, processes, and curriculum to ensure equity and inclusion.**
2. **Hire a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator to shepherd our current work and future growth.**
3. **Refine hiring practices so that our employee community reflects the diversity of our students and families.**



Expand opportunities for community engagement.

---

1. **Nurture peer family relationships and connections to the school.**
2. **Enhance parent education programs.**
3. **Match students, parents, faculty, and alumni through Maumee Valley to foster deeper, lifelong connections.**

# ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITY AND INNOVATION

# 2

Ensure that our graduates are prepared for a dynamic world that requires creativity, adaptability, collaboration, and communication.

---

## CULTIVATE INTELLECTUAL EXCELLENCE

### 1. Emphasize learning as a journey, not just a fixed destination.

- Develop a system that allows students to demonstrate their level of understanding in each component of the revised Portrait of a Maumee Valley Graduate.
- Moving toward mastery: clearly define course skills and competencies such that students may demonstrate their understanding of course concepts along a continuum of growth.

### 2. Make the world our classroom and bring our classrooms to the world.

- Students conduct research and demonstrate their learning by solving real-world problems. Create opportunities for students to engage in relevant, real-world learning by establishing community partnerships locally, nationally, and globally that extend learning beyond the campus.
- Expand our Forest School Inspired Programming and Outdoor Education.





## CREATIVELY EXPLORE PASSIONS

### 1. Blaze a personal trail.

- Increase the number of interdisciplinary courses that allow students to explore interests while also receiving academic credit.
- Enhance the independent study and passion project programs such that all students have the opportunity to explore their interests and passions and share their experiences.

### 2. Create your vision of success.

- Develop a more robust college counseling program that focuses on building relationships with students and their parents early in the academic journey.

## INSPIRE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE WORLD

### 1. Enhance our community of belonging.

- Implement restorative practices schoolwide, emphasizing each individual's responsibility to create a healthy community.
- Innovate our Advisory Program to include explicit lessons on social-emotional learning, including an emphasis on identities that allow students to develop a deep understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Provide opportunities for students to enhance school spirit and build student programs and relationships across divisions.
- Enhance service-learning opportunities.

### 2. Learn to lead.

- Expand student leadership programs to enhance communication skills, exhibit positive influences, cultivate emotional intelligence, and nurture healthy relationships with others.



# 3

## ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Establish systems and structures to solidify Maumee Valley's success.

---

- 1. Develop a competitive faculty, staff, and administrative salary and compensation philosophy and policy to recruit, retain, and reward exceptional employees, making MVCDS the first choice for talented employees.**
- 2. Bolster our world-class, innovative, student-centered faculty culture.**
  - Increase professional development funding.
  - Cultivate an environment of professional learning to support faculty and students.
- 3. Perpetuate a board culture that is strategically oriented, financially prudent, mission focused, and philanthropic.**





# BUILDING TOWARD TOMORROW

Be intentional and strategic about financial sustainability, specifically aiming to increase revenue in areas other than tuition.

- 
- 1. Implement the five-year strategic financial plan.**
  - 2. Increase the endowment to \$20 million by 2030.**
  - 3. Establish planned giving, major gifts, and grant writing programs while maintaining our annual giving.**
  - 4. Regularly review and update facilities master plan.**
    - Upgrade our technological capabilities to expand our program reach both stateside and worldwide.
    - Prioritize space and facility renovations to optimize and enhance our academic, artistic, and athletic programs.





**“Two of my favorite things about Maumee Valley are the travel intensives for the Upper School and the economic diversity of the students.”**



# Words from our **youngest scholars.**

“Maumee Valley is **my second home.**”

“Maumee Valley is **love.**”

“Maumee Valley is a place **where I feel I belong.**”

“Maumee Valley is **kind and caring.**”

“Maumee Valley is a **home away from home.**”





“I have recommended MVCDS to families that have approached me to share our experiences. I love the family environment MVCDS creates. Seeing the growth and development of my son over the years shows the level of commitment staff has to knowing my son’s individual needs.”

**“Maumee Valley promotes diversity and inclusion and educates the students about the issues around diversity and inclusion.”**

*“Maumee Valley values students for who they are and encourages them to pursue their interests.”*

# Vision

---

PERSONAL.  
EXPERIENTIAL.  
GLOBAL.

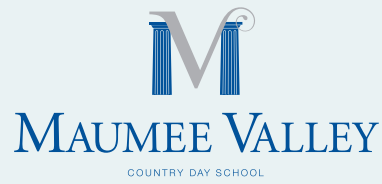




## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE**

We create an environment of freedom and responsibility to:

**Think.**  
**Speak.**  
**Explore.**  
**Choose.**  
**Connect.**  
**Be you.**



**ADDRESS:** 1715 South Reynolds Road, Toledo, OH 43614

**PHONE:** 419-381-1313

**FAX:** 419-381-1314

**WEB:** [mvcds.org](http://mvcds.org)

