



Merici College Strategic Plan 2025-2027

INTRODUCTION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027

Following from the successful implementation of the Merici College Strategic Plan 2022-2024, a new assessment of future needs and objectives is required to ensure a continued commitment to providing a positive and nurturing learning environment that supports our school's mission and vision for the future.

As a Catholic community aspiring for excellence, Merici College is inspired by our Catholic teachings:

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit..." (Jn 15:5)

We are an innovative, progressive and caring learning community, committed to the well-being of our students and driven by our Catholic values. We work in partnership with parents to provide a nurturing and inclusive environment, which develops young women who can lead and have impact within their communities by showing respect for others, empathy, intercultural understanding and positive stewardship. In order to facilitate the ongoing spiritual, emotional, academic and social development of our young women, Merici College has a comprehensive Pastoral Care system based on Christian beliefs. We create a positive and inclusive learning environment that develops and challenges students who are compassionate, confident and engaged life-long learners. Our vision for each young woman is that she feels fully prepared to meet the challenges of an increasingly globalised world where differences are valued and respected.

We take St Angela Merici as our guide and as such, view each student as a unique individual with inherent dignity.

Act, bestir yourselves, have faith, make effort, have hope, cry out to God with all your heart then without doubt you will see wonders" (St Angela's prologue to the Counsels).

Teaching and Learning at Merici College is designed, implemented and evaluated to achieve excellence in education. We promote enthusiasm and energy for learning within our classrooms by utilising a variety of strategies to meet individual student needs. We encourage ownership of learning, higher-order and critical thinking and reflection to empower students and allow them to develop the self-discipline and drive required to become life-long learners.

Our focus is on developing students holistically, so that they become compassionate and active members of our global community: young women who value ethical behaviour, who have a strong yet realistic sense of their own worth, and who are ready to take their place in the world.

"Love your daughters equally, do not have any preference for one rather than the other, because they are all children of God, and you do not know what He wishes to make of them."
(St Angela Merici)

Mission Statement

Merici College empowers women to love life, have hope, be faithful and build futures more wondrous than they dare to dream.

Vision

Merici College endeavours to be a vibrant, faithful learning community that fosters excellence through taking positive action to build a shared global future.

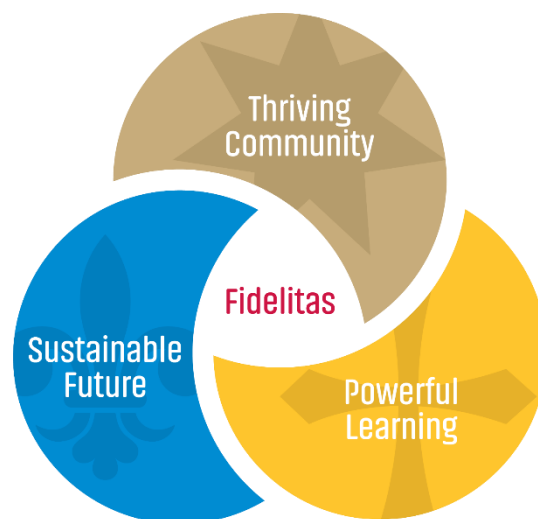
Purpose

To educate women so that they are empowered to love life, have hope, be faithful and build futures more wondrous than they dare to dream.

Values

- Fidelitas
- Integritas
- Communitas
- Spes

On reviewing the feedback and considering the challenges and opportunities outlined in the environmental scan, Merici has identified four priority areas of Fidelitas, Powerful Learning, Thriving Community, and Sustainable Future as depicted in the following illustration:



1. FIDELITAS - ASPIRATION: TO BUILD A STRONG AND POSITIVE CATHOLIC IDENTITY, WHERE FAITH IS NURTURED AND ALL ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE OTHERS.

Domain: Catholic Identity		
Goal 1.1: Enrich charism and Catholic culture in the College		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
Action 1.1.1: Continue to align faith formation with the Charisms of Merici College.	Regular Reflection Days and Retreats with a specific focus on the College Charisms.	All students complete their post reflections and actions.
Domain: Mission and Service		
Goal 1.2: Build understanding and commitment to Social Justice activities		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
Action 1.2.1: Realign the Christian Service-Learning Programme with the IB Middle Years Programme	<p>Collaboration between the Head of Mission & Community and the IB Middle Years Programme Coordinator to map and plan how to align Service activities with Middle Years Programme.</p> <p>Facilitate staff professional development on the connection between service learning and the Middle Years Programme during scheduled meeting times.</p> <p>Head of Mission and Community and the IB Middle Years Programme Coordinator to develop resources for staff, students and wider community</p>	<p>Middle Years Programme goals are integrated within the Christian Service-Learning Programme.</p> <p>Staff and students can clearly articulate the connections between Christian Service and the Middle Years Programme goals.</p>

<p><u>Action 1.2.2:</u> Refine student reflection process pre and post Christian Service-Learning Program.</p>	<p>Head of Mission & Community and the Head of IB to develop structured reflection templates.</p> <p>Head of Mission & Community and the Head of IB provide training for both staff and students on reflective thinking.</p> <p>Establish peer and teacher feedback protocols.</p>	<p>All students engage in pre- and post-service reflections.</p> <p>Selected reflections show meaningful connections to Middle Years Programme's Creativity, Action and Service (CSA) goals and Catholic Social Teachings (CSTs).</p> <p>Students articulate the impact of their service and the alignment with the Middle Years Programme goals.</p>
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Domain: Faith Formation		
Goal 1.3: Formalise Professional Learning and Religious Education Accreditation for Staff		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<p><u>Action 1.3.1</u> Differentiated and inclusive formation programme for staff to grow in their encounter with and understanding of the mission of Catholic Schools</p>	<p>External (Catholic Archdiocese Canberra and Goulburn) and Head of Mission & Community and the Religious education Coordinator developed formation programmes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Middle leaders • Teaching Staff • Support Staff 	<p>All leaders demonstrate the ability to articulate and model Catholic mission in their leadership roles.</p> <p>Staff incorporate the Catholic mission into daily practice by attending staff prayer and liturgical events.</p>
<p><u>Action 1.3.2</u> Compliance with Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead in a Catholic School</p>	<p>Head of Mission & Community ensures staff are aware of the Accreditation opportunities through individual communication</p>	<p>All staff undertake appropriate Accreditation Training and development offered at a Systemic level</p>

2. POWERFUL LEARNING - ASPIRATION: AN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT THAT FOSTERS LEARNING, ENABLING EVERYONE TO ACHIEVE INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE.

Domain: Learning Frameworks		
Goal 2.1: Every student is engaged in learning		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 2.1.1</u> : Consistent use of High Impact Teaching Practices in all subject areas	<p>Studies Coordinators and teachers embed High Impact Teaching Practices in curriculum documentation and resources</p> <p>Implementation and rollout of instructional coaching program by Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning</p>	<p>80% of all teachers trained in High Impact Teaching Practices</p> <p>All low-variance curriculum resources and materials to have High Impact Teaching Practices elements included</p> <p>Classroom observations observe High Impact Teaching Practices and Classroom Mastery routines</p>
<u>Action 2.1.2</u> : Continued implementation of Classroom Mastery	Implementation and rollout of instructional coaching program by Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning	<p>Classroom observations observe High Impact Teaching Practices and Classroom Mastery routines</p> <p>Staff meeting time dedicated to Classroom Mastery professional development and workshops</p>
<u>Action 2.1.3</u> : Enhancing and revising intervention programs	Literacy Coordinator and Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning to upskill staff knowledge and understanding of data literacy	<p>Numeracy intervention program has been created and implemented</p> <p>Minimum of 80% students in exceeding or strong for NAPLAN</p>

	<p>Studies Coordinators and teachers to utilise data for tier 1 literacy and numeracy development in subject areas</p> <p>Numeracy Intervention Facilitator to design numeracy intervention processes</p>	
Goal 2.2: Build low-variance, knowledge-rich curriculum		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 2.2.1</u> : Create Years 7-12 low-variance curriculum	<p>Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning and Middle Years Programme Coordinator to create whole school curriculum map to guarantee content and identify IDU opportunities</p> <p>Studies Coordinators and expert teachers to write low-variance curriculum programs</p>	<p>Curriculum map has been created</p> <p>Teachers use curriculum map to inform curriculum decisions and collaborations</p> <p>Authentic Inter-Disciplinary Unit tasks exist for Years 7-10</p> <p>Low-variance, knowledge-rich curriculum programs exist, complete with formative assessments</p> <p>Teachers engage in data analysis to refine instructional methods and resources</p>
Goal 2.3: Proactively educate students on career pathways		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 2.3.1</u> : Increase career pathway opportunities and awareness/education for all students and parents	Careers and Senior Studies Coordinators to design a Careers scope and sequence	Career education scope and sequence created

	Careers and Senior Studies Coordinators to work with pastoral team on opportunities for careers education	Minimum of 1 lesson of careers education in every year level of the pastoral program
	Pastoral Care teachers deliver careers education program	Survey of improved student satisfaction conducted for each group on careers education

3. THRIVING COMMUNITY -_ASPIRATION: A CONNECTED COMMUNITY THAT CULTIVATES COMPASSIONATE RELATIONSHIPS, WELLBEING AND THE WHOLE PERSON

Domain: Staff Culture		
Goal 3.1: Develop a collegial culture that reflects College values		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 3.1.1:</u> Restructure and extend the staff induction program	Assistant Principal Development reviews and redesigns staff induction program Senior Leaders and Middle Leaders input and then lead induction modules	Strong staff retention and staff exit data Post-program evaluations for each staff member Tell Them From Me data re staff culture
<u>Action 3.1.2:</u> Build Leadership capacity and career development through succession planning and mentoring programs	Assistant Principal Development refines Professional Learning and Development and Merici conversations and goal setting Middle and Senior Leader professional development programs Professional Learning Communities program re-invigorated to enable expert teacher leaders to	Middle and Senior Leaders can articulate strategic goals and achievements/connect with AITSL standards through review processes Tell Them From Me data to gauge staff satisfaction regarding leadership development Professional Learning Communities embedded in school meeting structure each term

	<p>develop colleagues as aligned to AIP and Strategic Plan</p> <p>Middle Leaders (Studies Coordinators, House Coordinators) establish faculty and goals as aligned to Annual Improvement Plan and Strategic Plan</p> <p>AITSL Middle Leader Standard incorporated into leadership reviews, role descriptions and goal setting</p> <p>University of Canberra Professional Certificate of Educational Leadership</p>	
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Domain: Student Engagement and Wellbeing		
Goal 3.2: Promote student engagement and support mechanisms to ensure safe and orderly environments		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Actions 3.2.1</u> : Embed Classroom Mastery	<p>Leadership Team to develop and communicate implementation timeline</p> <p>Assistant Principal Wellbeing to facilitate professional learning through staff meetings</p> <p>Head of Student Wellbeing to oversee and coordinate coaching process</p>	<p>Classroom Mastery routines evident in all classrooms</p> <p>Behaviour data from SEQTA demonstrating a decrease in behaviour incidents</p> <p>Improved student performance in Approaches to Learning data</p>

	<p>Middle Leaders to observe and feedback on Classroom Mastery as part of the Instructional Coaching program</p> <p>Assistant Principal Wellbeing to design and outline tiered behaviour management approach</p>	
Goal 3.3: Enhance student wellbeing programs and processes that support student engagement		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<p><u>Action 3.3.1</u>: Holistic use of SEQTA data to inform student wellbeing</p>	<p>Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Head of Student Wellbeing to work with Catholic Archdiocesan of Canberra Goulburn Data Analyst to develop a data profile</p> <p>Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Head of Student Wellbeing to upskill pastoral leaders in their use of data</p> <p>House Coordinators to coach and mentor their teams in the use of student wellbeing data</p> <p>Pastoral Care teachers actively engage in conversations with students and families using data as evidence</p>	<p>Improved daily attendance and College event attendance</p> <p>Scope and sequence of Long PC Data from surveys to gauge effectiveness of College processes and programs</p> <p>Reduced number of student incidents</p> <p>Staff engagement and use of pastoral data</p> <p>Greater engagement in learning as evidenced by improved Grade Point Averages</p>

Domain: Parent and Community Engagement		
Goal 3.4: Parents/carers are actively involved in the learning of Merici students		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 3.4.1:</u> Continue to develop opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in student learning.	<p>Reception coordinates volunteer registers and Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) records</p> <p>Assistant Principal Wellbeing involves parents/carers in Wellbeing Workshop program</p> <p>Senior Studies Coordinator and Careers Coordinator involves parents/carers in Careers Learning Program</p> <p>Principal and Community Council/P&F School Liaison Officer build and work with Community Council and P&F Committee to contribute to major events and community group events.</p>	<p>Increased responses to the Tell Them From Me Parent survey</p> <p>Increased attendance at Community Forums</p> <p>Post event feedback and evaluations Parent/community involvement/P&F membership</p> <p>Success of wellbeing and careers initiatives</p>

4. SUSTAINABLE FUTURE - ASPIRATION: ETHICAL PRACTICES ENSURE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF ALL RESOURCES

Domain: Facilities and Infrastructure to accommodate higher enrolments and maximise learning and wellbeing		
Goal 4.1: Minor capital works to maximum learning and wellbeing		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 4.1.1:</u> Implementation of the College Masterplan	<p>Complete Stage 1 (Modulars) and Stage 0 (Pavilion and OYC) to sustain enrolment capacity</p> <p>Complete the Business Case for the Master Plan</p>	<p>Stage 1 is commenced by end of 2027 or start date is confirmed and announced by end of 2027</p>

	<p>Develop design brief for Stage 1 with all stakeholders</p> <p>Develop design brief and tender the design services with assistance of Procurement team at Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn</p> <p>Complete Stage 1 project estimate cost to source the necessary funds</p>	
<u>Action 4.1.2</u> : Information Centre/Learning Commons design brief	Assistant Principal Development to facilitate external review into the Information Centre	Review conducted and recommendations adopted by 2027

Domain: Financial Sustainability		
Goal 4.2: Ensure the financial sustainability of the College		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 4.2.1</u> : Investigate and assess financial resourcing including Government, Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn funding and Capital Levy, maximising existing revenue streams and exploring new ones for the College.	<p>Business Manager designs 3-10 year scenarios for project funding and revenue</p> <p>Principal and Business Manager to design annual budget that maximises financial outcomes</p>	Achieve an annual operating surplus of 3% per year

Domain: Kinship and Environment		
Goal 4.3: Merici College cares for our common home		
Actions	Enablers	Evidence of Success
<u>Action 4.3.1:</u> Complete the ACT Sustainable Schools audit and accreditation process.	<p>Design and Technology Coordinator, Sustainability Officer, Sustainability Teacher, SAM Team, Narragunnawali, Angela's Angels, Catering staff and Maintenance team work together to complete audit.</p> <p>Recommendations from audit inform future actions and planning</p> <p>Merici College uses Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn procurement practices for ethical and sustainable purchases</p>	<p>Accredited as an ACT Sustainable School</p> <p>Improved data in ACT Smart areas of waste, energy, water, biodiversity</p>
<u>Action 4.3.2:</u> Implement and sustain a Biodiversity project	<p>Sustainability Officer, SAM, Narragunnawali and Religious Education Coordinator to collaborate with Head of Mission and Community</p> <p>Sustainability Officer will work with staff to complete the Biodiversity Project</p>	Biodiversity project report completed

APPENDIX 1:

ENVIROMENTAL SCAN

Policy Context

Merici College is a systemic school with oversight by the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Education Limited (CACG Education Limited). The CACG Office provides broad objectives in their Strategic Plan that supports consistency in operational standards and effective utilisation of systemic resources, functions and processes.

Merici College is a IB World School offering:

- Australian Curriculum
- International Baccalaureate Diploma and Middle Years Programmes
- ACT Education Directorate/BSSS

Our teachers are subject to Accreditation with ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI).

As with all schools in the Canberra region, Merici is impacted by drivers in both the internal and external environment that influences the sustainability of a quality learning environment, contemporary teaching practices, access to resources and effective business practice. Key influences on Merici operations are briefly discussed in the following sections.

Academic Reputation

Merici has responded to innovation in education through a focus on:

- STEM
- Vocational Courses
- Guided Inquiry Learning
- CAPA
- International Baccalaureate (IB). DP and MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME endorsed World School
- Catalyst
- Classroom Mastery
- Low-Variance Curriculum

Growth data and summative results indicate the ongoing strength of the academic programs at Merici College and the gains achieved through innovation now need to be consolidated.

Median ATAR in the newspaper every March shows that Merici's ATAR is moving beyond 83. The Year 12 Achievements poster and destinations wall work to celebrate academic outcomes of all students at the College. These show that nearly all students get their first preference for those completing a Tertiary Package and those completing an Accredited Package go onto a third party supplier/educator or the workplace. Multiple pathways for students support individual growth and success.

Co-Curricular Life of the College

The co-curricular opportunities for students are many and diverse with most students involved for pleasure and some performing at elite levels. This is more so than many competitor schools in the Canberra region. Although very appreciated by our community, this does pose a challenge for staffing and administration. Competing demands for limited resources also can add tension between interest groups. That being said, the Creative and Performing Arts/Music Program have rebuilt a presence in the school.

Community Engagement

The school community is heavily invested in the College as evidenced in an effective Community Council, parent/carer volunteers and the initiation of a Parent and Friends sub-committee of the Council. Alumni interest in school tradition and current life continues to grow with a high level of interaction at alumni events and school reunions.

Catholic Education System

Merici College continues to work effectively as a member of a dynamic and evolving system of schools. The College seeks to build partnership and innovation across the system by:

- Fully supporting Catalyst
- Sharing expertise and contributing to system projects

Marketing

Merici College continues to support a very comprehensive advertising and media campaign through the year. Specific campaigns are undertaken during the months of February – June for the enrolment period. College branding continues to be consistently used in all print, digital and media. Considerable time and effort continue to be given to branding, marketing and promoting the College, especially through social media channels and experiential programs for prospective families. The academic excellence attained in recent years has been instrumental in promoting the College. Additionally, as an IB World School, we have placed greater emphasis on communicating the benefits of the IB program through direct contact with IB primary schools in the ACT and the wider community.

Enrolments

Merici College draws enrolments from all areas across Canberra and surrounding regional NSW. With very few single sex schools in Canberra, Merici has an opportunity to emphasise the benefits of this learning environment and convenient location.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

Merici continues to be well known for the Pastoral Care of students. A sense of community and relational approach is evident in feedback. The students feel “known and safe”. The College prides itself on being inclusive and effective in nurturing young women. That being said, the embedding and scaling of Inclusive Education methodologies and practice is ongoing. The College has employed two Counsellors.

Catholic Identity

The College's faith life is strong with deeply moving faith celebrations a feature of our annual calendar. Solid connections have been re-established with the founding religious orders of the College and there is opportunity to strengthen the school's sense of sacred and sense of tradition through increased religious artworks, Liturgies, Retreats and Immersions.

Service Learning

The Christian Service Learning Program has been embedded in our College and has strengthened ties with our local communities and agencies. Students from Merici have a reputation in the community as caring, kind and extraordinary young women impacting their world.

Funding and Finances

Changes in the calculation methodology of parents capacity to pay continues to be a very real threat to the financial health of the College. Without CACG support with the transition of the College's funding over time we will not be able to meet our educational financial resourcing and infrastructure needs now and into the future

without considerable fee rises. That being said, the College has managed to break even every year in despite of considerable and unforeseen challenges. A Foundation for the College would be ideal.

Staff Retention, Development and Organisational Structures

Merici College is blessed with a dedicated and expert staff and is firm in the maintenance of professional standards. Merici is attracting staff of high calibre and is an employer of choice for teachers and support staff in the region. Staff health and wellbeing is now a focus of College leadership. The Catalyst program is adding to the professional development of staff. Nevertheless, there is a perceived need to be an effective feedback culture for teachers/support staff and a conscious development and up-skilling of middle leaders and aspiring senior leaders in the school and across the system.

Facilities

As an older and growing school, many of the facilities at Merici are below modern classroom requirements and educational facility standards. This is a challenge day-to-day and in a competitive educational market. However, to accommodate a growing school community, we have erected four modular classrooms. In 2025, we will need 6 additional GLAs. The Administration Centre (front office) has been renovated to provide a more adequate working environment and better facilities for students. The corridors in the new quad have been carpeted and sliding doors and air-locks have been installed. A new Masterplan has been finalised.

Single-Sex Education

With a comparatively small population, Canberra continues to be over-serviced with 3 all-girls schools. Whilst Girls schools tend to fair better nationally than boy's schools, sustainability of these schools is uncertain. Despite a range of benefits and offering diversity of choice in education environments, Merici is challenged to continue to combat negative media attention with the help of the CACG and continuous positive stories.

Parent/Student/Staff Annual Satisfaction Survey

The College continues to participate in a survey tool - Tell Them From Me.

APPENDIX 2

VALUES - DESCRIPTION

Vision Reflection Words: Excellence, fullness of being, empowered, achieve, impact positively on world, educates, inquiring, resilience, knowledgeable, better and more peaceful world, inter-cultural, respect, global citizenship, courage, agile, adaptable

Fidelitas

- Faith
- Courage
- Love – self, others, environment, God, whole of creation
- Loyalty
- Commitment
- Wisdom women
- Solidarity

Integrity

- Truth and understanding
- Authenticity
- Honesty
- Justice
- Respect
- Principled
- Ethical
- Honour
- Balanced

Inclusivity

- Community
- Compassionate
- Hospitality
- Service – make a difference
- “Welcoming” the other
- Collaboration
- Relationship – relational
- Holistic
- Diversity
- Open-minded/balanced
- Synodality

Hope

- Solution of future focused
- Courage
- Care
- Faithful
- Positive
- Resilient
- Agile/adaptable
- Wonder

APPENDIX 3

Policy Context

