

# *Leading, Learning and Legacy*



*Strategic Plan for St. Mary's Academy*  
2016-2020



*Educating Young Women Spirit, Mind and Body*

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# *Leading, Learning and Legacy*

## *Strategic Plan for St. Mary's Academy: 2016-2020*

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# Message from the Chair of the Board and the President

We are excited to present our new Strategic Plan, **Leading, Learning and Legacy**. This Plan is the result of extensive consultation by the Board of Directors with students, faculty, staff, parents, alumnae, the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM), the SMA Foundation and the general community. We have looked at the evolving world of education “best practices” through consultants, we’ve looked at schools in Canada and the United Kingdom and we have looked at our past. This is an exciting time in our School, as we set a course towards preparing the students entrusted to us with the knowledge and skills to help prepare them for their future—in spirit, mind and body.

At this transitional moment in St. Mary’s Academy’s (SMA) history, **Leading, Learning and Legacy** is intended to honor our roots and to steward our students and community into the future by presenting articulated goals and actions that will enable SMA to achieve its Mission and Vision over the next five years.

Founded in 1869, SMA is a Catholic school for young women in the tradition of the SNJM. We continue to be inspired by timeless and prophetic words of the religious order’s foundress, Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher, who believed that an entire society can be transformed if the minds and hearts of young women are properly formed and nurtured. **Leading, Learning and Legacy** seeks to expand and enrich her dream as we dedicate ourselves to forming young women who will become leaders in the service of the community and of the Church.

In 2014, SMA successfully transitioned from religious to lay leadership for the first time in its history. The new President and the Boards are committed to the traditions and charism of the SNJM and that they live on for generations to come. The last five-year plan, *Focus on the Future (2011-2015)*, reached its end in early 2015 and successfully reached its targets of Students & Academic Excellence, Financial Strength, Organizational Effectiveness, Leadership & Teaching Excellence and Building a Spiritual Community.

In early 2015, the SMA Board of Directors initiated a process to develop a roadmap to guide the school into the future. A strategic planning committee was assembled, with representation from both the School and the Foundation Boards, and was tasked with the oversight of planning the course of action. A competitive process was used to select consultants, with expertise in education, to guide the intensive data-gathering, research-driven phase, inclusive of all stakeholders and constituents to fundamentally understand what the emerging learning and teaching essentials are, and what will each graduate need to be empowered with to successfully transition from high school into post-secondary life.



Young women are central to our decisions and planning at SMA, and without a doubt they are at the core of this Strategic Plan. We are proud to present the broad strokes; the five main goals which will drive our decisions and plans as we continue our commitment to being a preeminent educator of young women.

## **Identity**

Nurtures and proclaims its identity as a community of learners who live their faith and spirituality based on the SNJM Charism.

## **Academics, Learning and Innovation**

Prepares students to engage deeply, excel and be lifelong learners.

## **Well Being**

Values, promotes and sustains the development of lifelong mental, physical and spiritual well-being.

## **Governance and Leadership**

Governs and leads in achieving our Mission, Vision and Values through clarity, collaboration and transparency.

## **Stewardship**

Fosters the Mission of SMA through responsible and forward-thinking stewardship of its physical and financial resources.

Over the next five years, our Strategic Plan will help guide our journey as we respect the past, while embracing the future and as we continue to strive for excellence.

## **Scott Greenlay**

Chair, SMA Inc. Board of Directors

## **Connie Yunyk (Scerbo '77)**

President, SMA



# *Educating young women spirit, mind and body*







## *Profile of St. Mary's Academy*

### **Roots and Legacy**

St. Mary's Academy (SMA) is one of a network of schools in North America under the direction of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM), a teaching congregation founded in Quebec in 1844 by Mother Marie-Rose Durocher. In 1874, the SNJM came to the new Province of Manitoba to assume responsibility for SMA, a school started in 1869 by the Grey Nuns. The SNJM led the school until 2014 when SMA saw its first lay woman assume the leadership role of President. Currently the SNJM are the corporate members of SMA providing direction and guidance as owners.

SMA has expanded, relocated and evolved through the years. Today, SMA remains the oldest, continuously operating independent school in Manitoba. SMA is noted for its commitment to young women and for providing exceptional academic, religious and extra-curricular programs. SMA delivers a focused and rigorous academic program designed to prepare students for post-secondary education. At SMA, we embrace our foundress' vision that an entire society can be transformed when the minds and hearts of young women are properly formed and nurtured.

### **Campus**

SMA is located on 11.5 acres in a park-like setting in the City of Winnipeg. The cornerstone of the original five-story building was laid in 1902 and the school opened in 1903. Today, this facility is used primarily for offices, meeting and work space for school staff, Holy Names Chapel and the SNJM's Provincial office.

In 1909 a new, larger wing was added. This building, last renovated in 2003, houses most of the classrooms, the Richardson Science Wing and the human ecology department.

Another new wing was opened in 1964. The addition, designed to enrich the school culturally, includes Alumnae Hall, the Sister Rita Maureen Gym, a cafeteria and a drama classroom. Alumnae Hall, a 625-seat theatre, houses dramatic and musical productions, assemblies, school Masses, meetings and events. The gym is home to the SMA Flames. In 2010, this building was redeveloped and expanded to include Durocher Library, fine arts studio, fitness room and the Tartan Shop.

In 2013 another expansion was completed and included a sacristy, a theatre production area, drama and music classrooms, a multi-purpose area and the Sheila Chipman Atrium.



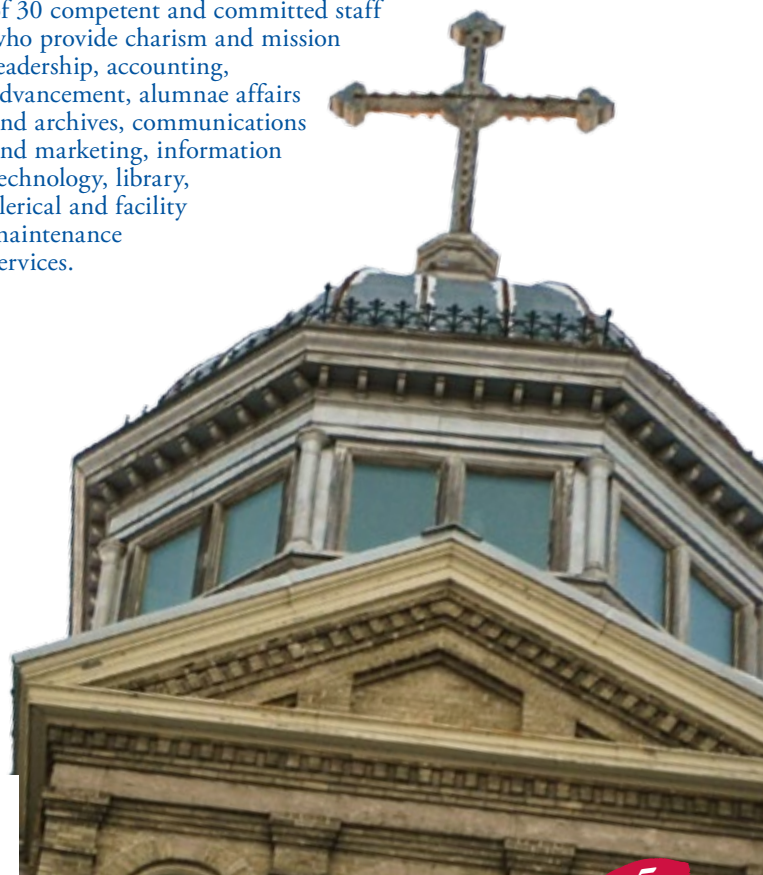
### **Students**

In the 2016/17 school year, SMA has an enrollment of 575 students in grades 7 through 12. Our students come from diverse socio-economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Approximately 65% are Catholic and many come from families with a tradition of attending SMA. Our students are academically-oriented and each year upwards of 95% of graduates attend universities and colleges of their choice.

Admission to SMA is competitive and each year there are more applicants than spaces available. We seek students of average and above average academic ability, who are interested and engaged in their learning process, their school, their community and who are open to exploring the spiritual dimension of life.

### **Administration, Faculty and Staff**

SMA is served by two Boards of Directors; St. Mary's Academy Inc. and St. Mary's Academy Foundation Inc., and operates under the direction of a President, Senior School Principal and Junior School Principal. There is a dedicated and enthusiastic team of 45 faculty certified by the Province of Manitoba. Additionally, there is a team of 30 competent and committed staff who provide charism and mission leadership, accounting, advancement, alumnae affairs and archives, communications and marketing, information technology, library, clerical and facility maintenance services.



# Mission, Vision and Values



St. Mary's Academy (SMA) is a Catholic school for girls, rooted in the tradition of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM).

## Mission

**Our mission is to nurture young women in spirit, mind and body, so that each student reaches her full potential as an individual created in God's image.**



## Vision

SMA is committed to being a preeminent educator of young women so that they can become leaders in the service of the community and of the Church. **Our vision is that each graduate be empowered with:**

- a personal and active faith in God
- a set of moral values based on an appreciation of the Catholic faith
- a sense of social responsibility and a commitment to service and generosity to others
- a love of learning and a desire for excellence in all endeavors
- an awareness of her gifts
- a complement of academic, leadership and social skills
- a commitment to the pursuit of a balanced, healthy lifestyle



# *Values*

## **Faith Formation**

Educating in the faith by infusing gospel values of Jesus and providing varied religious and faith experiences that inspire students to become informed, spiritually alive, moral women.

## **Charism Integration**

Infusing the Charism of the SNJM throughout the curriculum and all activities of the school community in support of the lifelong faith journey of our students.

## **Academics, Learning and Innovation**

Cultivating an intellectually engaging program which prepares students for success in post-secondary education and the challenges of a changing world.

## **Leadership Development**

Providing an environment and opportunities which encourage young women to identify and develop their talents and leadership potential.

## **Well-Being**

Nurturing a foundation for lifelong well-being for all students to develop positive emotional, physical and spiritual wellness.

## **Social Responsibility**

Educating to a social awareness that challenges each member of the school community to act justly and which encourages service to the poor and disadvantaged.

## **Inclusive Community**

Fostering a school community that respects the dignity of the human person, reflects diversity and welcomes students from all socio-economic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

## **Partnership with Parents**

Collaborating with parents and encouraging open communication and involvement in the SMA community.

## **Stewardship**

Planning and operating strategically with the goal of financial stability, program excellence and future vitality and viability.



# Identity

**Goal: St. Mary's Academy nurtures and proclaims its identity as a community of learners who live their faith and spirituality based on the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM) Charism.**

Rationale: SMA strives to witness the SNJM values and to live the Charism in the wider community. We are committed to embracing and protecting the essence of the SNJM Charism to guide our work in developing and flourishing as a community.

## Charism



Blessed Mother Marie-Rose Durocher  
Oct 6, 1811 — Oct 6, 1849

With an unwavering faith in God rooted in gospel values, Blessed Mother Marie-Rose Durocher believed that an entire society can be transformed when the minds and hearts of young women are nurtured and directed. As the foundress of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, she used the graces of this vision to educate in faith, service, and justice. From humble and challenging beginnings, amidst social, religious and politically-stifling contexts, Mother Marie-Rose left a legacy of service which has been sustained by generations of women. The moral fervor that lives on in so many who have kept her mission alive is a testament to her gifts and commitment to serving the common good. Infusing this **charism** throughout SMA means intentional teaching, modeling and guiding of learning so that graduates and community members contribute meaningfully in the world with vision, compassion, discernment, insight and courage, guided by the inspiration of Mother Marie-Rose.







## *Objectives*

**Embrace the SNJM Charism as the foundation to create, provide, develop, sustain and flourish as a community.**

**Support the SMA community in reinforcing the Charism as the foundation of learning at SMA.**

**Continue to redesign and implement a relevant and meaningful religious study program.**

## *Activities*

Develop a communication plan, building on the history and values of the SNJM, to support and communicate SMA's charism and identity.

Review all communication tools so that they reflect the message that SMA is an inclusive, accessible environment where all traditions are welcomed and respected.

Engage in visioning and success planning for the Archive department.

Focus the work of the newly established Office of Charism and Mission in providing support in this journey.

Engage the SNJM members in sharing and informing the transformation of our community through presentations and ongoing opportunities for interaction.

Raise awareness of the social justice impact of the SNJM through providing opportunities to the SMA community to carry forward their work.

Empower students to realize their potential to address community needs by acquiring skills based on community experience.

Complete an inventory of all religious studies programs.

Redesign curriculum for the Religious Study Program, infused with the SNJM Charism, introduced in stages.

# *Academics, Learning and Innovation*

**Goal: St. Mary's Academy prepares students to engage deeply, excel and be lifelong learners.**

Rationale: SMA believes in teaching and learning to increase student engagement; enhance student skills in critical thinking, communication, creativity and collaboration; and support continuous learning and development of our faculty. SMA recognizes that the learning environment is central to equipping young women to become strong and confident with the capacity to meet challenges and be contributing members and leaders in their community.





**“the learning environment is central to equipping young women to become strong and confident.”**



## *Objectives*

**Support the use of instructional practices and tools that enhance deep, relevant and lifelong learning.**

**Develop an SNJM Teaching and Learning Framework (SNJM TLF) to guide and support holistic teaching pedagogy which is consistent with SNJM values and principles.**

**Review and revise mechanisms for faculty performance management.**

**Fund and support ongoing professional learning for all faculty.**

## *Activities*

Develop a process and timeline for monitoring and evaluating the *Coordinator of Learning and Innovation*.

Explore the potential for summer school programming to support additional learning opportunities for students.

Propose and approve an iterative and inclusive process to design an SNJM TLF.

Develop the SNJM TLF

Train faculty in the pedagogy.

Amend Teacher Evaluation policy to reflect the SNJM TLF.

Develop assessment tools and processes to determine the impact of the SNJM TLF teaching framework on student outcomes.

Review current Teacher Evaluation policy and revise, as needed, to include regular cycles of evaluation, professional growth plans and both formal and informal feedback.

Communicate the policy and process to all faculty.

Develop a five-year timeline for the completion of all teacher evaluations and professional growth plans.

Continue to conduct regular cycles of evaluation and professional growth plans.

Develop a transparent process, including guidelines and criteria for the funding of professional development and communicate to faculty.

Continue to support a professional learning team to do short and long-term professional development planning for faculty.

# Well-Being

**Goal: St. Mary's Academy values, promotes and sustains the development of lifelong mental, physical and spiritual well-being.**

Rationale: The SMA community (students, parents and staff) is committed to better understanding and practise of mental health literacy.

SMA will consolidate existing mental health approaches and implement and sustain an expanded, widely understood, comprehensive mental health and well-being plan for students and staff. This plan promotes the importance of positive mental health and well-being and its essential role in SMA's vision of developing mind, body and spirit within a supportive culture.

As a community of faith, SMA is committed to promoting and protecting the positive mental health and well-being of its community and its students (those with and those without chronic mental illness) to flourish. Through character development and social emotional learning, SMA strives to prepare students to practice mental health literacy and to effectively meet challenges and manage stress.







## Objectives

**Promote overall well-being and positive mental health for all students and staff.**

**Develop and support a risk management plan for SMA.**

## Activities

Establish a working committee with stakeholder representation to guide the process of reviewing existing resources and establishing a process to develop and sustain a SMA Well-Being and Mental Health Promotion Plan.

Engage students, staff and parents in the development, implementation and sustaining of the SMA Well-Being and Mental Health Promotion Plan.

Communicate the Plan broadly.

Develop a survey to gather baseline data.

Build the mental health literacy of all students, staff and parents to increase understanding and reduce stigma.

Build the physical health literacy (based on an analysis of the needs identified in the survey) of all students, staff and parents to increase understanding of the importance of overall physical well-being. Potentially consider approaches to respond to community-identified areas of concern such as modifications to the school uniform and enhancement of the music program.

Develop places and spaces that are safe, accessible and provide positive supports.

Develop intervention approaches and processes appropriate to the skill and knowledge level of the provider (students, staff).

Evaluate the impact of the Plan on an annual basis.

Build on the strengths in the proactive SMA Well-Being and Mental Health Promotion Plan.

Develop and Support a Risk Management Plan to:

- Proactively manage stress to reduce the occurrence of adverse events.
- Identify mechanisms and processes for systematically assessing and reviewing risks.

Broadly publicize the elements of the Support and Risk Management Plan within the SMA community.

# Governance and Leadership



**Goal: St. Mary's Academy governs and leads in achieving our Mission, Vision and Values through clarity, collaboration and transparency.**

Rationale: SMA is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders better understand and embrace the SMA Mission and Charism. To do so, the interrelationship of the various stakeholders in the SMA community will be strengthened through a complementary and supportive relationship between the School and the Foundation Boards; strong communication with the Provincial Council of the SNJM to complete the legal structure and transition; a planned, robust relationship with the Parents and the Alumnae; and support to the staff, faculty and President as they continue to ensure the Academy is a leader in preparing our students to meet and excel in facing the academic and social challenges of the changing environment they face.

## *Objectives*

**Engage the SMA community (students, parents, staff and faculty, alumnae and Boards) in understanding their roles, responsibilities and relationships.**

**Support the daily commitment to SMA Mission, Vision and Values.**

## *Activities*

Develop schedules and undertake enhanced orientation programs with the SMA community to emphasize the importance of commitment to the SMA Mission, Vision and Values.

Review and update the descriptions of roles and responsibilities for all members of the SMA community.

Develop assessment tools for monitoring orientation.

Undertake assessment for each group and report to the Board.

Identify a task team to develop an SMA Code of Conduct, engaging all stakeholder groups.

Develop a Code of Conduct for SMA community members.

Establish communication and education processes which are known and lived by the Board, President, parents, staff and students.

Establish a monitoring system and develop tools to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the code of conduct orientations.



Like a seamless garment, the SMA Mission and Vision, the SNJM Charism and the role of Mary will be interwoven into the understanding and practice of all facets of governance, administration, educational work and stakeholder expectations at SMA. This understanding will provide stability and consistency within changing conditions and leadership succession.



## *Objectives*

**Engage SMA community and stakeholders with the Strategic Plan.**

**Sustain leadership and good governance.**

**Maintain and enhance an inclusive and accessible school, reflective of the community.**

**Collaborate with the Foundation Board.**

## *Activities*

Leverage change management principles of communication, involvement, clear goal setting and success measurements to implement strategic plan.

Establish tasks and roles for implementation.

Engage SMA community and stakeholders with opportunities to contribute and proactively communicate.

Build in a feedback process for all stakeholders.

Celebrate successes.

Create a Board performance management system to ensure alignment and progress with strategic goals and priorities.

Report yearly to shareholders at AGM on progress of Strategic Goals and Priorities.

Implement a documented succession planning process based on an annual talent review and assessment of Board needs.

Maintain a Board that is representative of the community with a balance of skills.

Continue to build an environment for SMA to enhance its cultural diversity.

Identify barriers to attracting a diverse student population and develop strategies to overcome barriers.

Investigate mechanisms for recruitment and retention.

Build awareness in the general community that SMA is an inclusive, accessible Catholic school for young women through an overall SMA communication plan.

In conjunction with Foundation Board:

- Analyse bursary allocations.
- Set and meet targets to increase diversity.

Coordinate budget planning.

# Stewardship

**Goal: Foster the Mission of St. Mary's Academy through responsible and forward-thinking stewardship of its physical and financial resources.**

Rationale: Long-term resource health is the basis of SMA's organizational vitality through which we achieve our Mission, Vision and Values. It is indispensable to providing a superior educational experience for SMA students.

Sound operational practices are steeped in the mission and values of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. With the Mission as a guiding light, the school strategically plans and operates with the goal of financial stability, program excellence and future vitality and viability.







## *Objectives*

**Maintain long-term resource health and thoughtful, effective stewardship to ensure support for students, existing and future programs and facilities.**

**Work with the Foundation Board to ensure the long-term viability of fixed assets and facility.**

**Continue to prepare for the transition of stewardship from the SNJM.**

## *Activities*

Review budget annually.

Maintain five year financial and risk outlook to safeguard the resources of the Academy.

Ensure proper financial controls are put in place and adhered to in order to safeguard assets.

Ensure financial assets are invested in accordance with an Investment Policy.

Prepare financial statements.

Maintain and enhance resources in conjunction with the SMA Foundation Board.

Hold annual budget meetings between Finance Committee Chairs.

Support the Joint Fixed Assets and Facility Committee.

Maintain the Joint Board legal structure committee to provide oversight.

Work with relevant stakeholders to develop a plan.







# *St. Mary's Academy* *An Advantage For Life*

*95% of SMA graduates attend universities and colleges of their choice.*

## **Girls' schools foster interests in underrepresented STEM subjects.**

Girls' school grads are six times more likely to consider majoring in math, science and technology compared to girls who attend coed schools.

- National Coalition of Girls' Schools

*Many SMA graduates go on to become leaders in the service of the community and of the Church.*

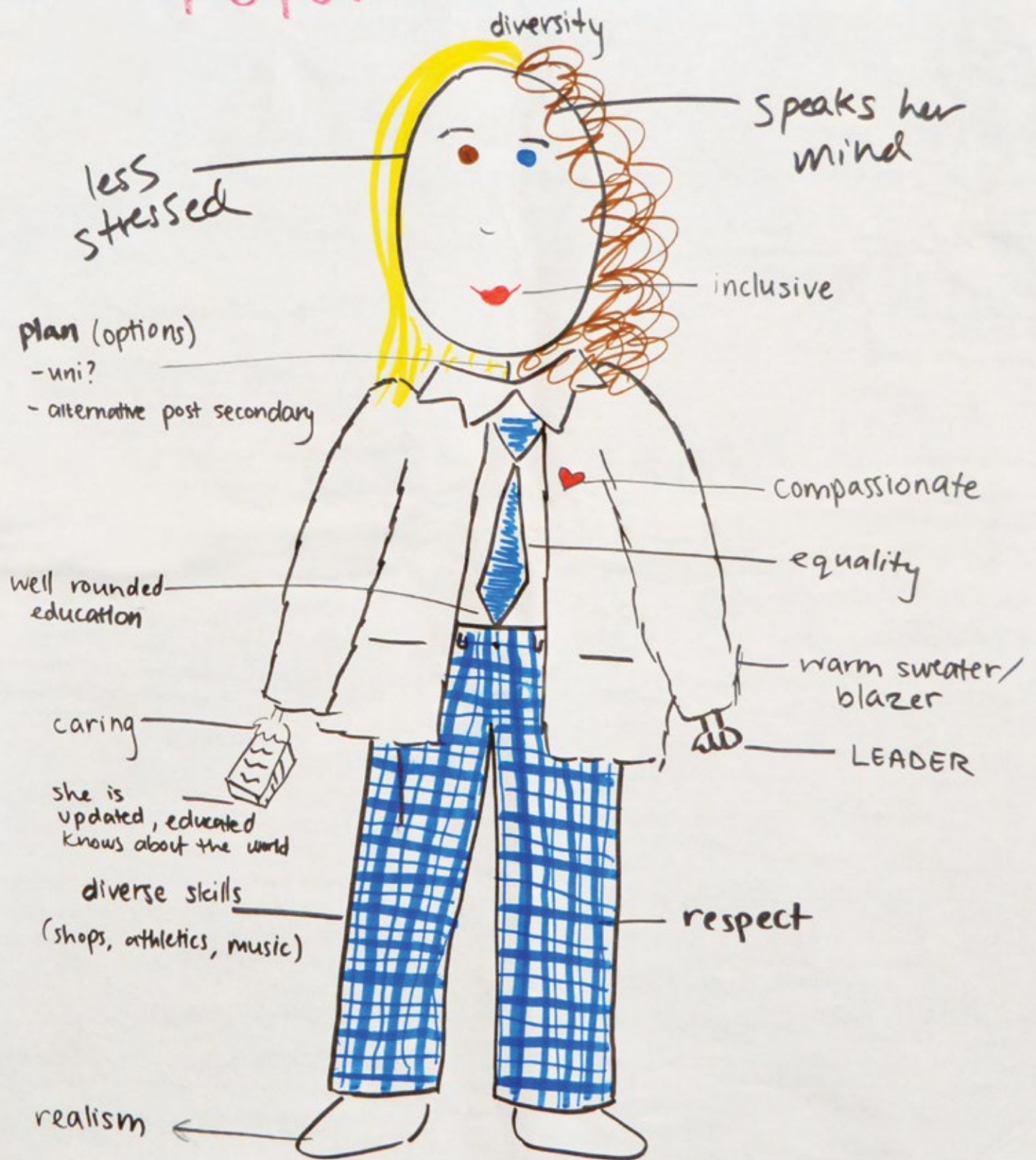
## **Girls' schools empower students to become bold leaders.**

93% of girls' school graduates say they were offered greater leadership opportunities than peers at coed schools and 80% have held leadership positions since graduating from high school.

- National Coalition of Girls' Schools



# FUTURE STUDENT



Drawing created by students in 2016

