



Strategic Framework

PURPOSE

City Garden exists to ***redefine education*** by developing the whole child in an excellent, inclusive, Montessori school; to ***reimagine community*** by creating spaces and systems that help to restore our collective humanity; and to ***reinvigorate our world*** by creating a culture in which individuals and communities thrive without disparities or barriers to success.

CORE VALUES

Academic Rigor

Inclusive Excellence

Connection through Community

Racial Equity and Social Justice

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We create high performing, racially and socioeconomically integrated school communities.

Integration is a catalyst for academic and institutional excellence, setting the stage for an inclusive and equitable community.

We effectively implement the Montessori Theory of Child Development in a stimulating public school environment.

Montessori education develops the whole child and unlocks the potential for life-long learning.

We develop and utilize an anti-biased, antiracist framework in all aspects and levels of our community.

Creating an institution in which all have access to freedom and possibility requires actively dismantling systems that have perpetuated inequities and intentionally seeking inclusive excellence.

We connect our work to neighborhoods and cultivate community empowerment.

An ecosystem of support and engagement within neighborhoods will not only empower our young people, but will catalyze deep, systemic change.

We operate and grow thoughtfully and sustainably.

We continuously search for ways to thoughtfully and sustainably expand our impact, recognizing that long-term change happens through adequately resourced, careful, measured growth.

SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES

- To understand and address the education gap between children of color and white children, and between low-income and middle/upper-income children, developing strategies to successfully and consistently close this gap.

LONG-TERM PRIORITIES

- To further develop an anti-biased, anti-racist Montessori model that can be replicated and shared.
- To develop training programs and opportunities for adults to understand and implement this model.
- To develop an organizational and financial structure that supports this vision and allows for significant growth.

IMPACT

City Garden is one of the highest-performing charter schools in St. Louis.

City Garden attributes its strong academic performance, as well as its high level of parent and student satisfaction, to a number of factors, beginning with the solid foundation of our early childhood program for three- to six-year-old students. Our Montessori curriculum, multi-age classrooms, highly certified instructors, racial and socioeconomic diversity, and very high level of parent involvement have a direct and positive impact on our notably high outcomes.

City Garden embodies the diversity of the St. Louis region unlike most schools.

City Garden's student population is 48% White, 42% African American, 3% Multiracial, 5% Hispanic, 2% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 39% qualify for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program. We know that our student, parent, and staff diversity strengthens our program and benefits all of our students. This interactive diversity strengthens the neighborhood and city and prepares our graduates to be leaders in our region.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

City Garden graduates will be some of the most thoughtful and effective leaders of the next generation.

Having been in our academically excellent, inclusive Montessori environment, our graduates will enter secondary school and beyond with key intellectual and social competencies that will foster both personal fulfillment and professional success. They will possess a profound sense of empathy, a conviction for social justice, and a commitment to positively engage in our society's civic, business, social service, educational, health and political systems.

City Garden adults will contribute to ongoing positive social change in the neighborhoods we serve, in the St. Louis region and across the United States.

Through active participation in our children's Montessori education and City Garden's efforts to create an anti-biased, inclusive, and rigorous learning community, parents, guides (teachers) and other adults who are part of City Garden will experience personal transformation and will positively impact their communities.

City Garden will become a nationally recognized model for academic excellence through racial and socioeconomic integration, public Montessori education, and anti-biased, antiracist transformation.

By sharing what we learn about how to best educate children within this context, City Garden will become a leader in local and national efforts to transform public education and to build inclusive, equitable, and connected schools and communities.