



WESTGATE MENNONITE COLLEGIATE STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030



Westgate Strategic Plan 2025–2030

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Introduction

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is committed to continually reevaluating its purpose and mission. This work is especially important as we consider our post-pandemic world and the elevated levels of mental health concerns of our students. We also recognize that recent changes within our supporting churches shape our identity as a church-based institution. The strategic planning process offers an opportunity to reflect on our roots, our role in the community, and how we will shape our future.

History

The Mennonite Educational Institute (Westgate) was established in 1958 to provide students with an education grounded in the values cherished by the supporting Mennonite community. The board of directors recognized that the foundation of the future lies in the youth of every generation and sought to offer a comprehensive curriculum encompassing strong academics, faith-based discussions, value systems, scientific inquiry, fine arts, and critical analysis of contemporary issues affecting students and their communities.

Westgate has grown into a welcoming and inclusive institution, opening its doors to non-Mennonites and embracing a broader Anabaptist community. It continues to emphasize extracurricular activities such as sports, music, arts, languages, outdoor education, and travel which, alongside a strong academic program, help develop well-rounded students who become engaged and supportive members of society.

The last strategic plan was completed in 2017, culminating in the renovation of our entire school building. The redevelopment of the school created light-filled welcoming communal spaces that will be enjoyed by generations while addressing accessibility requirements and the specific needs of the choral and band programs. Ultimately, the renovation provided Westgate with a facility that reflected and supported its mission statement.

The current strategic planning process began with a reflection on how the community assesses Westgate's success in fulfilling its mission and vision. A survey was distributed to gather input from the broader Westgate community. Insight from the survey informed discussions that led to an update of core principles and the creation of a strategic agenda outlining priorities for the next five years.

Current Westgate Core Priorities

Mission Statement

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is a Christian school grounded in the Anabaptist tradition. It is the mission of the school to provide a well-rounded education, which will inspire and empower students to live as people of God.

Vision

As a Christian education community within the Anabaptist Mennonite tradition, Westgate Mennonite Collegiate integrates academic learning with growth in character and faith, together with peacemaking and service to God and all creation. Westgate seeks to provide a quality academic education in the context of a faith community, upheld by our Christian values. We are convinced that learning, at its best, occurs when academics are bound together with faith and positive relationships.

We will strive to regularly commit this vision and these goals to God in prayer, and we recognize the importance of the continued support of families and our supporting churches in this endeavor.

Goals

Striving for Academic Excellence:

Westgate strives to provide an academic environment which encourages academic excellence within the context of our Anabaptist faith. Westgate will:

- offer a program of academic excellence recognized by both Manitoba Education and institutions of higher learning.
- inspire academic achievement in order to broaden, enrich and challenge students' learning and worldview.
- enrich classroom learning with diverse extra-curricular opportunities for participation and leadership development through such things as travel, outdoor education, music and sports.
- enable students to participate in educational, life-style, vocational and voluntary service choices that offer healing and hope in our world.
- provide solid pedagogy based on current educational needs.

Living Lives of Faith and Discipleship:

Westgate strives to provide an environment that encourages students to explore and understand what it means to live in a world that has been redeemed through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Westgate will:

- partner with the families and local Mennonite Church Manitoba congregations in the mission of Christian education.
- teach the Bible as the story of God's relationship with us and encourage students to participate in this story and to choose the way of Jesus in daily life.
- lead students to understand, appreciate and identify with people of faith throughout history, with emphasis on the Anabaptist witness of faithful discipleship and service.
- encourage students to belong to and actively participate in their local churches and provide opportunities for students to be involved in service, both locally and globally.
- equip students with the skills to participate responsibly and to lead in their church, community and global society.
- celebrate God's creation and equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitude to care for this earth.
- partner with other faith communities, exploring our shared purpose and recognizing our differences in a forum of respect and love.

Sustaining a Nurturing Community:

Westgate strives to provide a safe, nurturing community where every student is included and encouraged to explore their gifts and find places of involvement and belonging. Westgate will:

- foster a stimulating and safe school environment where students, faculty and staff reconcile individual freedom with mutual accountability and learn a wholesome respect for self and others.
- help to develop respectful and ethical relationships, where each person is valued and where we are accountable for our actions, decisions and behaviours.
- encourage and affirm students to do their very best, whether in academics, leadership, service, athletics, music or the arts.
- give students the direction and the grace they need to succeed.

- develop self sufficiency through the teaching of life skills.
- be a safe and inclusive space for all of our students.
- work with parents in a forum of mutual support and respect as they are partners in the educational endeavour.
- partner with our churches in the faith formation of our youth.

Serving Our Wider Community:

Westgate strives to promote healthy relationships between our school and the local and wider community. To that end, Westgate will:

- foster opportunities for students and teachers to give back to the local community.
- inform and invite participation from the community in Westgate events.
- encourage interaction through drama, athletics, music and service.
- encourage healthy living.
- encourage global awareness, working toward fairness and equality in the world.
- teach students to be generous stewards of their time and resources.
- teach students to respect the earth and tend to creation care.
- understand our place as treaty people with a focus on reconciliation.

Future Priorities- Strategic Plan

Our strategic plan for the next 5 years is made up of 9 priorities that ensure Westgate students are prepared to face known and emerging social challenges, to make the school resilient to future uncertainty, and to support the schools vision and goals. We have 3 interconnected pillars. As we work on one, they all become stronger.

Pillars

- Faith and Community
- Academic Strength
- Wider Program

Faith and Community Priorities

A strong understanding of identity creates resilience in an organization. Our Anabaptist faith and perspective guides our core commitment and our actions. It is essential to bring the wider community (parents, churches, and others) into its shared vision. Equally important is recognizing where we come from and the place we occupy in the broader context.

Our strategic goals:

1. Deepen our awareness of who we are as an Anabaptist school community.
 - a. Westgate strives to communicate the core commitments through its programs and align policies and practice with our Anabaptist identity. One example includes our approach to conflict. Whether between students or with staff or parents, we want to address conflict in a way that continues to knit us together, rather than tear us apart. As Anabaptists committed to peace and wholeness, we believe that how we engage in relationships and community deeply matters. We will offer professional development to our staff and continue to refine policies and guidelines for conflict resolution.
2. Support our staff and students in building meaningful relationships with our wider community.
 - a. Leading worship on Sunday mornings (commonly known as “*Westgate Worships*”) continues to be an important way that Westgate connects with its supporting churches. Through the Westgate Worships Committee, we will work to make these church connections meaningful, bringing our shared faith into practice. Within the school, we will invite guests from our wider community to share in chapels, classrooms, and professional development sessions. We will move further outward to include local connections such as St. Margaret’s Anglican Church, Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, and the Winnipeg Central Mosque. The local faith communities are important in helping us form our path forward as an Anabaptist school in Winnipeg. Community Service Day continues to be an important opportunity to connect with organizations in the city. We need to be intentional about how we facilitate these connections as we bring our students

into all of these important spaces.

3. Understand our responsibilities and identity as treaty people.
 - a. Resilience comes through understanding our identity and being in relationships. This understanding also helps us to shape our students to live lives in Manitoba. Manitoba Education requires all teachers to participate in Treaty Education which invites everyone to understand their own histories and identities while recognizing our shared histories. It also calls us to build relationships with Indigenous communities and respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. We believe this work is essential, and our staff will receive treaty education training to help us live and teach as treaty people within our classrooms and community.

Academic Priorities

Good education never allows itself to remain stagnant; it is an art form that must be continuously revisited and renewed. As we continue to strive for academic excellence, Westgate is committed to critically assessing and refining its educational practices to serve a diverse range of students effectively.

Our strategic goals are to:

4. Use inclusive educational pedagogy.
 - a. In our classes, Westgate will balance differentiated learning with Universal Design for learning, meeting each child where they are in their learning journey. We will offer internal professional development sessions to equip our staff with strategies for inclusive and engaging teaching. These efforts will help ensure that Westgate remains a safe and supportive environment for students with diverse learning needs and neurodiversity.
5. Have clear structures that support all students in their academic growth.
 - a. Westgate will build a robust, flexible, student support team, including resource, counseling and administration support. Our school budget will reflect the need for Educational Assistants

and Resource Staff to meet the needs of our students. We will facilitate positive and strong connections between teachers and our resource department to work together on the unique educational path of each student.

6. Guide students better in course selection.
 - a. Westgate’s strong academic program prepares students for success beyond high school. We will continue to offer advanced courses that allow students to explore university level learning with teachers who know and care for them. Our educators scaffold learning from junior high to grade twelve building the skills needed for post-secondary achievement. The student support team will guide students through the transition to post secondary programs with teachers and staff helping them discern their gifts, and future direction. Structures such as pre-math assessments will allow us to challenge students appropriately and support individual growth.

Building Wider Program Priorities

As we navigate a period of significant change, it is vital to create educational structures that go beyond traditional models, fostering creativity and independent thinking in our students. Programs that extend beyond the classroom are an essential part of Westgate’s identity, and we must invest in their growth and sustainability to ensure their longevity.

Our strategic priorities are to:

7. Strengthen the capacity and quality of life skills education.
 - a. Life skills—such as teamwork, perseverance, communication, problem-solving, and adaptability—are developed across many aspects of Westgate life, from athletics to outdoor education. To enhance these opportunities:
 - i. We will provide leadership professional development for our staff in our outdoor education program through training such as Basic First Aid, Wilderness First Aid, Field Leader Training, Paddle Canada Certification, and internal mentorship.

- ii. We will also expand life-skills opportunities for middle school students by introducing an Interterm week during Senior Exam Week to allow for a rotation over the years of life skills such as fine arts, cooking, woodworking, knitting, sewing, drama, etc
- 8. Build support and longevity into our unique Westgate “heritage” programs.
 - a. While Westgate offers a strong academic program across STEM, languages, arts, and humanities, our founding “heritage” programs—German, Music, and Religious Studies—remain central to our school’s identity. We will strengthen through thoughtful investment in:
 - i. Hiring and professional development, program initiatives, timetabling, course requirements, and encouragement for continued participation beyond the required levels.
 - ii. Music Program: Hiring and professional development, program initiatives, timetabling, course requirements, and encouragement for ongoing participation beyond core courses.
 - iii. We will also provide support for a Spiritual Life Coordinator and offer professional development in theology. In chapel we will invite guest speakers from inside and outside our community and foster active student participation.
- 9. While many activities are included in tuition, some trips and experiences can pose financial challenges. To balance affordability with sustainability, Westgate will create a Trip Bursary Fund to support students wishing to pursue Westgate trip experiences, but who find these experiences out of their financial reach.