BENILDE-ST. MARGARET’S SCHOOL
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

PRESIDENT
Start Date: July 2022
bsmschool.org
OVERVIEW

Benilde-St. Margaret’s School (BSM) is one of Minnesota’s top Catholic, independent, college preparatory schools for students in grades 7-12. Located in St. Louis Park, a first ring suburb of Minneapolis, BSM takes a rigorous and holistic approach to education and is focused on helping all students reach their highest potential for a successful future.

Rooted in the vibrant traditions of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the Christian Brothers and the Order of St. Benedict, BSM offers a rigorous and relevant curriculum, leading-edge learning experiences, extensive co-curricular opportunities, faith formation and a robust service-learning program. The school is also deeply committed to fostering a genuine sense of belonging for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic level or ability.

Benilde-St. Margaret’s seeks a dynamic leader as its next president to start in July 2022. The successful candidate will be a highly experienced Catholic leader who has the capacity and vision to build on an impressive level of success and take BSM to even greater heights. The president serves as the school’s academic leader, responsible for fostering a climate of excellence and moral development among students, faculty and staff. This is an exceptional opportunity to lead a forward-thinking school with deep roots, an unwavering commitment to student success, and an enduring grounding in its Catholic identity.

MISSION

Benilde-St. Margaret’s School educates, empowers and inspires learners within a Catholic community to lead lives of faith, achieve academic excellence and contribute meaningfully to a global society.

IDENTITY STATEMENT

Benilde-St. Margaret’s is a Catholic, co-educational college-preparatory school serving students in grades 7-12. Rooted in the vibrant traditions of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the Christian Brothers and the Order of St. Benedict, we are uniquely blessed with three charisms that guide how we teach, act and treat one another. We develop the whole student through a rigorous curriculum, leading-edge learning experiences, extensive co-curricular opportunities, faith formation and a robust service-learning program. We value our strong and lifelong relationships with parents, alumni, local schools, parishes, religious organizations and the larger Benilde-St. Margaret’s community.
SCHOOL HISTORY

In 1907, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet founded St. Margaret’s Academy in Minneapolis. For over a half-century, this all-girls school ran independently. In 1956, the Christian Brothers founded Benilde High School, an all-boys school, in the Minneapolis suburb of St. Louis Park. In the 1970s, with enrollments decreasing at both schools, the two joined together to officially form the co-educational Benilde-St. Margaret’s School. The newly combined school grew steadily through the late 20th century and was named a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. A capital campaign in the early 2000s led to the school’s state-of-the-art expansion, including a new chapel, library, classroom wing, performing arts center, administrative office spaces and athletic facilities. Moreover, a recent successful capital campaign provided additional innovative learning, technology and collaboration spaces.

THE SCHOOL

BSM has a strong reputation for its focus on holistic education within the Catholic tradition. Throughout the 7-12 program, the school attends to the intellectual, physical, emotional, interpersonal and spiritual well-being of students to ensure they are prepared to reach their highest potential.

Led by experienced faculty, the school believes students learn best by actively participating in meaningful, challenging activities in safe environments that are conducive to success and that foster critical thinking and creativity. BSM also believes that diversity and multicultural education are essential components of students’ lives as they prepare to live and work in an ever-evolving, complex world.

FAST FACTS

Total students: 1,191
Students of color: 19%
Students who identify as Catholic: 65%
Zip codes represented: 73
Total faculty: 97
Faculty with advanced degrees: 76
Student/teacher ratio: 11:1
Financial aid budget: $1.8 million
Students receiving financial aid: 20%
Teachers, staff and coaches — in partnership with parents and families — take seriously the responsibility to provide quality instruction, model conscientious behavior, and assist students in learning to make good decisions based in Christian values.

The BSM community welcomes and celebrates the histories, experiences and identities of each of its members. It believes that shared experiences — formal and informal — within a diverse community foster authentic human relationships and growth. The school also supports community members in their journey toward greater human understanding and personal development through a variety of courses and topics studied across the curriculum and through programming, student organizations, leadership development, student and parent affinity groups, and professional learning opportunities.

The BSM Board of Directors recently adopted a five-year strategic plan that establishes a formal vision for the school. The 2025 strategic plan, Rich History, Radiant Future, is built on four core pillars: Exceptional Academics, Being Catholic in the World, Vibrant Community, and Investing in the Future. A key element of the strategic plan is to welcome a student body that reflects racial, economic and academic diversity, and to foster a culture of inclusion and a sense of belonging among all students, faculty and staff.
ACADEMICS

The BSM curriculum is designed to prepare students for the dynamic and ever-changing world in which they’ll study, live and work.

The Junior High School offers a comprehensive curriculum for students in grades 7-8 with a strong emphasis on the development of literacy skills. Core courses include English, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, religious studies, and the arts. In the Junior High, each student is provided a MacBook for daily academic use. Technology is integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

The Senior High School curriculum includes core courses in English, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, religious studies, and the arts for students in grades 9-12. The program offers numerous honors courses and 24 Advanced Placement courses. Students also have access to a wide range of elective courses that allow them to follow their passions and interests. Signature programs include Research, Engineering, and Design (RED) and Explore, Partnership, Inspire, and Connect (EPIC) — both designed to engage students in real-world professional experiences. All Senior High students also receive MacBooks, and technology integration is seamlessly utilized in all classes. Counselors are assigned to students in ninth grade and remain with them for their entire high school career. Additionally, counselors work with all juniors and seniors, in collaboration with their parents, to provide comprehensive college preparation.

BSM’s recent strategic plan includes further adapting the academic program to the changing needs of students and society by providing innovative and authentic learning experiences and ensuring effective instructional approaches to promote the enduring skills of creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. The strategic plan also outlines a goal to expand opportunities for students to earn college credit throughout the academic program.
ARTS AND ATHLETICS

The visual arts program provides students with the opportunity for developing creativity, imagination and effective visual expression with a link to cultural history. Working in a collaborative peer-learning environment, students develop creative problem-solving skills, self-expression and visual literacy. The music department nurtures an appreciation for composition and music and recognizes the important role music plays in developing a student’s self-esteem and academic achievement. Outside of formal course offerings, students may take part in extracurricular groups in band, orchestra, jazz and choir. The drama department offers three performance opportunities annually, two in the Senior High and one in the Junior High.

BSM offers more than 20 different athletic programs across all three seasons — including varsity and junior varsity teams in football, soccer, cross-country, swimming, diving, tennis, volleyball, dance, alpine and Nordic skiing, hockey, basketball, wrestling, baseball, golf, softball, tennis, and track and field. Additionally, the school excels in academic competitions such as speech and mock trial. In the last 20 years, BSM has won 29 state titles.

COLLEGE MATRICULATION

BSM students consistently score well above average on the ACT and SAT tests, with numerous National Merit finalists, semifinalists and commended scholars recognized annually. Graduates go on to the top colleges and universities in the country.

Graduates from 2015-2019 attend the following, among others:

American University
Baylor University
Boston University
Brown University
Catholic University of America
College of the Holy Cross
College of William and Mary
Colgate University
Cornell College
Dartmouth College
Duke University
Fordham University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University, Chicago
Marquette University
McGill University
Mount Holyoke College
New York University
Northeastern University
Occidental College
Ohio Wesleyan
Spelman College
Swarthmore College
University of Texas, Austin
Tulane University
University of Chicago
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
University of Notre Dame
University of Southern California
Vanderbilt University
Villanova University
Xavier University

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ACTIVITIES AND SCHOOL LIFE

To help nurture a student’s passions and provide opportunities for connections to the school and with other students, BSM provides a host of clubs and activities both competitive and informal. Students are encouraged to create clubs of interest to them, working with faculty/staff advisors and administration.

BSM offers a wide range of extracurricular and co-curricular programs — including athletic teams, clubs, faith and service activities, and opportunities in fine arts. More than 90% of BSM students report participating in at least one school-sponsored activity.

The school’s focus on supporting the spiritual development of students includes a range of opportunities to engage in academic religion classes, liturgies, prayer services, community service and international mission trips.

Homerooms convene weekly for academic advisory, activities and special interest meetings. Relevant issues such as peer pressure, decision-making, self-esteem, diversity and healthy social relationships are also addressed during this advisory period.
CAMPUS

Benilde-St. Margaret’s sits on 32 acres in the Twin Cities suburb of St. Louis Park. The attractive mid-20th-century school building has been steadily updated over the years. In 2019, the school completed a 10,000-square-foot renovation and created state-of-the-art science labs and a multi-purpose teaching, meeting and performance space called the Atrium. In 2021, another 10,000 square feet of learning space was added to promote student creativity, curiosity and collaboration. The technology infrastructure and the ventilation systems underwent large-scale renovations to support school operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, BSM finished construction on a flexible maker space devoted to entrepreneurial pursuits and collaborative projects.

The campus also includes present-day classrooms, a college and career center, a welcoming chapel, a modern library, a full-service gymnasium, a performing arts center, and multiple athletic fields.

ST. LOUIS PARK, MINNESOTA

St. Louis Park, a city with a population around 49,000, is located just west of Minneapolis. The community balances the energy of the city and the quiet, down-to-earth feel of a smaller town. It promotes many fun and diverse options for dining and shopping, as well as numerous community and leisure activities. St. Louis Park is part of the inner-ring of suburbs around the Twin Cities metro area. The Minneapolis-St. Paul airport is only 20 minutes away and the area’s hospital, Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital, has been recognized as a top 100 hospital in the United States.
A short, 10-minute drive to the east gets you to the heart of downtown Minneapolis, with easy access to the central business district, entertainment and many excellent restaurants. The Twin Cities boasts a strong labor market and is home to large international companies such as Target, Best Buy, UnitedHealth Group, 3M, Medtronic, General Mills, U.S. Bank, Xcel Energy, among others.

Take a short 10-minute drive west and you’ll find yourself at Lake Minnetonka, one of the ten largest lakes in Minnesota and recreational destination many. But as Minnesota is known as the Land of 10,000 lakes, you can also find your spot by the water closer to home. Westwood Lake and Meadowbrook Lake are right in St. Louis Park, and the popular Bde Maka Ska (formerly known as Lake Calhoun) and Lake Harriet are just a few miles away.

True to its name, St. Louis Park offers a number of green spaces for its residents, including several outdoor recreational areas with hiking trails, skiing and skating. The town also shares Minnesota’s love of professional sports, where locals cheer for the Vikings in NFL football, the Twins in MLB baseball, the Wild (men’s) and White Caps (women’s) in professional hockey, the Timberwolves (men’s) and Lynx (women’s) basketball teams, and the recently established professional soccer teams of the Minnesota United Loons (men’s) and Aurora FC (women’s).
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Benilde-St. Margaret’s is an amazing school with a stellar reputation in the greater community. The next President of the school will inherit a joyful and dedicated school staff who are enthusiastic about the next chapter of growth at the school.

Specific opportunities facing the school as stated in the strategic plan include:

1. Building a strong academic plan with authentic learning opportunities for all students;
2. Continuing the long-term stability through effective governance, leadership and financial planning processes;
3. Ensuring all students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni and friends see the BSM community as integral to their identity;
4. Strengthening BSM’s Catholic identity to enrich spiritual experiences for students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni and friends;
5. Retaining and recruiting a committed, dedicated and collaborative faculty and leadership team; and
6. Unifying the many constituency groups around a strategic vision for the future.
DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The next President will be expected to be a practicing Catholic and strong communicator who can provide a clear message of unity, collaboration and belonging. The Board seeks an approachable and relatable servant leader who has a clear passion for mission and who can clearly articulate that mission in the greater community.

Additional qualities desired for the next President include:
1. Living the BSM Catholic identity and having a passion for the BSM mission;
2. Experience in executing goals and objectives in order to provide excellence in all parts of the school’s operations;
3. Being a strategic thinker who can motivate others and inspire teamwork;
4. Having an executive presence including poise, transparency, accountability and outstanding communication skills;
5. Living BSM charisms and fostering a spirit of belonging and unity for all community members; and
6. Cultivating a sense of philanthropy with strong fundraising and “friend-raising.”
TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

• A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
• A current résumé;
• A statement of leadership and/or educational philosophy; and
• A list of five professional references with name, phone number and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate’s permission)

Make inquiries and send complete applications to:

Brandon Jacobs  
Search Consultant  
brandon.jacobs@carneysandoe.com

Barbara Daush  
Search Consultant  
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