

EDUCATE FOR ADAPTATION AND CHANGE

A. Educate to shape the future

“New times call for new methods,” Blessed Chaminade said. The Marianist school faces the future calmly, balancing acceptance and adaptation. We accept change in faith, at the same time responding through strategic planning based on Marianist pedagogy and Christian wisdom. For example, fulfilling the school’s mission in changing times requires that school personnel employ new kinds of learning and new technologies to enhance their administration and teaching. Our intention is not acquiescence to the future but the hope-filled shaping of it. We encourage the same attitude in our students, educating them to be bearers of the best of our tradition, and to meet change actively with discernment and reflection. We view the signs of our times in faith, prayerfully open to their possibilities.

B. Educate persons to accept and respect differences in a pluralistic society.

As the people of the world come increasingly into contact with one another, differences among them become more apparent. If the world of the future is to be peaceful, students of today must learn how to appreciate cultural differences and how to work with people very unlike themselves. To this end, we cultivate in our students both skill and virtue: the skills required for dialogue consensus, and teamwork depend on the virtues of loving acceptance of others and faithful dedication to a collaborative, honest, and hopeful search for the truth.

C. Develop critical thinking skills in the search for truth

To foster the search for truth, the Marianist school encourages integration among the academic disciplines and cooperation among academic departments. Wise teachers and administrators, bearing witness with common sense and practical skills, work together to achieve these goals. In schools thus harmoniously organized, we teach our students to see how Marianist habits of reflection can help them to follow an argument and understand another’s point of view as well as how to evaluate alternatives, to judge prudently, and choose responsibly.

D. “Do whatever he tells you.” Be available and respond to the signs of the times.

In Mary’s *fiat*, we see her openness to the signs of her times, her “yes” to the mystery of the future. In her counsel at Cana to “Do whatever he tells you,” we hear Mary urging us today to be equally available to God’s call. The Marianist school, itself a communal learner, discerns what present needs call for, open to adapting Marianist pedagogy as needed in the service of our mission.

GENERAL PRACTICES FROM THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MARIANIST EDUCATION

- The members of the school community, recognizing the importance to be a lifelong learner, discerns what present needs call for and are open to adaptation in service of its mission.
- Faculty, staff and students work together to be positive change agents for their school, church, and society.
- The school community embraces a hope-filled shaping of the future by encouraging this spirit in its students and effecting change with discernment and reflection.
- Opportunities are provided that help the members of the school community to understand, appreciate, and value diversity.

MARIANIST QUOTES

- “New times demand new methods.” (William Joseph Chaminade)
- “Rooted in tradition, as well he should have been, (Blessed Chaminade) faithfully preserved the essentials and the basic elements that do not admit of change. However, he was flexible, even at the risk of causing surprise, or even opposition among those who were shackled by routine. ‘We must courageously modify methods and forms that have nothing about them that is immutable in order to adapt to the changing needs of time, place and customs.’” (Henri Rousseau, S.M.)
- “The authentic educator should possess the power of adaptation that allows him to adjust to the student, who is in the process of becoming, just as he must be able to adjust to the evolution taking place in the culture.” (Leopold Prohaska, S.M.)
- “What is beyond discussion is the fact that the future belongs to the enterprising, and that new times require people of action. Now then, this is the role for young people who do not have to reproduce the past, but rather have the challenge of creating new ways of thinking of working in keeping with current intellectual developments.” (Henri Rosseau, S.M.)
- “The basic principles of education and of teaching do not vary; but the application of those principles, as well as methods, must of necessity be adapted to the needs and demands of human society. To insist on the absolute inalterability of methods

and teaching materials would be at the same time to limit to a very short life the services and even the existence of an Institute dedicated to education.”
(Constitutions of the Society of Mary, 1839)

- “Though we are not (people) of the world, we are not for all that (people) of another age or of another country. Our lives are not hidden; they are not relegated to the desert, or passed within the narrow limits of a cell. To act on the world we are persuaded that we must know it, and hence our life is mingled with all the movements that influence the trend of the epoch, and call for a new order of requirements.” (Jean-Baptiste Lalanne, S.M.)
- “Our mission required adaptability on the part of our members and a spirit of collaboration with all who serve in the church. (Marianist Rule of Life)
- “A school ought to be continually revising its methods, bearing in mind the complexity and instability of the real world. The development of new circumstances presupposes on the part of educators a calm affectivity and respectful humility in the face of truth. (Paul J. Hoffer, S.M.)

CHARACTERISTICS OF MARIANIST EDUCATORS

Educate for Adaptation and Change

Descriptors

- Educate to shape the future
- Educate persons to accept and respect differences in a pluralistic society
- Develop critical thinking skills in the search for truth
- Be open and adapt to local and global contexts through inculturation and interdisciplinary education
- “Do whatever he tells you.” Be available and respond to the signs of the times.

Practices

- Mary is presented as the model of Hope: like Mary we respond to the call and signs of the times
- A strategic plan for implementation of the Characteristics of Marianist Education is in place
- Students/teachers/staff discuss how they must respond and shape the signs of the times
- Students are made aware of how the Catholic and Marianist charisms may challenge and complement the culture of the United States
- The students, faculty, staff, board members are prepared and willing to be agents of change (missionaries for the next generation)

- Discussion is had regarding various reactions to changes that anticipate the future and reaction to change agents
- Students/faculty/staff are encouraged to be life-long learners
- Members of the community are educated to accept and respect differences in a pluralistic society
- Opportunities for interdisciplinary studies are available to students
- The curriculum helps prepare students for a world we do not know
- Teachers are provided opportunities to learn/discuss/implement the developments in curriculum, learning styles, etc.
- Students are taught new skills so as to develop their learning
- Senior teachers share why and how they have adapted their course content, teaching style, etc. during their careers
- Critical thinking is an integral component of each course offered at the school
- Students/faculty/staff treat each other with respect
- Students appreciate and value people and ideas different from their own
- Students are actively involved in a dialogue between faith and culture
- Education is done within a global awareness
- Discernment and change is done in community
- Appreciate and use appropriately technology throughout the curriculum to enhance learning
- The ethical use of technology is taught
- Vowed religious are active agents of change for the school community

AS A MARIANIST EDUCATOR

- I witness to members of the school community my willingness to follow Mary's word of "Do whatever he tells you."
- I follow the words of Blessed Chaminade, "New times call for new methods."
- I am open minded and accepting of people with new ideas
- I work with my students so they can be effective agents of change
- I present ideas that encourage students to reflect on their ideas and the ideas of others
- I teach other cultures and belief systems
- I model kindness and openness as a means of accepting differences of others
- I integrate global perspectives into the curriculum
- I challenge racist and sexist attitudes
- I monitor the manner in which students treat each other and intervene if unacceptable behavior occurs
- I use reflective practices as a regular part of the curriculum
- I encourage students to be open minded
- I teach the students how to learn
- I encourage students to participate in class discussions
- I accept different learning styles in the students
- I promote inquiry-based assignments
- I encourage the student's creativity through projects and the use of technology
- I use e-mails to communicate with my students and their parents
- I stress the moral and ethical implications of the use of the internet and technology
- I create and maintain a web page for instructional purposes
- I am open to the ideas presented by my students, colleagues, parents and administrators
- I am flexible and accommodate changes in curriculum, school scheduling, etc
- I work with students so that they can become critical thinkers and life long learners
- I am a positive change agent for the school community
- I work with students so they can become change agents; presenting to students the need for patience, tolerance, and understanding to be an effective agent of change
- I attend conferences and seminars to stretch my understanding
- I am flexible and accommodating
- I demonstrate trust and faith in the future

