





History

Mariners Christian School (MCS) was founded by a steadfast group of passionate parents desiring a covenant, Christian school in Orange County. MCS opened its doors in the fall of 1987 with 44 students in grades kindergarten through 2nd grade. In 1995, the school found its permanent home in Costa Mesa where it continues to uphold the vision of the founders as a covenant, Christian school equally committed to academic excellence and spiritual formation. Today, MCS spans grades TK-8 and is home to over 720 students from neighborhoods across the county.

The school's growth and development over the past 37 years are a testament to God's faithful direction and provision. MCS has earned a stellar reputation for its unwavering commitment to Christian education rooted in biblical truth, exemplary academics, outstanding enrichment and learning support programs, and a Christ-loving community.

From the visionary foundation laid by our founding families to today, Mariners Christian School remains steadfast in its mission and core values, building on the firm foundation of Christ as described in 1 Corinthians 3:10-11: "By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder... For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." This resolute commitment drives our efforts to secure a flourishing, covenant, Christian education today and for generations to come.

Our Unwavering Mission

From the desires of our founders to the present day, Mariners Christian School has never wavered from our mission: *"building a firm foundation through Christ-centered education."* The mission requires us to be uncompromising in our commitment to Christian values and the pursuit of excellence to equip students with a faith-driven, exceptional education that empowers them to stand firm, lead with integrity, and influence the world for Christ. This mission has never been more vital.

Our Driving Values, Beliefs, and Commitments

Mariners Christian School proudly stands as the **only** independent covenant Christian school in Orange County. As such, we believe we are uniquely called to be a beacon of light in a time when many educational institutions are drifting from biblical values.

Fulfilling the mission requires a steadfast commitment to **five core values** that permeate every aspect of our school.

- We cultivate a deep **Love for Christ**, guiding students to grow in their faith and develop a biblical worldview.
- Through **Exemplary Academics**, we challenge and inspire students to achieve their fullest potential, preparing them for success in a rapidly changing world.
- Our **Whole-Child Focus** ensures that each student is nurtured emotionally, socially, and spiritually, recognizing that education extends beyond academics.
- Embracing a **Culture of Innovation**, we pioneer new approaches and foster creativity to enhance learning and engagement.
- The **Connected Community** reflects a shared partnership between families, faculty, and staff, united in the pursuit of providing a thriving, Christ-centered environment.

We believe in partnering with Christian families to “train up a child in the way they should go,” trusting the promise of Proverbs 22:6: “When they are old, they will not depart from it.” We believe in equipping the next generation with a firm foundation of faith, values, and purpose through a biblical worldview. Recognizing that all students are image-bearers of God, we believe they deserve the opportunity to flourish in the unique excellence He has designed for them.

Our steadfast commitment to the cornerstones of excellence, faith, and stewardship drives every program and facet of our school. We are committed to the continual advancement and improvement of academics, programs, and student support to maximize the unique gifts and abilities of each student.

Our Vision


Mariners Christian School's vision is bold and clear: to secure our Kingdom impact, protect our position as a covenant school, and ensure every student experiences the transformative power of an exemplary Christ-centered education. With great joy, we launch **Firm Foundation: A Campaign for the Flourishing Future of Mariners Christian School**. The strategic plan and subsequent capital campaign reflect prayerfully developed initiatives informed by years of careful planning and collaboration with the MCS community. Built on the cornerstones of a continual pursuit of excellence, stewardship through financial sustainability, and a thriving Christ-centered community, these initiatives will expand and strengthen programs, protect our mission and status as a covenant school, maintain affordability for decidedly Christian families, and ensure a flourishing future for our students and school community. With great joy and anticipation, we embark on this exciting journey to solidify the strongest foundation for Mariners Christian School.



INITIATIVE I

Fortifying the Cornerstones of Excellence





MCS is committed to building a firm foundation for **every student — academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally**. Through the *Fortifying the Cornerstones of Excellence* initiative — one of two key strategic initiatives — **every child** will benefit from exemplary academics and enhanced offerings that support them in reaching their full potential and developing their unique, God-given gifts through programs designed to inspire passion and rooted in an uncompromising biblical worldview. This initiative is dedicated to fostering a culture of excellence, directly impacting the learning of every student and ensuring their success. It aims to continually refine and strengthen instruction to better meet the diverse needs of each child, providing a seamless and intentional approach to learning that integrates biblical values across all subjects.

This initiative focuses on elevating the quality of education at MCS by investing in professional development, curriculum design, and academic support. Professional development opportunities will ensure that teachers continually refine instructional practices to deliver the highest quality education. A rigorous, biblically integrated curriculum will strengthen every content area and be tailored to established learning objectives, content standards, developmental priorities, and biblical integration. Expanded programs will address the broadest range of academic needs, while also nurturing individual gifts and talents. MCS will provide greater academic rigor, accelerated learning, tailored interventions, and holistic support. These opportunities will be provided internally through a dedicated team, ensuring alignment with the unique needs of our programs, faculty, and students, while upholding our established priorities and biblical values.

By accomplishing this endeavor, MCS will remain not just a covenant school, but the only covenant Christian TK-8 school in Orange County that can also offer such comprehensive programs with excellence. We will provide families with an unparalleled Christ-centered education that celebrates and nurtures the unique gifts and abilities of each child, ensuring that every student thrives within a flourishing and supportive community.

OBJECTIVE 1: EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE THROUGH INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Exemplary academics and a culture of innovation require continual growth, intentional leadership, and a dynamic approach to teaching and learning. This investment will strengthen every classroom, support every teacher, and impact every student by ensuring instruction remains responsive, personalized, and excellence-driven, continually adapting to meet students where they are academically while challenging them to grow to their highest potential. Through strengthened academic leadership, instructional support, and ongoing innovation, MCS is building a cohesive and thriving academic program designed to help every learner flourish with confidence, mastery, and success. Strategic priorities include:

- *Addition of Director of Academics:* The addition of a Director of Academics marks a significant and strategic investment in the future of exemplary academics at MCS. As the first role of its kind in school history, this position will provide dedicated leadership and alignment across TK–8 curriculum, instruction, assessment, and academic programming ensuring consistency, cohesion, and excellence at every grade level. With a singular focus on strengthening and advancing the academic experience, the Director of Academics will help drive continuous growth, innovation, and achievement schoolwide so that every student benefits from a fully aligned and thriving educational program.
- *Addition of Elementary Instructional Specialists:* Credentialed Instructional Specialists will be added to provide flexible, real-time academic support tailored to each student's immediate learning needs through targeted reteaching to ensure mastery or increased rigor to maximize growth. Working alongside classroom teachers, these expert educators will deliver responsive small-group instruction that continuously adapts based on where students are in the learning process, helping ensure every child is challenged, supported, and progressing toward their highest potential.
- *Addition of Middle School Instructional Coach:* A dedicated Middle School Math and Science Instructional Coach will be added to provide specialized coaching, professional development, and programmatic leadership designed to strengthen instruction in two of the most foundational academic disciplines. By working directly alongside teachers through individualized coaching, instructional support, data analysis, and curriculum refinement, this role will elevate both teaching quality and student outcomes while ensuring our math and science programs continue to grow in rigor, excellence, and innovation.

OBJECTIVE 2: EXPANSION OF INNOVATION

Innovation and creativity will be expanded through the launch of the Mariners Innovation Academy, a specialized enrichment initiative designed to nurture students' unique passions through a specialized enrichment pathway across the three middle school years. This academy will provide exceptional opportunities for students to explore in greater depth the areas of science, math, engineering, and technology (STEM). The academy approach moves beyond mere exposure to empowering students to develop their gifts with increasing depth and focus and pursue their unique callings. By graduation, students will have cultivated their talents in these areas in meaningful ways, equipping them with advanced skills and a deeper understanding of their interests, laying a strong foundation for success in high school and beyond. Strategic priorities include:

- *Addition of Director of Innovation:* The launch of the Academy of Innovation begins with the addition of a visionary Director of Innovation who will design, lead, and grow transformative STEM learning pathways for middle school students. This dedicated leadership position will develop innovative, future-focused programs that cultivate creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, and hands-on application through opportunities.
- *Innovative Pathways:* Develop specialized elective courses focused on cultivating skills in innovation, robotics, technology, programming, engineering, and design thinking.



OBJECTIVE 3: EXPANSION OF SUPPORT FOR THE WHOLE-CHILD

Our commitment to cultivating a Love for Christ and Exemplary Academics requires an equally intentional commitment to supporting the whole child. To help every student thrive, we must continually strengthen our ability to meet the unique social, emotional, spiritual, and academic needs of each learner. This investment will expand systems of support, strengthen specialized leadership, and create more responsive, individualized programs that allow us better care for, guide, and equip every student to flourish both in and beyond the classroom. Strategic priorities include:

- *Addition of School Psychologist:* The addition of a School Psychologist will significantly strengthen MCS's ability to support the whole child by providing comprehensive academic, social-emotional, and behavioral support services directly on campus. This role will allow the school to conduct full educational evaluations in-house, eliminating many barriers often faced when seeking outside assessments while enabling earlier identification and intervention for student needs. Beyond evaluations, the School Psychologist will play a vital role in partnering with teachers, support staff, and families to develop individualized strategies that help students thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. This position will strengthen student support systems schoolwide, provide expert insight into learning and behavioral needs, and help ensure MCS continues building a responsive, compassionate, and individualized approach to caring for every learner.
- *Expand Student Support Services* to better assist students with identified learning challenges and provide tailored support for their individual progress.
- *Expand enrichment* offerings for students who are exceptionally gifted providing greater depth and challenge.

INITIATIVE II

Securing Our Decidedly Christian Legacy:
Firm Foundation Capital Campaign





Mariners Christian School was founded with a steadfast commitment to excellence and remaining a covenant Christian school for decidedly Christian families. Strengthening our mission requires a commitment to excellence through continual improvement. Protecting this mission and remaining a decidedly Christian school requires adherence to the highest standards of admissions to ensure community alignment with our beliefs and values. Achieving financial sustainability and affordability is essential to sustaining this mission, enabling MCS to enhance academic and enrichment programs, maintain its Christ-centered identity, and secure a flourishing future, even in the face of economic challenges.

As outlined in the first strategic initiative, *Fortifying the Cornerstones of Excellence*, the pursuit of excellence and strengthening exemplary academics requires significant investment and expansion of programs, staffing, and resources. Achieving these goals requires not only initial investment, but a sustainable financial strategy that supports these efforts long-term. This second initiative, *Securing Our Decidedly Christian Legacy*, provides the financial means to support the goals and objectives of the first initiative.

Additionally, building a robust financial aid endowment is essential to preserving Mariners Christian School's founding purpose and ensuring it remains a vibrant, Christ-centered community for generations to come. The growing demand for Christian education, coupled with rising costs and limited financial aid options, has made it imperative to expand access for aligned current and prospective families. Many Christian families face financial barriers that hinder access to the exemplary covenant education MCS provides. By offering vital financial assistance to families in need, MCS can maintain affordability, uphold its mission to serve decidedly Christian families, and remain selective in admissions while weathering economic challenges.

Through the *Firm Foundation Capital Campaign*, we will safeguard our commitment to excellence and ensure that a high-quality covenant Christian education is accessible to those who desire it and are a mission fit for our school.

This initiative is a bold step toward securing a strong financial foundation that will enable Mariners Christian School to secure and sustain our decidedly Christian legacy.

Goal 1: Freedom to Flourish: Sustaining Exemplary Academics and Achieving a Debt-Free Future for MCS

\$9,000,000

The *Firm Foundation Capital Campaign* is designed to secure the funding necessary to *Fortify the Cornerstones of Excellence* across our school. Through this campaign, we will immediately implement the staffing, leadership, and programmatic initiatives necessary to elevate academics, strengthen student support, and expand innovation opportunities. It will also create a long-term path toward sustainability through debt reduction and elimination. This is more than a campaign. It is an investment in a decidedly Christian legacy that will impact students, families, and future generations far beyond our lifetime. By strengthening the foundation of MCS today, we ensure that future generations of students will continue to be known, loved, challenged, disciplined, and equipped to stand firmly on the truth of Christ in an ever-changing world.

OBJECTIVE 1: \$3,000,000

The first critical component of the Firm Foundation Campaign provides immediate seed funding for the full staffing model required to accomplish *Initiative I: Fortifying the Cornerstones of Excellence*. This investment will fully fund all new and expanded positions for a five-year period, allowing MCS to implement and strengthen critical academic, instructional, and student support roles without placing additional financial burden on families through tuition increases. By funding underwriting these positions upfront, we are able to move forward immediately in building the staffing structure needed to elevate every aspect of the student experience while maintaining affordability and access to a distinctly Christian education. After this initial five-year investment period, these roles will transition into the operational budget, ensuring long-term sustainability while preserving both excellence and accessibility for generations of families to come.

OBJECTIVE 2: \$6,000,000

A second critical component of the *Firm Foundation Campaign* is the allocation of \$6 million to retire MCS's only existing debt, our mortgage, thereby eliminating a significant long-term financial obligation and creating lasting financial freedom for the school. By removing this debt service from our annual budget, we are able to redirect substantial resources directly back into our mission, strengthening academic programs, supporting faculty and staff, and sustaining overall excellence across the school. Most importantly, this financial shift ensures the long-term viability of the staffing model established through Initiative I. While these positions are initially funded through campaign seed investment, retiring our debt creates the necessary ongoing budget capacity to sustain these roles beyond the five-year funding window without placing additional burden on families through significant tuition increases. Debt elimination is the mechanism that allows us to preserve affordability while maintaining and fully integrating these essential positions into our operational budget for the future.



Goal 2: Expanding Our Legacy Endowment

\$3,000,000

OBJECTIVE

Expand our current *Legacy Endowment* to provide financial support to current MCS families fostering a school community that reflects the beauty and belonging of God's Kingdom and ensuring decidedly Christian, missionally aligned families are provided access to a MCS education.



The Opportunity

Firm Foundation: A Campaign for The Flourishing Future of Mariners Christian School

# of Gifts	Gift Amount	Subtotal	Cumulative Total
1	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000
1	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$4,500,000
2	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$6,500,000
3	\$500,000	\$1,500,000	\$8,000,000
4	\$250,000	\$1,000,000	\$9,000,000
8	\$100,000	\$800,000	\$9,800,000
8	\$75,000	\$600,000	\$10,400,000
Many	<\$75,000	\$1,600,000	\$12,000,000

Secured through a letter of intent, gifts can be designated over a 3-5 year period and include cash, appreciated securities, charitable lead or remainder trusts, or other assets.

God's Call, Our Faithful Response

From the founding of MCS, God has called us to accomplish mighty things for His Kingdom. Fulfilling our mission requires a steadfast commitment and the support of the MCS community who join us in desiring a covenant and exemplary Christian education. Accomplishing the strategic initiatives and funding goals requires generous and sacrificial giving. Every gift is an active step for the Kingdom in a world that desperately needs a place committed to God's truth, following that truth, and raising a generation who will do the same.

Now is the time to unite as a community of believers to ensure that MCS remains a beacon of faith and excellence. Doing so will fortify the cornerstones of excellence, provide long-term sustainability, and ensure we are a flourishing, decidedly Christian school today and for generations to come.





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To learn more about gifts of stock and corporate matching, contact Jennifer Vaughan, *Director of Capital Campaign*, at jennifer.vaughan@marinerscs.org.