



COLEGIO SANTA MARIA

**"A COMMUNITY THAT TEACHES AND
LEARNS" INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL
PROJECT SUMMARY**



This document presents a summary of the Guiding Statements embodied in our Institutional



Educational Project, document through which all members of our academic community learn about our school's fundamental philosophy.

1. Founding Principles

1.1 Embrace the past, fulfill the present and forge our future.

Colegio Santa María was established by the religious American order of the Benedictine nuns in 1963, as an all girl, bilingual school. The academic program, and Institutional Educational Program were created to call students and community members to embrace the task of becoming responsible members of society.

In 1975, their community in the United States called the founding nuns back. They created a new foundation called Fundación Colegio de las Hermanas Benedictinas (today Fundación Colegio Santa María), to which they donated the school. The Archbishop of Bogotá granted it legal ecclesiastic status on February 4, 1975. By petition of the founding nuns, the Archbishop is the head of the foundation through a Governing Body of five members chosen by him. This Governing Body (Board of Directors) has the responsibility of ensuring that the foundational objectives are met.

After the nuns returned to their homeland, various religious communities were hired to manage the school until 1990, when the Governing Body of the foundation decided to leave the responsibility of managing the school to secular people.

Fundación Colegio Santa María is a private legal institution, of a Canonic origin, which, due to its very particular legal essence, can receive donations to support its different projects. It has its own statutes and its goods belong exclusively to itself, not to its founders or administrators.

Today, the foundation has two complementary educational institutions:

- **Colegio Santa María:** Catholic school for girls, bilingual, grades K4 to 11th, Colombian B calendar. (School year running from August to June).
- **Centro Santa María:** Catholic school for boys and girls, grades K4 to 5th, Colombian A calendar (school year running from February to November).

Each of these schools has its own educational program, and academic autonomy. However, both share the financial, administrative and logistic resources of the foundation.



Colegio Santa María is a Colombian, bilingual, Catholic school for girls. It is a community that wants its members to receive a solid, well-rounded education with a Christian orientation, in order to fulfill their life plans and contribute to a better society. Its educational role is oriented towards the accompaniment of the formative processes of girls who are to assume important responsibilities in society.

Aware of the current world's needs, the academic program develops a high quality learning which involves an approach that takes into account people and their multiple relationships; this leads to a process characterized by alterity, which means the ability to let oneself be transformed by others, without losing one's identity. Within a framework which aims at developing:

Catholic principles.

Knowing-Doing-Being through discovering.

International Curriculum (Cambridge Assessment International Education).

Teaching for Understanding framework.

Global Citizenship.

Intercultural competence.

It is the school's belief that an educational approach oriented towards discovery and understanding will expand their world vision and their ability to live in today's world and transform it. Understanding is a continuous essential process to human beings, through which assimilation of reality takes place, enabling the process of making sense of that reality.

¹In Colombia, grade 11th corresponds to grade 12th in the U.S.

1.2 Guiding Statements

Mission

Colegio Santa María, through a solid, demanding, and well-rounded formative process, contributes to the construction of a more just and compassionate society, based on Catholic principles, within a global context.

Vision

By 2027, the CSM will be recognized and chosen for:

- Being a cutting-edge institution, open to the novelty of a changing world and supported by technological advances; ensuring an inspiring and empowering learning environment for its students through knowledge and research, to promote significant changes in its community and surroundings.
- Promoting a culture of care that facilitates understanding of the individual and collective needs of its students, as well as respect for their dignity as individuals to ensure the well-being and growth of the entire community.
- Educating the entire community in environmental care, resource management, and social responsibility, to lead sustainable transformation processes in the local and global context.

Values

- **Respect.** We educate our students in respect for interracial, ideological, and gender differences, educating them in a modern multicultural social context.
- **Integrity.** We educate women in values and principles regarding appropriate interaction and behavior, who always seek to do the right thing and act according to the well-being of the community.
- **Honesty.** Our commitment is to educate women who are empowered and visionary leaders characterized by respect for good manners and moral principles.
- **Solidarity.** We support good causes. We educate altruistic students who care about helping those who need it most without expecting anything in return.

1.3 Formative purposes

- **Catholic formation process:**
As a Catholic educational institution we promote a deep respect for life and promote the development of all the faculties of the human being. We seek to promote excellent comprehensive training in every way, with an emphasis on permanent improvement; privilege the construction of a community based on Christian values, especially in respect for difference; attend to the needs of the less favored and commit ourselves to the environment and the community.

- Discovery and understanding approach:

Our educational proposal must respond to the needs of the context in which we find ourselves and the emerging demands of a globalized world. To this end, the school offers a rigorous, multilingual academic program, with a curriculum focused on understanding, which encourages the development of critical thinking, communication and social skills. Additionally, we offer multiple complementary opportunities that allow us to explore different ways of approaching the world and expression and develop a taste for knowledge and inquiry.

- Educating girls and young women:

Emphasizing the primary role that women have in the promotion, defense and care of life and education of the family, we seek to contribute to the Catholic formation of competent, responsible and committed women who find their personal fulfillment in the transformation of society from any profession and life option they choose.

1.4 CSM Student Profile

Spiritual Dimension: There is harmony between the mind and spirit because the student is able to see, feel and act according to the discernment of the community in the light of the Gospel. **Committed –**

Living Solidarity - Responsible: The student is committed with her educational process and is supportive to community building through her outstanding responsibility and social sensitivity, and has an entrepreneurial spirit towards changing the world and supporting her immediate surroundings in creating life projects.

Inquiring. She is intellectually driven and autonomous from the different dimensions of knowledge by seeking answers to current issues in a way that is always respectful to others.

Daring – Self- Motivated: She is open minded to change and contemporary tendencies from a perspective that values others positively.

Courageous - Fair - Balanced: Learns, respects and distinguishes different ideologies and criteria in other members of society in order to build her own principles, challenging anything that is degrading to human dignity

Leader: She has the ability to take an active role in organizations, leading teams and other social groups, adapting to diverse personal and collective characteristics.

Endowed with Social Skills: She has critical thinking abilities, collaborative intelligence and empathy towards others.

Communicator – She has sufficient communication abilities and skills in oral and written Spanish as well as in modern languages such as English and French.

Model Citizen (global – digital) – She is fully compliant with society rules and promotes citizen rights

and duties through example, justice, and obedience.

Upstanding – She is responsible for her personal care by seeking activities that benefit her welfare and the quality of her life.

Responsible for the Environment – She develops a responsibility towards preserving and respecting the environment in a way that is rigorous, well grounded and aware.

Lively - Sensitive She has an outstanding sensitivity towards different artistic and cultural expressions and participates in them.

1.5 Global Citizenship

CSM understands Global Citizenship as a way of life that enables a student to commit herself in an active way with the local and global contexts through:

- Catholic Principles
- Respect for diversity
- Leadership in contextualized problem solving
- Sustainable lifestyle
- Intercultural competence -Digital citizenship

The curriculum offered is varied, rich in options and opportunities to explore the diverse fields of knowledge in various languages and develop different skills, as crucial elements in today's global and connected world. This is why intercultural competence is the main ability the students are willing to develop throughout their school life. In that way, CSM considers this competence as the ability to perform effectively through different cultures, thinking in a coherent way, working and communicating confidently with people from different cultural backgrounds, whether in one's own country or abroad. This competence is essential to being able to participate actively in a world which is more globalized every day.

It implies various components:

Attitudes:

- Curiosity
- Respect for diversity
- Openness
- Discovery
- Appreciating what's different
- Conscience of what is gained through cultural exchange programs

Knowledge:

Conscience of one's own culture

Identity

Values

Beliefs

Abilities:

Observation

Analysis

Listening

Evaluation

Finding connections with one's own culture in the realms of economics, technology, forms of government, and social organization.

In relation to technology, we understand the importance of providing the tools, environment and learning opportunities to respond to current needs. We foster in our students an awareness process towards the management of norms, rights and responsibilities at the digital level. For CSM, Digital Citizenship refers to the Group of norms and good citizenship practices that are made visible in the way of acting of our students in different digital environments that are constantly changing. In this sense, it involves rights, responsibilities and opportunities to interact in a globalized, connected and digital world.

2. Process Management System

The Processes Management System organizes and defines the activities and those responsible for the integration and interaction of the different work areas. It is the basis for the school Strategic Plan's development and it is aligned with the CIS domains. In the same way, it establishes objectives, actions and management indicators for each macro process and domain, in order to monitor and evaluate compliance with what was planned.



- Strategic Direction

It is the reference framework for the CSM guiding statements principles (mission, vision, values, strategic intent) in a manner that is coherent and sustainable for all members of the community. It is aligned with Domain A: Purpose and Direction, and Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership.

- Academic Management

It guarantees high quality learning by articulating national and international curriculums and responding to the Guiding Statements that are referenced School PEI. It is aligned with Domain C: The curriculum, and Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning.

- Pastoral Care

It guarantees the students' protection, safety and well being as the basis for high quality learning. It is aligned with Domain E: Well-being

- Human Talent Management

It maintains personnel competent and motivated in order to fulfill the objectives set in the school PEI. It is aligned with Domain F: Staffing.

- Infrastructure And Service Management

It guarantees that resources, services, and facilities supporting the CSM mission are provided. It is aligned with Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems and auxiliary services

- Communication and Alliances

Its main objective is to strengthen the CSM image based on an internal and external communication system that allows visualizing and understanding its Guiding Statements. It is aligned with Domain H: Community and Home Partnerships.

3. Our educational approach

Within our educational ideas, we strive to learn to understand ourselves, and the world we live in, enabling us to face reality and give meaning to it. A fundamental academic principle is to acquire understanding to build and transform ourselves and the world. Our goal lies in providing the necessary contributions so that everyone may:

- Embrace the development of character and core values throughout our lifetime. • Develop a strong core value system that will enable them to face any challenge independently and with self-confidence.
- Acknowledge that integrity and balance should define their sense of self, and rule our lives Based



on the special meaning that we have given the word *formation*, we acknowledge a particular teaching style that characterizes our pedagogical task. Since our ultimate goal is to contribute to the students' development of broad and deep comprehension skills, we focus our daily duty on teaching to discover; this means, we motivate in students their sense of amazement which should help them see what they are, what they want to be and what is around them. In that way, we consider that our pedagogical approach focuses on three basic aspects:

Teaching to appreciate: Teach to discover the value of our being, as sons and daughters of God, and all the blessings and gifts of talents we have been given, inspiring a sense of constant awe toward God's generosity. This teaching method essentially:

- Exemplifies living through Catholic values
- Sets that the strength of character or core values provides the means to achieve self-fulfillment.
- Sets that the ethical standards based on the teachings of the Gospel provide guidance and meaning to our existence.

Teaching to inquire: Guide the sense of discovery through the formulation of questions that enable students to develop a sense of ownership in their lifelong learning process, as well as to develop self assessment, and search for solutions to address difficulties. This teaching method essentially:

- Values understanding and skill development
- Brings together the different content areas into a meaningful unity,
- Conceives research as the means to acquire knowledge,
- Favors learning different languages and cultures, emphasizing the importance of learning English,
- Stimulates debate.
- Integrates the use of digital and technological tools to promote learning.

Teaching to build a community: Teaching how to recognize in others characteristics that resemble those in us, in order to develop healthy relationships, and aiding us to accept our role in building God's kingdom. Enabling us to value others, realizing that who we are is greatly defined by how we see and act toward others; embracing the differences as a key principle for coexistence and peace; and becoming active promoters of transformations that fight disinterest and apathy. This teaching method essentially,

- Values interactions that enrich our vision and understanding of the world.

- Conceives respect as the basis for democracy, peace, freedom and social justice. • Strengthens community spirit, exalting service towards others and the acceptance of different points of view.
- Contributes to the creation of citizens with critical thinking skills that allow for independence, freedom of ideals, concern for others, and the exercise of all rights and duties established within the community.
- Understands the limits of freedom based on the respect toward the rights and duties of fellow citizens.

4. CSM Teacher Profile

A CSM teacher:

- Is committed to the protection, welfare, and integrity of every student.
- Understands that his/her main role is that of promoting the positive development of others, through his/her own attitude towards discovery and questioning, worldview, mastery and expertise in the corresponding field of knowledge and in pedagogy.
- Pushes his/her students to transform, reconstruct, and internalize the attributes, which define global citizenship, in order for them to achieve high-quality learning in a critical, active and responsible manner.
- Is in a permanent search for the synthesis of faith, culture and life, which enables him/her, through his actions and teachings, to be a living testimony of the values inspired by the Gospel, which favor the full development of every member of a community and foster a peaceful coexistence with others and with the environment.
- Is responsible for his/her personal growth, being a model of the same virtues he/she expects from the students.
- Is a role model, with respect to life within a community, commitment to the school, personal growth, intellectual rigor, passion for knowledge, and search for the truth.
- Is a generator of permanent reflection about the different ways by which understanding can be achieved, and about the ways by which one gains ownership of oneself and of the world; is

constantly asking, challenging, demanding, formulating new problems to solve.

- Is an expert in his/her field of knowledge, and in pedagogy; demonstrates an attitude characterized by openness, innovation, and a passion for learning and research, which enables him/her to be permanently updated in his profession.
- Is skilled at promoting and developing teamwork.
- Sees mistakes as an opportunity to generate actions.

5. School Governing Body

5.1 The Archbishop of Bogotá

The archbishop of Bogotá, will be the patron of Fundación Colegio Santa María and he will be the maximum authority in and will execute by him or his delegates the inspection, invigilance and control of the Foundation, so it keeps its purpose.

The Foundation will have the next management boards, administration and control according to the attributions each one of these boards have been assigned in the statutes:

- School Board.
- Executive Director – Legal Representative..
- Fiscal Auditor.

5.2 School Board (Fundación Colegio Santa María)

The statutes establish in a clear and concise way the functions, responsibilities and limitations of the School Board. The School Board in Fundación Colegio Santa María will be composed by the delegate from the Archbishop of Bogotá, who will preside, and by four members who will be designated by the Archbishop of Bogotá by periods of two (2) years, with the possibility of being removed by the nominator at any moment or reelected indefinitely. The silence of the nominator implies the reelection of the members for the coming term.

5.3 School Council (CSM)

It is a participation and communication instance formed by representatives elected by each school area: directives, staff, students, parents and alumni conforming to the legislation and the bylaws of the associations represented. Their mission is to gather information about the opinions these areas have on general interest topics and serve as a communication channel among the areas themselves. This is the maximum instance of appeal of decisions made within school.

5.4 Head of School

Has the direct responsibility of the academic operation in the school.

Dependency: Executive Director.

5.5 Executive Director

The Archbishop of Bogotá, having previously consulted the members of the School Board, designates it. He/she is the Legal Representative of the Foundation and his tenure is indefinite. In the performance of his/her duties, the Executive Director will be subject and must act in accordance to his faculties and limitations contained in the statutes, to the decisions made by the School Board and the guidelines for the accomplishment of the foundational goals imparted by the Archbishop of Bogotá.

5.6 General School Board: it is the committee formed by the school administrators (Head of School, Financial Director, Continued Improvement Director and Heads of School Divisions) in charge of guiding the actions of the different school sections according to what is established in the Institutional Educational Project.

5.7 Student Council. It is the school committee elected every year to promote and guarantee an ongoing participative exercise by students. It is regulated by the bylaws endorsed by the school administration. It represents students in the School Board and promotes respect and partnership among students in an environment of responsibility and academic endeavour; it also assists the school in its community actions. It is made up of K-11 students elected in each class at the beginning of the academic year. These students must have an excellent academic and disciplinary performance, and must have been students at Colegio Santa María for at least one year.

5.8 Parents Association at Colegio Santa Maria. It is the instance that gathers parents who want to become involved voluntarily through the payment of an annual fee. It is guided by the current law regulations for this type of association.

5.9 Alumni Association. It is the instance formed by the alumni that voluntarily chose to join the association. It encourages the bonding and love for the school. It promotes closer relationships among alumni through different activities and offers moral and material support for its members while being faithful to the Catholic Principles learned in the school. It is guided by the current law regulations for this type of association. Alumni membership will pay an annual fee approved in the general parents assembly.

6. Infrastructure

Colegio Santa María is a six-hectare campus located in Usaquén, one of the Bogotá's Northern districts. The campus houses the two schools (CSM and Centro Santa María) both of which are part of Fundación Colegio Santa María. In 2015 the School purchased the Francisco Spinelli Centre, a former nursery school located across the street from the main campus, currently used by the CSM community for meetings, seminars, and outreach activities to promote learning and well-being.

Based on the School's Construction and Infrastructure Master Plan, the School undertook major improvement actions between 2013 and 2018, such as: The rebuilding of the multisport gym, the arts centre, the cheerleading training centre, a chapel, and an open waste management area; the remodeling of the administration building, coliseum, ICT laboratories, dining hall for 500 people, pathways, fences, a new auditorium, a multipurpose room. The school also has a green area of 38,000 square meters, with soccer fields and volleyball courts, all of which is surrounded by mature native shrubs and trees.

The entire CSM campus facilities comprise eight building blocks, including the new CSM Arts Centre completed in 2018, a building (664 square meters) which has six rehearsal music rooms, two music classrooms, as well as theater and dance classrooms.

7. Communication

Communication at CSM is conceived as a primary source for the positioning and evidence of institutional values. In this sense, it is essential to promote an environment of respect, opportunity and transparency that governs, in the first place, the interaction of the members of the school's educational community and, secondly, the use of the established dissemination and communication channels for the solution and effective response to concerns and needs.

Internal communication is determined by the interrelation of the school staff, which can be ascending or descending according to the different hierarchical levels of the school and with the regular channels and procedures established for each case. There are billboards and digital media located around the school campus as a dissemination channel for all the staff.

External communication, on the other hand, is defined based on the CSM's relationship with its stakeholders and / or key audiences (suppliers, authorities, schools, allies, associations, nursery schools, potential parents, etc.) with a focus on its positioning and reputation. The Communications Department and the school's leadership team, are responsible for keeping stakeholders and the community informed about all the relevant and determining aspects for the proper functioning of the school and the fulfillment of its mission.

All decisions of the CSM that are of general interest are communicated in different formats, such as newsletters, notices, communications, publications and messages, disseminated through email, Phidias platform and the school's website, according to the needs that might arise. Likewise, training, talks and workshops are carried out in which key messages and guidelines are transmitted, in addition to positioning the school as a leader and expert in educational issues.

Official channels:

- E-mail is the official means of communication between CSM and the school community.
- The school's website is the ideal communication channel from a corporate point of view. On it, important school aspects of the school are published such as news, daily events, recognition of people and activities, as well as institutional information, methodology and academic proposal, philosophy, guiding principles, alliances, curriculum, admissions, cafeteria, history, payments, among others. Some sections are interactive and allow users to access more information and perform specific procedures.
- The Phidias platform is the information and registration channel for students, parents and school staff. Through this channel, it is possible to carry out procedures, follow-up, obtain statistics and have a clear traceability of the entire CSM community.
- Official social media, such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, are tools for communication and dissemination of events, news and initiatives of the school, having previously analyzed their potential impact.