

## Stella Maris College's Magna Carta

*A Christian Brothers' school in Edmund Rice's tradition.*

The aim of this Magna Carta is to inspire all of us in our educational community to share the vision of a true Christian spirit of community. Its objective is to improve the education we provide. It recognises the importance of sharing a common mission with everyone in our educational community, it emphasises the educational process of our students and prioritises the construction of an educational environment that supports the learning process.

While this document inherits a tradition that started in 1955, it also looks into the future by providing the ground rules that will allow the college to measure its mission and its performance, and to outline its priorities. It will be used for continuous assessment, to celebrate our accomplishments and to acknowledge future needs.

Following the Congregation's spirit of adaptability and redefinition in the face of an ever-changing world, we set five essential objectives to ensure a coherent practice:

- To nourish the faith, the Christian spirituality and the values of the Gospel.
- To promote teamwork within our educational community.
- "Ad Astra" in teaching and learning.
- To create an educational community steeped in solidarity.
- To inspire transformational leadership.

1. To nourish the faith, the Christian spirituality and the values of the Gospel.

Faithful to Edmund Rice's tradition, and together with our students' families and their parishes, our colleges seek to provide and develop a Catholic education that cultivates a living faith, fosters our students' Christian spirituality and educates them in the values of the Gospel. These experiences are the foundation of our educational community.

Stella Maris College aims to:

- 1.1 Invite our students and educational community to be transformed by God

The main purpose of our College is the evangelisation of our students and of all the educational community. The ministry of Catholic education entails bringing Jesus' Good News to our lives and culture. Jesus' life was transformed by the Holy Ghost and His close relationship with God. Jesus invites us to be His disciples every day – to walk with Him, to see the world through His eyes, to respond with God in our hearts. We aim to educate citizens who are aware of God's presence in their lives and are willing to lead a coherent and committed Christian life.

## 1.2 Seek to fully develop every student's personality

We believe that the educational process involves providing opportunities for our students to fully develop their personalities as we all are unique individuals who are loved by God. This means that we pay special attention to the cultivation of our God-given talents. It also means that we strive to teach our students to understand that our talents are gifts which are not just ours to use for our own personal success but that we need to put them to the service of others.

## 1.3 Promote a compassionate spirituality steeped in solidarity.

Our goal is to support our students' growth as members of the community. Together with our students' families and their parishes, we aim to cultivate and foster a compassionate Christian spirituality steeped in solidarity. The Eucharistic life of our community is a nourishing expression of our shared faith. We seek to ensure that our pastoral aims penetrate all areas of our students' education during the students' lives at our college.

## 1.4 Foster a living faith through the commitment to social and ecological justice

We understand the need to improve and expand social advocacy projects that will help our students to comprehend, experience and contribute to transforming the reality of those who suffer from social injustice.

Our concern with social justice is directly linked to our concern with ecological justice. Education leads people to feel responsible for their connexion with nature. It inspires them to live in harmony with Creation, to respect and look after the environment, to worry when it is threatened with destruction, and to become fascinated with the wonders of the universe. We celebrate the gifts of Creation that we received from God and we express our gratitude to Him in our prayers and liturgy.

## 2. To promote teamwork within our educational community

Teamwork at Edmund Rice Schools promotes the sense of belonging, mutual respect and inter-dependability which allow the development of the college as a community where we foster personal growth.

Stella Maris College aims to:

### 2.1 Build a community

We strive to be an inclusive and participative community where people can become actively involved, develop a sense of belonging, contribute and be consulted about the way to go. Teamwork allows all of our community to grow within a broad vision of education.

## 2.2 Work together with parents.

We consider parents to hold the main responsibility in the education of their children and they play a fundamental role in our educational community. Continuous consultation and communication between the college and our students' homes, the active participation of parents in their children's education, and their involvement in specific school activities are essential to create lasting bonds between our students' homes, the college and the local community.

## 2.3 Interact with other communities

We seek to collaborate and interact with different communities and local organisations that are essential to life in our college. Our school maintains strong links with different educational, cultural and sports organisations, as well as religious institutions, charities and social justice advocacy agencies.

## 2.4 Strengthen the links to the Congregation of Christian Brothers

We value our links with the Global Edmund Rice Network and we seek to help the Congregation fulfil their commitments with the rest of the countries in the Latin American Region.

## 3. "Ad Astra" in teaching and learning

The Edmund Rice Schools are committed to demanding the best from themselves in everything they undertake and in every aspect of teaching and learning.

Stella Maris College aims to:

### 3.1 Focus on "committed" teaching and learning

We deem excellent those who strive to do their best according to their abilities. It's not about being the best but rather the best you can be stemming from your own self-awareness. Thus, we optimise academic performance tapping into the motivation and the willpower that push a person to learn.

### 3.2 Develop inspirational and innovative methodologies

We seek to establish clear aims and offer innovative teaching and learning experiences that are also well-balanced and meaningful. This educational model is characterised by its high expectations and the implementation of regular assessment and self-assessment. It creates

an educational environment that respects and facilitates the development of different intelligences as well as different learning styles. It generates flexible and holistic assessment tools to adjust teaching to learning. An orderly, safe and warm learning environment allows the college to attain significant achievements in every educational dimension.

### 3.3 Educate body, mind and soul in a bilingual environment

Since its foundation our school has been a Catholic college offering education in two languages (Spanish and English). To learn in two languages requires an extra effort from each student but allows them to participate in today's world more successfully as well as contributing, together with other languages, to the expansion of their cultural and intellectual horizons.

At the same time, our college has always stressed the importance of sports and exercise and their contribution to building team spirit and the development of healthy bodies and minds.

As well as this, we seek to instil an aesthetic sense in our students and the appreciation of beauty in all its manifestations: music, drama, visual arts and dance.

### 3.4 Be critical of the technological revolution

We strive to incorporate new technologies into our teaching and learning, instilling a critical awareness of how technology is used, and making the most of the creative opportunities it allows as well as the challenges that it poses.

### 3.5 Support our students in choosing a healthy pace of activities

The wide range of extracurricular activities on offer at the College aims to allow our students a deeper exploration of different areas and therefore help them find vocational interests in broader contexts of personal accomplishment. The choice of activities must be both stimulated and guided so that students can experience them in a healthy way without feeling overwhelmed.

## 4. To create an educational community steeped in solidarity

The Edmund Rice Schools stand out for our solidarity towards the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, as well as our commitment to social and ecological justice.

Stella Maris College aims to:

#### 4.1 Develop a sense of community

We instil the sense of community, solidarity and compassion which characterised Jesus' life. These values are reflected in the interpersonal relationships at the college, and in the interactions we have with other institutions, communities and outside agencies. We ensure there are instances to introduce new members of staff to our practices, processes and customs.

#### 4.2 Acknowledge each student as unique and guide them towards their personal growth

We seek to identify our students' individual needs and to provide opportunities for the full development of their talents. We support both our gifted students and our students with special educational needs. We strive to help them to become better people that have good interpersonal relationships. Our effective pastoral support programme meets the needs of every student. At the same time, we encourage our students to take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning, as well as the creation of a warm, healthy and safe environment that makes them feel comfortable and allows them to learn and grow.

#### 4.3 Plant the seeds of an active citizenship

The long road towards becoming an active citizen that seeks social transformation starts at the college in a practical manner. We help our students to grow by means of educational processes that are sensitive to their different stages of development.

#### 4.4 Prioritise the service of others as an essential element in Christian life

A key element in the life of a disciple of Jesus, we seek to promote the service of others through meaningful educational experiences. We provide opportunities for our students and staff to live their faith taking part in service and immersion programmes, seeking to promote the dignity of those who are marginalised in the understanding that the way to social justice is through fraternal charity.

### 5. To inspire transformational leadership

Our educational leaders articulate their vision for our college with Edmund Rice's tradition. They make their vocation for the service of others their priority, inspiring minds and hearts, fostering critical awareness and instilling a model work ethics while promoting a spirit of innovation.

Stella Maris College aims to:

#### 5.1 Promote inspirational leadership

The members of the 'Edmund Rice' Educational Trust - *Asociación Educadora Edmundo Rice* – and the members of the Senior Leadership Team have a clear vision of the future of our college which motivates staff, parents and students to develop, share and own the institutional vision. Their purpose is to inspire the rest of us in the process of transformation inviting everyone to participate actively and encouraging them to experience the vision. This vision must be translated into real measures to transform structures and systems to everyone's benefit. The Senior Leadership Team must be role models and carry out their management tasks inspiring trust and sharing the search for a better future with the community.

#### 5.2 Be critical of today's world

We acknowledge that the postmodern world is fast-paced, complex and insecure, and that the world of work today looks for young people that are flexible and creative, problem solvers and team workers. We are aware that we are preparing our students to be democratic citizens, who are Christian, well-informed and critical. We also seek to develop a set of skills that will not only allow our students to enter a dynamic and flexible world, but also motivate them to transform it into a world of justice and solidarity. Teaching them to be critical of the patriarchal world where we live is a step towards accepting equality between men and women, and it's an example of how justice and solidarity are a practical part of our vision.

#### 5.3 Support the innovative commitment of teaching staff

Each member of our educational community fulfils a leadership role. The creativity that our teachers display in their lessons, in the extracurricular activities and in the wide range of other activities that the school offers, helps us achieve the quality education we aim at. Because we are aware that educational transformation depends on what teachers think and do, we motivate everyone to commit to their own continuous personal and professional development so as to improve their lives and our school's educational environment.

#### 5.4 Ensure that our students develop autonomy and responsibility

We strive to have students who take responsibility for their own behaviour, learning and development; who display leadership skills within the college and in the local community. Our college seeks to support every student in the development of their talents and skills for the benefit of the whole community.