

Here we stand.

*This is our*

**Vision:**

**The FutureSchool Project**



# Here We Stand

It is during times of upheaval and uncertainty, times such as these, that individuals best reveal their **character**, their essence, their core. So it is, too, for nations and cities, organizations and schools. And so it is for this school, our school, St. Martin's Episcopal School. We have faced these challenging times with **clear resolve**, feet planted firmly on the ground, eyes fixed squarely on our **mission**: bringing out the genius and the passion in each and every student. The process has been rigorous and thorough; good planning permits no shortcuts. But we've emerged **strong** and **bold**, confident about our future course. We know who we are. We know where we stand. Here, then, is our **vision**.

# Taking Stock

During the past year, we have engaged in a thorough strategic planning process. We have been inclusive, involving trustees, students, parents, faculty and alumni. We have been realistic, guided by today's marketplace realities and population trends. And we have been right on the cutting edge, filtering our thinking through the prism of today's best practices in education. We have addressed such questions as, "How can we do better what we do best?" "What new programs can be added, consistent with our mission, true to our core?" "How can we best support our teachers—the heart of the school—so that they can best tap the potential and excite the curiosity of every student?" "How can we ensure that those magical teachable moments occur, no matter the time or the place?" And "What will it take to make the best use of our great location in one of America's most magnetic cities?"

Ian Symmonds, a renowned consultant to independent schools across the U.S., served as our guide throughout the planning process.





# The Many Paths to Learning

As our planning evolved and our research unfolded, one fundamental truth became ever more clear:

Students learn in different ways by different means at different times. No two students are alike; no

one teaching method works for every student. Teachers who've truly mastered the craft know and live

this truth, well aware that students are active human beings, not passive predictable robots. What

matters isn't how students learn; what matters is that

they do learn. Our "classrooms," for example, can take

the shape of a climbing wall or a baseball field, a

recording studio or a dance floor. A student can learn

as much from an informal pep talk about teamwork as

a serious discussion of Shakespeare. We don't separate

"class time" from "extracurriculars." It's all integral;

it's all important. When we talk about teaching and

learning at St. Martin's, then, we're talking about

everything we do at every hour of every school day.

To learn about research initiatives which place the learner at the center of the educational process, respecting the different ways in which an individual learns, go to the Project Zero website: [www.pz.harvard.edu](http://www.pz.harvard.edu).







# Staking Our Claim:

## *The Total Human Development Approach*

Our thorough planning process combined with the recognition of the multiple ways that students learn

and teachers teach led us to our unique position: *St. Martin's is the superior independent school in*

*greater New Orleans featuring the Total Human Development Approach.* Seven attributes fall under that

positioning stance. Call them our core operating principles, the foundation of a St. Martin's education.

(See sidebar.) These principles will be reflected in different ways from day to day and year to year, even

from student to student or teacher to teacher. But they will remain the cornerstones upon which we base

our thoughts and our actions. They are sacrosanct; they are fixed; they are firm. They define who we are.

### *St. Martin's Episcopal School's Core Operating Principles*

An intellectually rigorous academic environment

The intentional integration of faith and learning

A community-based approach to learning

A collaborative philosophy which focuses on personal relationships, not power of authority

A balanced preparation for life

An emphasis on life-long learning

Student-led servant leadership

## Our Philosophy in Action

To see how positioning becomes reality at St. Martin's, walk into the new *Coatney Leadership Center*.

See the magnificent oval *Harkness Table* around which students and teachers and leaders from here

and across the country engage in dialogue, equal partners in the learning process. Marvel in *Project*

*Adventure*, a school-based version of Outward Bound, which employs rope-climbing walls and initiative

games to teach character and foster teamwork, essential goals of our *SportsPLUS* program. Observe

the many activities taking place during our *Late Start Wednesday* program, from students collaborating

on a class project to teachers sharing a new teaching strategy. Tune in to our *MusicPLUS* program any

time of day when students gather informally to play

music and shape dreams. Witnessing St. Martin's

philosophy of learning in action is like looking through

a kaleidoscope or hearing a symphony, but remember

our common focus: tapping the talents and exciting the

curiosity of every student.

Harkness is a registered trademark of Phillips Exeter Academy.

To learn more about  
the Harkness table and  
the Harkness method  
of learning:

[www.harknesstable.com](http://www.harknesstable.com)

[www.exeter.edu](http://www.exeter.edu).







# Looking Ahead

We have implemented many exciting initiatives at St. Martin's this past year, and more loom on the horizon.

Our *Headmaster will live on campus*, returning the Van Slate House to its original residential use. We are

creating a welcoming entrance at the heart of our campus where learning, faith and innovation take place. As

part of this re-centering of our campus, we will change our "front door" and even our address. We're developing

a new *Leadership Program* to be held in the Coatney Leadership Center. We are reviewing every aspect of the

*Lower School* to ensure the absolute best learning environment for children embarking upon the lifelong journey

of discovery. We'll be offering *Mandarin Chinese* starting in Fall 2009. We're developing innovative learning

partnerships with *Good Shepherd School* in New Orleans. We'll be hosting seminars and workshops for

educational pioneers from across the country. We'll be exploring ways better to connect with the extraordinary

energy and assets of *New Orleans*. We will continue to build on

our exciting *FutureSchool Project*. Truth be told, we'll also be

creating programs and addressing issues not yet even on our

radar. That is as it should be. While we're fixed in our principles,

we're fluid in our approach.

Our Core Operating  
Principles, the Harkness  
table learning and constant  
access to current data and  
research as we learn is  
The FutureSchool Project.

## On a Personal Note

As Headmaster of St. Martin's Episcopal School, I'm proud to have been a member of this community as we collaborated in laying out our vision for the future. Positive momentum is with us: We've mapped out our unique position in the marketplace, and we are shaping a plan of long-term financial sustainability. ❖ As noted, we believe that students learn in many ways, and I'm a



*Dr. Jeffrey Pratt Beedy*

prime example of that phenomenon. In academic terms, I was a late-bloomer in high school, although I did experience success on the athletic field. It was only later, in graduate school at Harvard, that I became fully immersed in the joys—and theories—of learning. I know how important it is not to give up on a child. As a School, we must ever strive to create the conditions which help young people tap their talents and discover their passions. That's what we're about. Meeting that challenge informs every decision we make, every program we create, and every dollar we spend. ❖ I look forward to working with you in the future as we engage in healthy dialogue and open debate. Together, we can take a great school to even greater heights.

Dr. Jeffrey Pratt Beedy, *Headmaster*

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St. Martin's Episcopal School  
5309 Airline Drive  
Metairie, LA 70003-2499  
Phone (504) 736.9917  
Fax (504) 736.8802  
[www.stmsaints.com](http://www.stmsaints.com)

[www.stmsaints.com](http://www.stmsaints.com)



\*Coming soon! Our new address will be 225 Green Acres Road. Our new front door will welcome you to the center of our learning, faith and innovation.



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