The **mission** of Visible Men Academy is to provide boys with outstanding academic, character, and social education in a nurturing school environment.

The **vision** of VMA is to lead boys toward a realization of their innate strong character – boys who are family oriented, community conscious, and globally aware. Through a firm foundation of intellectual and academic diligence, VMA students are equipped to meet and exceed the expectations of challenging middle and high school environments and are eager and determined to pursue college education. Through the rigorous modeling experience of the Visible Men Success Curriculum, VMA students gain vast exposure to future personal and career possibilities. These combine to cultivate within VMA students an unyielding sense of control over their futures – a critical orientation for lifelong success, personal fulfillment, and family and community contribution.

The **purpose** of VMA is to deliver a high-quality educational experience that meets the specific needs of at-risk elementary school aged boys through the collaborative efforts of administrators, teachers, parents, the broader community, and the students themselves.
QUICK FACTS

• VMA is a tuition-free K-5 public charter school for boys
• In our 7th year of operations, VMA serves over 100 students
• VMA has an extended school day and extended school year to help ensure students achieve grade level success
• 96% of VMA students live at or below the poverty line
• 6% of our students are homeless
• 95% of our students identify as Black, Hispanic, or Multi-Racial with 5% identifying as White
• VMA uses a Two-Generation (2Gen) Whole Child and Family Community School approach & is a member of The Ascend Network at the Aspen Institute

Visible Men Academy Students are our “Suns”

We know they SHINE brightly.

They engage in a rigorous academic program and they are immersed in the study of the VMA Core Values:

Selflessness Honesty Integrity Niceness Excellence

At VMA, our Suns SHINE!

ABOUT VMA

 Academic Highlights 2018-2019
• Our K-2nd graders surpassed their average annual growth goal at 112% in Reading
• Our 3rd-5th graders surpassed their average annual growth goal at 133% in Reading
• Our K-5th graders surpassed their average annual growth goal at 115% in Math

 Academic Highlights Current School Year
• Our Suns continue to grow academically, at their typically impressive rate. On average, our boys have grown 64% in Reading proficiency and 61% in Math proficiency.
That means that, on average, our Suns have already reached the growth level that they were expected to reach in March/April of 2020.
THERE ARE 5 ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS

1. SINGLE-GENDER [ALL-BOYS]
There is emerging and increasingly definitive research that reveals that, when considering boys from lower-income backgrounds, single-gender classrooms and school environments are highly beneficial in the ways they impact student academic and social development. Each of our classrooms is led by teachers who demonstrate outstanding instruction on a daily basis designed specifically to meet the unique development needs of boys.

2. EXTENDED DAY AND YEAR
Our 8.5 hour school day provides staff with an additional 90 minutes of instruction focused on remediation for students that are falling behind academically, as well as enrichment for advanced students that are ready for additional challenges. In order to facilitate the highest level of learning, we have extended the school year from the traditional 180 days to 205 days. The additional days in the classroom include school in session one Saturday per month and three weeks of school added onto the traditional school year. The longer school day and extended school year means that, in all, VMA students spend approximately 32% more time in school than their peers in traditional public schools.

3. DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT
The entire VMA staff utilizes specialized interim assessment tools to monitor and drive the effectiveness of their instruction. Assessments and feedback are analyzed continually through the blended learning platform. Student Assessments will be conducted weekly, monthly and quarterly aligned with the Common Core Sunshine State Standards. Data will be used to determine which standards need to be re-taught and whether the teacher’s scope and sequence plan needs to be revised.

4. VISIBLE MEN SUCCESS CURRICULUM
The purpose of the Visible Men Success Curriculum is to immerse boys in the study of success through the lives of contemporary male role models. This emphasis on success imagery exists to provide boys with vast exposure to future possibility. By expanding school-aged boys vision of possible personal, family, professional, and civic options, the curriculum helps to invest them in their futures. As this attachment strengthens, it increases the likelihood that young boys will make healthy decisions and display good judgment on a day-to-day basis. They are more committed to a constructive present in order to protect a bright future. This is the cornerstone of the Visible Men character development philosophy and approach.

5. AN ADMINISTRATION & FACULTY DEEPLY CONNECTED TO THE UNIQUE VMA MISSION
VMA views this as an indispensable characteristic, as it sets cultural competency and sensitivity as priorities. Our school leaders and teachers constantly strive to understand and appreciate the family, economic, cultural, and social backgrounds of our students, and they are intrinsically drawn to work with our student population. This is and will always be an essential standard for our administrators and teachers.
YOUR GIFTS HELP FUND OUR AREAS OF GREATEST NEED

TEACHERS
VMA teachers are directly connected to our mission. They are passionate and hardworking educators who provide outstanding support or our students. This fund invests in compensation, and professional development to ensure we recruit and retain the best.

S.T.E.M.
VMA’S emerging STEM program focuses on a male friendly, hands on learning curriculum that integrates Science, Technology, Engineering and Math to prepare our Suns to be competitive learners and future workforce participants.

LITERACY
The VMA literacy goal is to ensure every child reads at or above grade level. Investing in literacy initiatives supports our reading curriculum, data-driven instruction and efforts to remediate all readers.

2GEN
VMA uses an innovative whole child and family approach to empower our students and families. This includes the Parent Success Program, Student Groups, the Fatherhood Initiative and the Summer Literacy Program.

THE ARTS
The impact of the Arts on learning is undeniable. VMA strives to ensure that all of our Suns are exposed to visual, performing and expressive arts. The goal is to develop a lifelong curiosity and appreciation for creativity and beauty in the world.

ONLY 50% OF OUR COSTS ARE COVERED BY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING. THE GENEROSITY OF OUR SUPPORTERS FUNDS THE REMAINDER OF OUR EXPENSES. BELOW ARE SOME SAMPLE COSTS FOR VISIBLE MEN ACADEMY THAT YOUR GIFTS WILL HELP US WITH:

$60,000 Teacher Salary
$40,000 Associate Teacher Salary
$30,000 Our 2GEN Whole Child and Family Program
$22,000 Reading Assessment Teacher Training
$20,000 Summer Literacy Programs
$5,000 Science and Arts Field Trips
$1,500 Occupational and Speech Therapy for One Student
$1,000 Basic Classroom Supplies for One Room
THE VISION

Visible Men Academy (VMA) was founded in 2013 with a two-part commitment to address the crisis of underachievement of impoverished boys in America – to be a local school with national impact.

The VMA founding spirit embraces the importance of directly serving our Suns while looking outwardly at the broader challenge and opportunity to impact lives and transform communities.

The VMA commitment…

LOCAL SCHOOL.

The initial and primary VMA commitment is and always will be to serve its students, our Suns, by providing a unique, beneficial, and effective school experience. VMA effects academic, character, and social growth through a nurturing school environment that focuses on whole child development. There are many distinct elements to this, including an emphasis on the VMA Keys to Success, modeling through the Saturday Success program, and delivering a two-generation approach that includes parents and guardians in programming aimed at ending the cycle of poverty in families. Most notably, VMA applies a keen understanding of the many dynamics that perpetuate the crisis and responds directly to these through our deep multi-faceted engagement with our Suns.

VMA has proven the effectiveness of its philosophy and model. Our results reveal remarkable and measurable student growth and a steepening of the trajectory for their school and life outcomes. In order to sustain and deepen our local impact, VMA must grow. The launching point for this growth will be a new state-of-the-art schoolhouse, one that will reflect the worthiness of the deserving students and families it serves. This new VMA building will allow VMA to broaden its reach to serve up to 232 students – doubling our enrollment and multiplying our impact. The new schoolhouse will also enable expanded programming allowing us to increase our enrichment offerings to provide our Suns with the exposure to life-altering discoveries through passion for the arts, athletics, science, technology, and community service, to name just a few essential learning opportunities areas of many.

NATIONAL IMPACT.

The secondary VMA commitment is to improve school and life outcomes for impoverished boys beyond the Sarasota/Bradenton community in which we exist. Sadly, the crisis of chronic underachievement of boys of color exists far beyond our hometown. For this reason, VMA assumes the healthy obligation to contribute to disrupting and ultimately reversing this crisis on a larger national scale. VMA will accomplish this in the following ways:

- Establishing of a Professional Development Center as an integral aspect of the new school site that will become a recognized national hub of leadership, learning, engagement and exchange among professionals in this sector – educational administrators, teachers, social servants, policymakers, and philanthropists.
- Ongoing partnership with Visible Men Solutions, Inc., a separate but closely mission-related 501(c)3 organization that exists for the purpose of amplifying, broadcasting, and proliferating proven VMA philosophies, practices, and discoveries. Visible Men Solutions will focus on effecting national impact and attracting national funding and resources while enabling VMA to faithfully maintain its focus on its ‘local school’ commitment.

This crippling national crisis is desperate for a bold and capable leadership voice of optimism, hope, and transformative results. Visible Men Academy is perfectly positioned to rise to this opportunity. The ultimate goal of the Visible Men vision, manifest through both Academy and Solutions, is to elevate boys and men of color across America and to maximize positive impact.
The VMA Success Curriculum is based on ten Keys to Success, the first of which is DREAMING. It is critical that our Suns re-ignite their childhood gift of dreaming and that they embrace the magnificence of dreaming big, boldly, and with the expectation of making their dreams become their reality. Our school is built on this fundamental principle.

This is our dream - it’s big, bold, and we expect to make it our reality.

Visible Men Academy & Professional Development Center
The VMA motto is Let Your Light SHINE. The school culture is built on an unwavering commitment to setting boys from lower-income communities on a path toward lifelong achievement, family and community contribution, and realization of their great potential. All stakeholders at VMA are unified in the belief that good character is as important as academic achievement.

This belief is evident in the Core Values that define our school culture.