

St. Catharine School Sustainability Plan

Prepared by the School Advisory Board

April 2013

Executive Summary

Introduction

In June 2008, the School Advisory Board adopted a five year strategic plan pursuant to the Office of Catholic Schools guidelines. Over the last year, the School Advisory Board has been involved in updating this plan to set goals and objectives for the coming five years.

With this process, the expected outcome for the on-going planning process is to enable the parish/school community:

- To become more knowledgeable about the quality and potential of its school and the resources available for carrying out its educational mission;
- To provide a basis on which decisions can be made as to the improvements and/or changes needed to fulfill its religious and educational mission;
- To challenge the sense of responsibility of the parish community to implement the recommendations of the study; and
- To lay the foundation for future development activities.

St. Catharine School Mission Statement

The mission of St. Catharine School is to advance learning in a Catholic environment that nurtures growth and values each student.

School Belief Statements

- Faith formation and acquisition of knowledge are essential to lifelong learning.
- The school and parish community foster the school's mission.
- Students learn when actively engaged in a variety of learning activities with multiple opportunities for individual success.
- Each student is a child of God with unique spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs and gifts.
- A student's personal development is nurtured by positive relationships that model Gospel Values.

Sustainability Planning Steering Committee

Michael J. Lumpe, Pastor

Janet L. Weisner, Principal

David Bourke, Chairman, Steering Committee

Mark Quinlan, Community/Parish Nature SubCommittee

Meg Allwein, Catholic Identity/Academic Nature SubCommittee

Pat McJoynt-Griffith, Financial Sustainability Nature SubCommittee

Timeline

- Spring 2012 – School Advisory Board begins process to update strategic plan
- David Bourke, parishioner and parent of three St. Catharine graduates agrees to chair the effort
- Committee assignments made among School Board members, others parishioners and parents are engaged
- Data gathering and processing commences
- November 2012 – Input/commentary gathered from parishioners and school families in an open forum
- April 2013 – Report completed
- Annually – School Advisory Board monitors/reviews implementation of Strategic Plan

Key Outcomes of 2008 Strategic Plan

- Establishment of pre-school to enhance and support enrollment
- Facilities review resulted in repairs & enhancements to the building structure
- Parking lot drop off/pick up revamped for safety and efficiency
- Efforts to stabilize/enhance tuition assistance fund implemented
- Continue to assure financial viability of school
- Establishment of a St. Catharine School alumni data base commenced, though more work needed

Major Initiatives to the 2013 Strategic Plan Include:

Recruitment & Retention

- major theme that encompassed both the Financial Sustainability & the Community-Parish Nature Sub Committees

Goal: Develop a plan to better market the school to sustain and enhance student enrollment providing security to our single largest revenue source – tuition.

- Budget for and engage professional marketing resources
- Develop marketing materials to be disseminated in the recruiting process
- Develop an outreach program to neighboring/prospective parishes – esp. those without a catholic elementary school. This might include the use of “ambassador” families from those parishes to help “market” St. Catharine School in their areas.
- Strategies, to name a few, could include advertising in church bulletins, direct mailing marketing materials to families in other parishes with school-age children, attend any parish open houses to get the word out about our school, continued realtor outreach, outreach to our own religious education families.
- Develop a process to “get the word out” about the academic successes as well as other important developments about our school
- Consider semi-annual newsletter highlighting such things as test results, scholarship recipients, etc.
- Develop the St. Catharine School “brand”.

Extracurriculars

Background:

St. Catharine School has a very strong athletics program for school and parish students in grades 4-8. In addition, the Scouting program at St. Catharine is also well established. A number of extracurricular “clubs” (e.g., art, cooking, etc.) were given a “test-run” in the Spring of 2012 and were well-received. During the Self-Study meeting in November 2012, there was strong parent support for establishing a sustainable plan for non-athletic extracurricular groups. As with all aspects of St. Catharine School, our Catholic faith should be an integral part of these extracurricular groups.

Plan Elements:

1. Find an Extracurriculars “Commissioner” to recruit/organize adult volunteers for each club.
2. Each club must have at least two adult leaders.
3. Extracurriculars would follow a similar “season” schedule as athletics:
 - October-November
 - January-February
 - April-May (adjust as necessary around Easter break each year)
4. Fees for club participation can be charged as necessary in order to cover any cost of materials. These should be determined by adult leaders prior to the launch/sign-up for each club.
5. Because the gym is used extensively by the Athletics program, it is suggested that arrangements be made to use the school cafeteria and church undercroft as the primary locations for extracurricular club meetings.

* New “Extracurricular” board would evaluate and set new charter to determine procedures and process etc.

Club ideas could include (will depend upon adult volunteer interest/availability and student interest):

- Art Club
- Chess Club
- Choir
- Cooking Club
- Drama Club
- Lego Club
- Missions/Service Club
- Photography Club
- Rosary Club
- Science Club
- Writing (Poetry, Journalism, etc.)

Financial Sustainability

- Explore additional fund-raisers to provide funds for tuition assistance fund
- Review balance, annual need and sources of funds in the tuition assistance fund
- Brainstorm/implement other fund raising options to supplement tuition assistance funds
- Continue implementation of alumni data-base composition and out-reach