

Strategic Plan: Laying a Solid Foundation for Our Catholic Schools

Q: Why was a *Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools* necessary?

A: Catholic schools are a vital aspect of ministry to children and their families and require significant financial and human investments of time, talent and treasure. Much like dioceses across the nation, our diocese was tracking challenges with shifting demographics and economic pressures that individual parishes and schools could not address in isolation. Bishop Finn and diocesan leaders knew that the time was right for developing a strategic plan that charted a course for the future.

Q: How did the *Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools* take shape?

A: In 2008, the diocese engaged nationally-recognized strategic planning consultants with experience in Catholic schools. The diocese requested a thorough assessment of: Catholic identity, academics, school finance, governance, marketing and enrollment, development and specific recommendations for each school. The report documents a number of demographic, economic and cultural challenges.

Q: Who was consulted?

A: The consultants interviewed diocesan leadership, pastors, principals and local school board members. Two community listening sessions also informed the process.

Q: Is this plan the product of outside consultants?

A: No. The work of the consultants informed the planning process. The Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools is the unique product of extensive community consultation and collaboration with hundreds of people.

In May 2009, Bishop Finn appointed nine task forces to prepare specific recommendations for a variety of needs. Each embraced their task with an eye toward planning for distinctly Catholic, academically excellent and fiscally stable schools.

A committee of pastors, community advisors and diocesan staff used the work of the task forces to develop the strategic directions. Bishop Finn approved the plan in June 2010.

Q: When does the plan take effect?

A: The plan begins to take effect in the 2011-12 school year. In the current school year, the diocese, parishes and schools will educate the community about the plan. To read or download a copy of the Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools, please visit www.MyCatholicSchools.org.