



School Study Timeline

Spring 2008 - School visitations, meetings with pastors and principals.
Summer 2008 - Research community demographics and analyze school trends.
Fall 2008 - Spring 2009 - Advisory groups meet, host focus groups, and refine strategic directions.
Spring - Summer 2009 - Task forces review plan, recommend ways to implement and strengthen.

School Study Goals

A successful effort will lead to the long-term vitality and viability of our Catholic schools. The ultimate goal is to ensure that schools are:

- distinctly Catholic
- academically excellent
- fiscally stable

June 2009

Strategic Planning for Catholic Schools

Catholic Diocese of Kansas City ~ St. Joseph

TASK FORCES REVIEW PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

A wise and familiar proverb reasons that, *“If you don’t know where you are going, it doesn’t matter which way you go.”*

To strengthen and sustain its Catholic schools, the diocese has spent more than a year studying, listening and imagining ways to help every school reach its full potential. The goal is to ensure distinctly Catholic, academically excellent, and fiscally stable schools for future generations. As the Planning and Steering committees finalized their recommendations, Bishop Finn appointed eight task forces to review the plan and to identify practical ways to convert the goals into action.

“In some cases, I expect, they will affirm the practical recommendations that have already enjoyed strong consensus,” said Bishop Finn. “In other areas, they will begin to complete needed details for a responsible ‘testing’ of the plan, or they may recommend helpful modifications. The input from these task forces will be indispensable to me in making a fully informed decision,” he said.

Effective decisions are based on facts, not just opinions. Task forces already are at work gathering facts that could influence outcomes, testing scenarios and ensuring that the final *Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools* will enjoy the support of the people of the diocese.

Funding Catholic Schools— A universal challenge facing Catholic schools is how to keep schools affordable for all who want to attend, regardless of economic status. Currently, schools are funded through a variety of methods - stewardship, tuition, fundraising, and, in some cases, diocesan subsidies. The strategic plan recommends a unified approach to school funding. The flexible tuition model incorporates parish and diocesan needs-based scholarship grants.

This task force will investigate all aspects of the flexible tuition model. These aspects include: a consistent definition of cost per pupil; timelines for transitioning to the new funding model and, ultimately, the full cost per pupil; the role of parish support; potential formulas and benchmarks for tuition assistance; and the impact of the flexible tuition model on parish stewardship. Because of the complexity and scope of the work, the task force broke into five subcommittees.

Parishes Without Schools - In the parish, Catholics experience the sacramental life of the church. The presence of a Catholic school is a significant ministry that partners with parents to pass on the faith, traditions and beliefs of the church. Whether the parish has a school on the parking lot, is neighbor to a school, or exists in an



Catholic Schools for the Third Millennium Must Be . . .

Distinctly Catholic • Academically Excellent • Fiscally Stable

area of the diocese with no school, the entire Catholic community is asked to offer support of time, talent and treasure. Two task forces are examining the roles of parishes without schools:

- Parishes Desiring Covenant Relationships with Neighboring Schools; and,
- Parishes Offering Financial Support to Schools.

School Board Development - Effective implementation of the plan calls for local school boards to have a meaningful role in strategic planning, development, and marketing the school. The task force is outlining practical means to train and develop local school boards.

Strategic Planning - The Catholic Schools Office is using data gathered in the School Study to begin a process of diocesan-wide accreditation. Our schools currently monitor goals and planning through both state and national accreditation processes. This task force is charged with helping to establish procedures and criteria for diocesan-wide school planning.

Strategic Marketing and Communications - Task force members are considering communications, public relations and media strategies to enhance the image of Catholic education, to increase enrollment, and to reach out to the Hispanic community. The end result will be a diocesan school marketing plan and a framework to assist local personnel as they develop local school marketing plans.



Development - With a goal to increase funding and to inspire broad-based support for Catholic schools, the task force will identify resources to help schools forecast a development plan. Plans will focus on growing endowments, maintaining contact with alumni, and building relationships.

Diocesan Fund Development - The *Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools* challenges the entire community to serve children in locations where the economics impede offering academically excellent, distinctly Catholic, and fiscally stable programs. This work group will identify strategies and structures to ensure that schools are accessible to families without regard for economic means. Components of the diocesan effort will incorporate the Central City School Fund and include a fund for families to turn to when local parish grants are exhausted.