

# **VISION FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

## **DIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY-ST. JOSEPH**

The Bishops of the United States have stated clearly the importance of Catholic schools for the future of the Church and society. They have reminded us that Catholic schools provide “an education that no other school can supply – excellent academics imparted in the context of Catholic teaching and practice.”<sup>(1)</sup>

The following statements give a vision for Catholic schools as we hope they will be in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph now and in the future. The strategic plan will then provide a path to the realization of this vision for all Catholic schools in the Diocese.

### **A. Distinctly Catholic Schools**

1. Teaching in the school is based upon the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Scripture, Catholic virtues and moral values. Doctrine and tenets of the faith are well taught and deeply integrated throughout the curriculum. Doctrine and faith are evident in all aspects of school life.
2. Each school provides regular opportunities for prayer, worship and reception of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. Students are encouraged and assisted to develop life-long habits of prayer.
3. A vibrant faith community is present at each school and that community is connected to and relates well with the parish community.
4. Each school is an effective vehicle of evangelization and ongoing faith formation.
5. The centrality of the family is recognized. Efforts are made to evangelize parents and to support and involve them in the spiritual and academic formation of their children.
6. A clear mission that is Catholic and Christ-centered guides each school. The entire school and parish community understand the mission and work together to carry it out.
7. Graduates know and understand the teachings of the Catholic faith. Their world view is shaped by Catholic teaching and moral principles.
8. Teachers and administrators have a strong personal faith whereby they give witness to the Christian life and integrate Catholic teaching into all subject areas.
9. While maintaining a strong Catholic identity, Catholic schools welcome students of other faiths.
10. Schools across the Diocese serve a diverse population in terms of ethnicity, race, economic status, background and ability. Enrollment reflects the diversity of the parishes and local community served by the school.
11. All parishes value Catholic schools as an important ministry of the Catholic Church of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph and accept their responsibility to support Catholic school education.
12. Parishes and schools work collaboratively in a strong supportive relationship.
13. Students and their families are active and involved in their local parish.

## **B. Academically Excellent Schools**

1. Schools provide a superior comprehensive academic program.
2. Graduates have acquired an appreciation for life-long learning. They possess the skills necessary for critical thinking, moral decision making and team work.
3. Every elementary school and high school maintains accreditation by the Missouri Nonpublic School Accrediting Association and the North Central Association. Schools are recognized in the community as academically excellent Catholic institutions with a rigorous curriculum.
4. Early childhood centers maintain accreditation by North Central Association or National Association for the Education of Young Children.
5. Learning needs of students are met through differentiated instruction, a variety of teaching strategies and creative methods. Objective measures of student growth and achievement verify this.
6. All teachers and administrators are certified, demonstrate excellence in their profession and are faith-filled role models committed to the mission of the school.
7. Up-to-date technology and current educational resources are used effectively by all teachers to enhance teaching and learning.
8. Each school has an effective school board whose members have the necessary expertise and training to provide leadership and support for the school, school administration, and pastor.

## **C. Fiscally Stable Schools**

1. School facilities are of high quality and fully sufficient to support a superior educational program. Each school campus is safe, attractive, clean and in good repair.
2. Revenue for schools grows to improve and sustain a vision for superior education.
3. Catholic schools are affordable for parishes and parents who desire a Catholic school education for their children.
4. All parishes contribute to the financial support of diocesan Catholic schools.
5. Stewardship is well understood and practiced in local faith communities. Stewardship is far more than a means of funding ministry; it is a life changing commitment of time, talent and treasure.
6. Every school has an effective development/advancement program that complements stewardship in the local parish. Donors increase in number and in their generosity to the mission of Catholic education.
7. Every elementary school and high school maintains an enrollment capable of supporting a high quality program.
8. Teacher compensation is sufficient to attract and retain qualified, excellent teachers.
9. Every school operates with a balanced budget and practices good business management. Schools are openly accountable for use of funds.

<sup>{1}</sup> *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*, “Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium”, 2005.