



Lighting the Path to Our Future
Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools

Diocese of Joliet

Catholic Schools Office
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I. INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2008, the Diocese of Joliet began a strategic planning process to determine the current situation of its Catholic schools and develop a comprehensive plan to ensure their continuing Catholicity, excellence and availability. The services of Meitler Consultants were engaged to direct the planning initiative. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet, as elsewhere, are facing many challenges. It is commendable that the Diocese has chosen to be proactive in addressing these challenges.

Catholic schools have a strong and successful tradition in the Diocese of Joliet educating and forming young people in the Catholic faith and preparing students to be contributing members to our Church and world. In concert with the commitment of the U.S. Catholic Bishops to, “revisit and reaffirm our commitment to Catholic elementary and secondary Catholic schools as invaluable instruments in proclaiming the good news from one generation to the next,”¹ the Diocese of Joliet is committed to ensuring the continuing excellence and availability of Catholic schools whose “mission is vital to the future of our young people, our nation and, most especially, our Church.”²

During the planning process, statistical data from many sources in the community, the Diocese and the schools was collected and analyzed. On-site visits to each of the elementary schools and interviews with pastors, principals and other church leaders were conducted. In addition, the consultants met with high school presidents and principals. The information gathered provided insight into the current challenges the schools are facing, served as a resource throughout the planning process and formed the basis for the plan recommendations which follow.

A Planning Committee was formed comprised of representatives from across the Diocese and appointed by Bishop Sartain. They met regularly with the consultants to review the data and its implications and to make recommendations. Leadership from all the schools in the Diocese participated in several rounds of consultation and discussions, and as a result the plan was shaped. As a component of the planning process, an online Community Engagement Survey was conducted in the fall of 2009 for parents, staff, students and parishioners. Survey results helped to form and shape some dimensions of this plan. Results are provided in a separate Survey Report.

Knowing the vital role that Catholic schools have in the Church’s educational mission, Bishop Sartain states:

“We must never forget: Jesus Christ is the reason there are Catholic schools. We must be about moving from ‘I’ to ‘we’: each of us has concerns about our parish, our school. But from today forward we must have concern for “our” parishes and “our” schools. If we do not, no amount of planning we do will successfully guide us to fulfill the true goal of Catholic education.”³

It is hoped that this overall plan will ensure the viability and vitality of Catholic school education in the Diocese of Joliet for many years to come and that it will serve to motivate all constituents to work together to achieve these goals.

^{1,2}Quotes are from *Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium*, 2005 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Inc

³Catholic Schools Communiqué, Thanksgiving 2008

II. CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement was created by the Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with Catholic school community constituents, Bishop Sartain and the Diocesan Board of Education. This mission statement defines the purpose of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet and serves as the foundation for developing this strategic plan.

Catholic Schools Mission Statement

Jesus commissioned His apostles to teach and make disciples. Mindful of this twofold mandate, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet provide formation in the Catholic faith as well as superior academic education to students of diverse backgrounds. Our Christ-centered education nurtures a personal relationship with Jesus and service to others. Our whole child approach integrates Catholic doctrine, prayer, sacraments, and moral decision-making with academic achievement and physical health. Working in partnership with parents and parish communities, Catholic schools prepare students for success in further education, a productive career and a life eternal with God.

III. A VISION FOR THRIVING CATHOLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

The following statement identifies essential elements necessary to sustain a school's viability over the long term in the Diocese of Joliet.

As the U.S. Bishops remind us, "The Catholic schools' mission is vital to the future of our young people, our nation and, most especially, our Church."⁴ Healthy and vibrant schools for the 21st century in the Diocese of Joliet show clear evidence of the following characteristics or demonstrate the potential to achieve them within a reasonable time.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

1. Each school has a clear and authentic Christ-centered mission which fosters personal pride in the Catholic faith.
2. The school promotes a personal life-long relationship with Jesus Christ wherein students understand and practice the Catholic faith and tradition in its fullness.
3. Elements of faith and Catholic values permeate the entire curriculum and educational program. Prayer, worship and liturgical experiences enhance the faith life of students, families, faculty, staff and volunteers.
4. The Sacraments, especially the weekly Eucharistic liturgy, are the "source and summit" of faith formation in Catholic schools.
5. The relationship between school families and the parish is strong and mutually supportive. The parish and school work collaboratively to provide religious formation, sacramental preparation and opportunities to grow in faith.
6. Principals and teachers are mature in their faith, know God as revealed in the scriptures and church teaching, act as role models to their students and have a sense of being called to the ministry of teaching in a Catholic school.
7. Serving others is a hallmark of every Catholic school. Students are actively involved in service opportunities as witnesses for Christ in parishes, communities and in the world at large.
8. Families from a diversity of backgrounds in terms of ethnicity, race, economic status and ability are welcomed, respected and served. School enrollment reflects the diversity of the parishes and local community it serves.
9. School culture reflects the Church's social justice teachings. The Church's teachings on social justice are taught and practiced at every level and in every classroom. Parents understand and act on their responsibility to raise the next generation of Catholics with a living and active faith in Jesus Christ. Catholic schools are viewed as vital to parents who take this responsibility seriously.

⁴United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium", 2005.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

1. Families served by Catholic schools recognize these schools as equal to or better than other educational options. The school excels academically, meeting or exceeding national standards, state standards, and the diocesan curriculum standards.
2. Instruction is differentiated, teaching strategies are varied and creative methods are used to meet the needs of all students – gifted, average and academically challenged.
3. A “whole child” teaching approach is used. Students are engaged at every level – mind, body and soul.
4. Each graduate leaves school prepared to succeed at the next scholastic level or in his/her life’s vocation.
5. Teachers possess appropriate academic credentials, are professionally competent, actively engaged in ongoing professional development, and dedicated to Catholic school education as a ministry.
6. Technology is updated and available to teachers and students, both in labs and classrooms. Technology is understood as a tool to enhance the educational experience. Technology is also used as an important tool of communication between and among teachers, students, parents, parish, and the broader community.
7. Real world issues are the basis of projects and activities that challenge students to think critically and creatively as they work to solve problems and serve others.
8. Extra-curricular and co-curricular programs that support and enhance the school’s mission and curriculum are offered for students.
9. Parents are involved in the school and valued as partners in the education of their children.
10. Teaching resources are available that enhance the motivation of teachers and the quality of instruction.

LEADERSHIP

1. The Office of the Bishop and diocesan agencies recognize and support Catholic schools as a ministry vital to the future of the Church.
2. The school’s governance, policies and procedures reflect the mission of Jesus Christ, the Church and professional ethics.
3. The Catholic Schools Office provides vibrant leadership for the mission of Catholic education, supporting school leadership and holding them accountable for the religious and academic mission of the school.
4. Pastors provide vital spiritual leadership and promote Catholic schools as an important ministry of the Church and community at large.
5. Pastors, principals and other administrators employ a “servant” leadership model that promotes collaboration and growth of the staff. The community respects staff members as Christian models for students.
6. Principals and teachers of religion, as well as a majority of teachers are committed, practicing Catholics who manifest their rootedness in faith through words and actions. Teachers from

other traditions are faith-filled individuals who respect the teachings of the Catholic Church and present themselves as positive role models for students.

7. Principals possess a diverse skill set required to successfully lead a multi-faceted, complex educational institution in the 21st century.
8. Principals are state certified, highly skilled, professionally competent and participate in ongoing professional development to stay current with educational research.
9. The local school board is knowledgeable about its role, is actively engaged in strategic long-range planning, and operates with a forward-looking big picture perspective.
10. Parents are committed to their parish and school sharing their gifts and talents to further the Church's mission.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

1. Schools have sufficient revenue to fund a quality program, invest in technology and provide enhancements essential to a well-rounded program. School budgets are balanced.
2. Parishes supporting schools teach through word and deed, stewardship of time, talent and treasure.
3. Schools have a mature advancement/development program. Boards are engaged and provide leadership for school development efforts.
4. Catholic schools are affordable for parishes and parents who desire a Catholic education for their children. Tuition assistance is available for many who need it.
5. A school operates with full enrollment – 90% or better of its capacity; thus promoting more program offerings, better stewardship of resources, more affordable education for all and a cost effective staff to student ratio.
6. All parishes make a substantial and long-term commitment to funding Catholic education.
7. Teachers, administrators and staff receive just and competitive compensation and benefits.
8. Facilities are well-maintained, attractive and updated to support current educational programming.
9. Parents of school students, both Catholic and non-Catholic, appreciate the worth of a Catholic education for their children. They value Catholic schools at a level that easily justifies a substantial investment.

IV. CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Catholic identity is essential to the mission of Catholic schools. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet must be authentically Catholic in their teaching and practices and continually strengthen and promote this Catholic identity.

A. Observations

1. Principals and pastors with schools expressed strong commitment to the mission of Catholic school education and its importance in today's society.
2. Students and faculty gather together on a regular basis to celebrate Eucharistic liturgy and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Students are prepared and encouraged to actively participate in the sacramental life of the Church.
3. Religious signs and symbols are prominently displayed in classrooms, corridors and common areas emphasizing the Catholic character of the schools.
4. Some schools operate as an integrated ministry of parish life while others seem isolated with little connection to the wider parish.
5. As the world becomes more secular and our society wanders further from its Judeo-Christian heritage, the Catholic school is more and more distinct in its unique identity with Christ and His Church. Increasingly, Catholic schools need to articulate how they are different from the world, and different from public or non-sectarian schools.
6. There is an awareness and concern among pastors and principals about the differences among schools. Some have strong academic programs, financial positions and newer facilities, while others have limited resources and struggle.
7. Elementary schools are required to use the Faith Formation Curriculum approved by the Diocese. The level of compliance is high.
8. All elementary school catechists are required to participate in and be certified through the "In Service to the Master: Catechist Certification Program." Record keeping and the awarding of certification levels rests with the local school or parish leadership.
9. Each fall parishes celebrate Catechetical Sunday commissioning and recognizing teacher-catechists and their vital role in the faith formation of children. In some parishes, school teacher-catechists share in this celebration along with their parish religious education catechists' counterparts. In other parishes, school teacher-catechists are not involved in this parish celebration.
10. Orientation for all new elementary teachers is conducted annually. A portion of the orientation program is dedicated to the role, responsibility and privilege of serving as a catechist in a Catholic school.
11. The Catholic Schools Office and Religious Education Office enjoy a positive and collaborative relationship. Personnel in each office work to strengthen Catholic identity by providing catechetical training and in-service opportunities, offering resources that support ongoing catechist formation and the teaching of religion. The Youth Ministry Office has an informal and limited role with some high schools.
12. The Catholic Schools Office and Religious Education Office collaborated in the development of the Faith Formation Assessment. This tool is used to evaluate the PreK to 8 Faith

Formation program. Each school is responsible for monitoring the use of this assessment and using the results to strengthen its religious education program.

13. The Diocese does not have a role in the screening, approval or hiring of high school religion teachers or campus ministers. The high school religion program is determined at the local level. The content, number of religion credits and time allocated to the teaching of religion varies from school to school.
14. The local school is primarily responsible for providing opportunities that nurture the spiritual life of teachers. Some schools may provide an annual retreat day for faculty, but it is not a diocesan requirement. In the past, the Diocese offered retreats for teachers and principals. This ended when the number of participants was insufficient to sustain the program.
15. The Diocese of Joliet and the University of St. Francis established a partnership whereby the university provides course work that focuses on methodology for teaching religion. Teachers participate at a reduced rate and course work can be applied toward catechist certification.
16. Online religion course work is available in partnership with the University of Dayton.

B. Goals and Strategies

1. Schools will be identifiable as Catholic and will work with parents and parishes to provide students sound instruction in the Catholic faith and foster a personal and life-long relationship with Jesus Christ in the Church.

Strategies for all schools

- 1.1 Every school will prominently display its mission statement. School leadership will promote awareness and understanding of this mission among students, staff, parents and the broader parish community. The school's mission will inform school policies and permeate all aspects of school life.
- 1.2 Schools will recognize parents as the primary educators of their children and develop specific and meaningful ways to partner with parents and support them in nurturing the faith formation of their children.
- 1.3 All teachers of religion in grades K through 12 will be Catholics in good standing with the Catholic Church. Religion teachers in the elementary schools will actively participate in the diocesan catechist certification program and attain appropriate levels of certification in a timely manner. High school religion teachers will be appropriately degreed.
- 1.4 All principals will be Catholics in good standing with the Catholic Church, active participants in the life of their parish and committed to the school's religious mission.
- 1.5 Principals will communicate the expectation that all school personnel and volunteers act as Christian role models for students.
- 1.6 Catholic social teaching will be taught in an age-appropriate manner across the curriculum and modeled within school life. Meaningful service opportunities for students will be provided. Service learning will be integrated into the educational experience to help students grow in their understanding of how service relates to Church teaching.

- 1.7 All teachers will be offered ongoing opportunities and resources to deepen their personal knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, to build faith community and increase their ability to integrate Catholic teaching and values throughout the curriculum.
- 1.8 To assist in planning for ongoing faith formation opportunities for principals and teachers, consideration will be given to using the NCEA Information for Growth (IGF) self-assessment survey. This tool is designed to assist in evaluating adults' levels of religious knowledge and spirituality.
- 1.9 Ways to heighten student and family awareness of vocation as a call from God will be identified and used to increase understanding of vocations to the priesthood, single, married and religious life. Students will be encouraged to consider a call to a life of service in the Church.
- 1.10 Displays of religious symbols, art work, scripture verses and other visual representations of the Catholic faith will be evident throughout the school environment as reminders of the school's identity and mission.

Strategies for elementary schools

- 1.11 Each school will provide sound instruction in Catholic doctrine and follow the diocesan faith formation curriculum.
- 1.12 Religion will continue to be taught daily in elementary schools and early childhood education centers.
- 1.13 The Religious Education Office will create and distribute to each elementary principal a resource for the blessing and recognition of all teacher-catechists. The resource will be used annually at the local level. Particular recognition will be given to teacher-catechists who have achieved diocesan certification within the past year.
- 1.14 Each school will provide regular opportunities for faculty, students and families to participate in the celebration and reception of the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation as well as in prayer services and activities that celebrate the Church's liturgical seasons. Every elementary school will provide a weekly opportunity for every child to attend Mass.
- 1.15 The Faith Formation Assessment will be administered annually. The results will be used locally and diocesan-wide to identify strengths and correct weaknesses in the religious education program.

Strategies for high schools

- 1.16 The Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Joliet and the principals of the Catholic high schools in the Diocese will collaborate on documenting criteria to be used during the vetting of high school religion teacher candidates and campus minister candidates. Should a prospective hire be deficient in any way regarding the agreed upon criteria, the high school principals would have to either eliminate the candidate from consideration or initiate a conversation with the Superintendent of Schools about an acceptable timeline for the candidate to comply with the standard criteria expected by the Diocese for high school religion teachers and campus ministers.

- 1.17 Each high school will evaluate its course of studies to determine how well students are being instructed in the core curriculum areas identified in the *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age* as published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Moreover, each high school will work toward the goal of having all students complete a four-year, eight semester course of catechetical instruction composed of the six core semester-length subject themes and two additional elective subject themes. Progress toward this goal and assurances pertaining to the academic rigor of religion course offerings will be shared annually by each high school principal with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
- 1.18 A timeline will be established no later than December 2010 for setting criteria (1.16) and for changes to curriculum (1.17). Changes will be implemented beginning in the 2011-12 school year.

2. Catholic schools will be valued as a vital ministry of the Church and recognized as the shared responsibility of all parishes in the Diocese of Joliet.

Strategies for all schools

- 2.1 The Catholic Schools Office, Bishop, Diocesan Board of Education and the Priest Personnel Board will collaborate to reinvigorate clergy regarding Catholic school education. Pastors who thrive in school parish settings will be identified and invited to share best practices and discuss the benefits of a Catholic school in parish life.
- 2.2 Each school will regularly invite and encourage priests, deacons and other parish ministers from the home and neighboring parishes to participate in the school religious education and formation programs as well as in the sacramental and spiritual life of the school.
- 2.3 Principals and teachers will be encouraged to participate in local parish adult faith formation programs as a means to further enrich their faith life.
- 2.4 Each school will identify ways to maintain and strengthen a meaningful connection with the home parishes of its students. A list of best practices will be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and shared with school and parish communities.
- 2.5 School leadership will identify ways to increase the involvement of parents in the faith formation of their children. Parents will be encouraged to attend liturgy weekly and actively participate in the life of their parish.
- 2.6 The parish(es), under the leadership of the pastor, will have the primary responsibility for the evangelization of parents and their children. Catholic schools will be seen as a vital means for achieving this larger goal.
- 2.7 Key statements from the USCCB document, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium*, regarding the value of Catholic schools for the Church and society will be communicated to all parishes. Parish leadership will be encouraged to educate and dialogue with parishioners about implications for their parish.

- 2.8 The value of Catholic schools to the Church and the responsibility of all parishes for this ministry will be integrated into priestly formation and ongoing clergy and pastor in-service programs.
- 2.9 Pastors will be asked to raise awareness of the value of Catholic school education among parishioners and to encourage parish families to enroll their children.

Strategies for elementary schools

- 2.10 School leadership will collaborate with the pastor to consistently identify the school as a ministry of the parish and to increase understanding in the parish community of the ecclesial relationship between parish and school.
- 2.11 Principals will work to strengthen relationships between school and parish leaders. Particular emphasis will be given to collaboration with parish Directors of Religious Education to build mutual support for their shared catechetical ministry.
- 2.12 Pastors will be appointed to parishes with schools who have a passion for Catholic schools and demonstrate the leadership required to further the school's mission.
- 2.13 The school principal, pastor, and other appropriate parish staff will craft a strategy to reach out to parents who are not actively engaged in their faith. Areas of ministry that mutually serve the spiritual needs of the family and school children will be identified and coordinated. School and parish will work together to see each other as part of the same team in this effort to enhance and promote the work of evangelization.
- 2.14 Principals will be members of the parish pastoral staff and will participate as appropriate in staff planning meetings.

3. Strengthening and supporting the religious mission of Catholic schools will be a prime responsibility of the Catholic Schools Office.

Strategies for all schools

- 3.1 A position will be established at the Catholic Schools Office to provide concentrated leadership and support for PreK to 12 religious education programs. Initially, attention will be directed toward developing and facilitating a process to assist high school leadership in transitioning the religion program to meet the USCCB Curriculum Framework.
- 3.2 The person holding this position will collaborate with the Religious Education Office, Youth Ministry Office and other appropriate diocesan agencies to further the faith formation of faculty and students, support principals in their role as spiritual leader and serve as a resource to school communities.
- 3.3 The Catholic Schools Office will collaborate with Catholic colleges and universities in the Diocese of Joliet to identify potential religion teachers and campus ministry candidates.
- 3.4 The Catholic Schools Office will plan and coordinate an annual professional day for elementary and high school educators focused on the religious mission of Catholic schools. A Day of Reflection will be provided elementary and high school principals to support their spiritual leadership role.

- 3.5 The Catholic Schools Office will hold Catholic elementary schools accountable to teach religion the recommended number of minutes each week and Catholic high schools to progress steadily toward meeting the curricular expectations for religion of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as articulated in the Curriculum Framework.

Strategies for high schools

- 3.6 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with the high school principals will establish criteria for hiring high school religion teachers and campus ministers no later than the 2010-11 school year. Subsequently the high school principals will provide the Catholic Schools Office with annual assurances that any new hires in these areas either meet these criteria or are in the process of meeting these criteria on a timeline mutually agreeable to the Catholic Schools Office and the high school.
- 3.7 An ongoing formation program, in-service opportunities and retreat experiences for high school religion department chairpersons and campus ministers will be provided through the Catholic Schools Office, Religious Education Office and Youth Ministry Office or sponsoring religious order no later than the 2010-11 school year.

V. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Catholic schools must be recognized for their academic excellence. The ability to include religious formation as an integral part of all instruction enables Catholic schools to truly educate the whole person.

A. Observations

1. The Catholic Schools Office has a well-developed process to evaluate and update curricula on an ongoing basis. The Director of Curriculum, in collaboration with the Curriculum Advisory Council and teachers certified in the subject area of study, is responsible for the curriculum review process.
2. Parents have high expectations of Catholic schools. They expect schools to offer high quality academic programs for the investment they make in their child's education.
3. Student progress is assessed on the elementary level using a variety of instruments including diocesan curriculum assessments, textbook and teacher-created tests, performance evaluations, teacher observation, student self-assessment and standardized tests.
4. Elementary teachers are required to follow the diocesan curriculum which integrates Catholic values and teachings in all subject areas and is aligned with the Illinois State Learning Standards.
5. Elementary schools administer the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) annually to students in grades 3, 5 and 7. In the fall of 2008, the overwhelming majority of students out-performed other students in the United States in all subject areas (Reading, Language and Mathematics) achieving at the 70th percentile or better. The degree to which standardized test scores are used to enhance teaching and learning varies from school to school.
6. The Catholic Schools Office posts a summary report of standardized testing results on the diocesan website each year. Catholic schools do not publish or compare individual scores.
7. Most elementary schools offer a comprehensive program which includes art, music and physical education. Some schools have a world language offering, while others provide an in-school television studio with live broadcasts to enhance students' communication skills.
8. The number of Hispanic children enrolled in our schools is low in comparison to school-age population growth for this particular ethnic group. Some of these potential new students may have limited English proficiency and may require some instructional accommodation.
9. The number of students with special learning needs, behavioral disorders and social/emotional challenges is increasing. There was an expressed concern that schools vary in the resources they have to meet this growing need.
10. Professional development of teachers varies in form and content. Responsibility for providing these opportunities is shared by the Catholic Schools Office, regional groupings of principals, individual principals and by individual teachers. Generally, school budgets do not provide enough resources to meet professional development needs.
11. All elementary schools and high schools are required to be State Recognized and to participate in the Nonpublic School Recognition Process.

12. Generally, schools have up-to-date technology resources which include computers, LCD projectors, SMART Boards, internet access and school website, etc. In some schools these technologies are available in both labs and in classrooms. Equity is an issue since some schools struggle to secure sufficient funds to support the technology program.
13. Each elementary school has a technology coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for day to day oversight and operation of technology at the local level. The coordinators meet with the Diocesan Technology Consultant on a regular basis to share best practices, access needs, address implementation of agreements, monitor internet safety, and develop/implement the Diocesan Technology Plan.
14. Articulation meetings between elementary feeder schools and high schools have occurred, but not in a sustained way. It is a challenge to make these meetings productive and beneficial for each constituency.

B. Goals and Strategies

- 1. Academic excellence rooted in a strong Catholic identity will be the hallmark of every school enabling it to educate the whole child and distinguishing it as uniquely different from other schools in the community.**

Strategies

- 1.1 Elementary schools will continue to comply with the required Diocesan Curriculum for each grade level and use the Diocesan Assessments for Faith Formation and the academic subject areas.
- 1.2 Schools will offer a complete program including instruction in fine arts, world language, physical education, health & wellness, and Safe Environment.
- 1.3 Schools will offer co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities which are age-appropriate and enhance the spiritual, physical, social, and academic development of the whole child.
- 1.4 All schools will continue to apply for State of Illinois Nonpublic School Recognition and maintain recognition status from year to year.
- 1.5 Standardized test scores (ITBS) and other measures of student achievement will be analyzed each year to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the academic program. Results will be used to identify specific improvement goals.
- 1.6 Progress in addressing improvement goals will be evaluated regularly and based on student achievement, student needs, teaching personnel, instructional resources, and research-based best practices. The improvement plan and an update on its implementation will be communicated to parents periodically.
- 1.7 Principals will continue to conduct teacher performance assessments to ensure quality instruction and to provide ongoing growth and development of teachers as required by diocesan policy.
- 1.8 Each school will be accountable to parents, parish community, and civic community for student achievement. The principal will ensure that general assessment information from the Diocese is appropriately shared.

- 1.9 The Catholic Schools Office will encourage high schools and elementary schools to engage in ongoing articulation meetings to ensure collaboration and curriculum continuity as students transition to the next phase of their Catholic educational experience.
- 1.10 Administrators and teachers will explore partnerships and other ways to create relationships in the wider community for enriched learning opportunities for students.

2. Catholic schools will provide program opportunities for students with a wide range of learning abilities.

Strategies

- 2.1 The Catholic Schools Office, in collaboration with school leaders and teachers, will identify and publish “best practice” instructional models that incorporate research-based, effective teaching and learning strategies.
- 2.2 Administrators will provide the necessary resources and support to implement effective professional development.
- 2.3 Teachers will engage in ongoing professional development that emphasizes effective teaching methods and learning activities to meet the needs of gifted, average and special needs students.
- 2.4 As new immigrant populations enroll, school personnel will assess students’ learning needs, adjust teaching methodologies and provide support services to successfully transition students into the school’s academic program.
- 2.5 Students will actively engage in the learning process. Student feedback will be used as an essential dimension for teaching and learning.
- 2.6 School leadership will actively pursue and utilize all resources available through Federal, State and private funding sources to maximize learning opportunities for students and educators.

3. The effective use of technology will be integral to the instructional program in every school and classroom to support learning goals and provide students a strong technological foundation for future educational pursuits.

Strategies

- 3.1 The Catholic Schools Office, in collaboration with school leaders, will develop a standard set of expectations for teachers to ensure the integration of technology in instruction. A technology component will be included in the annual assessment of teacher performance.
- 3.2 Based on the Diocesan Technology Plan, each school will annually review and assess implementation progress. Each school will provide its annual review to the Catholic Schools Office.
- 3.3 Teachers will continue professional development in the effective use of emerging technologies to foster teaching and learning.
- 3.4 Students will successfully integrate technology into the learning process as demonstrated through a variety of means.

- 3.5 Each school will have a technology coordinator position to assist teachers in technology integration and to efficiently address hardware/software/network issues in a manner that does not disrupt learning.
- 3.6 The school budget at each local school will annually allocate funds to support and improve an effective technology program as outlined in the Diocesan Technology Plan.
- 3.7 Schools will be encouraged to use web-based information systems to share grades, progress reports and other pertinent data with parents.

4. Principals and teachers will engage in continuous professional development that enhances professional knowledge and skills, provides opportunities to engage in dialogue with other educators about instructional practices and is aligned with curricula and assessments.

Strategies

- 4.1 Staff development themes related to school improvement and teacher effectiveness will be identified by each school annually. Teachers will integrate what they learn into instructional strategies that enhance student learning.
- 4.2 Principals will facilitate adult learning in their respective schools by creating structures that engage educators in collaboration about how to improve student achievement, refine existing instructional strategies and introduce new instructional strategies.
- 4.3 The job-embedded model of professional development will be encouraged as a way to empower teachers and build ownership of the educational endeavor. It will include, but not be limited to, peer coaching, mentoring, discussions, study groups and action research.
- 4.4 Administrators will continue to strengthen partnerships with Catholic universities by seeking additional opportunities to increase professional development offerings, including but not limited to, participation in programs leading to endorsements and graduate level degrees.

5. Teachers and students will be motivated to become communities of learners.

Strategies

- 5.1 Project/problem-based learning will focus on relevant, real life issues. Students will engage in long-term, interdisciplinary learning that is integrated with real world concerns relevant to students' lives or communities.
- 5.2 Teachers will utilize research-based instruction to support the learning process.
- 5.3 Students will develop skills to work collaboratively, take initiative, make thoughtful decisions and solve complex problems. Learning projects will be a key component of the curriculum.
- 5.4 Professional development for project/problem-based learning will be provided for teachers.

VI. LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOLS

Strong leadership is a critical factor in successful schools. Implementation of the strategic plan and the future strength of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet will require effective and collaborative spiritual, educational and managerial leadership at the diocesan and local school levels. At the heart of leadership is Jesus Christ who is the true leader and model for leadership.

A. Observations

1. Leadership for the school typically rests with the pastor, the principal and the local school board. Schools are governed parochially in a decentralized model as a part of the local parish mission. This model can be a barrier to the adoption of best practices within the Diocese and can leave some schools to fall behind.
2. Often, an individual school does not have the full complement of personnel required to operate effectively and the principal is left with too many roles (i.e. development director, business manager/finance person, marketing/public relations liaison).
3. Responsibilities and administrative tasks required to maintain Catholic school institutions have grown. The roles of principals and pastors have expanded. To some degree, the roles have expanded beyond principal and pastor expertise and training. The environment Catholic school leaders operate in is more complex. Principals and pastors need to surround themselves with a leadership team, both volunteer and professionals, that possess the full range of skills necessary to effectively manage all the facets of a successful school.
4. The number of Hispanic students continues to increase in the Catholic schools. Qualified educators with a Hispanic heritage are needed as teachers and principals.
5. Sustaining Catholic identity in the schools necessitates recruitment and training of future leaders who are capable of carrying on the religious and academic mission of Catholic schools. The Diocese does not have a formal leadership program. The “Leaders for the Future” program provides tuition assistance for teachers enrolled in a degree program.
6. Three Catholic universities are located within the Diocese of Joliet: Benedictine University, Lewis University and University of St. Francis.
7. The Catholic Schools Office is staffed by three experienced professional educators: the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, an Assistant Superintendent and a Director of Curriculum. There are two part-time positions: Teacher Personnel Coordinator (.8) and Technology Consultant. The office served 56 elementary schools, 8 secondary schools and 6 free standing or preschool/K programs for a combined enrollment of 23,560 students in 2008-09. This office is understaffed given the scope of responsibility and the service it is expected to provide school communities.
8. The Catholic Schools Office has functioned as a service provider. The authority of the Office has been limited to provide oversight or accountability when outside intervention is needed.
9. Schools are highly decentralized and parochial in nature limiting the Catholic Schools Office’s ability to provide leadership for the religious and academic mission of the schools.
10. In recent years, many new Catholic school principals have come from public school systems. Frequently these principals have taken early retirement choosing to spend the last years of their careers in Church-related ministry. While they bring many gifts to the position, a cadre of long-term, committed leaders is needed to promote continuity and stability.

11. Generally, pastors and principals enjoy a collaboration and supportive relationship. A strong pastor/principal team is essential to vibrant parish schools and modeling Christ for the community.

B. Goals and Strategies

- 1. The Catholic Schools Office will actively recruit, nurture and promote the development of talented educational leaders who are practicing Catholics with a strong commitment to and understanding of the Church's mission in the post-modern world.**

Strategies

- 1.1 The Catholic Schools Office will partner with the three Catholic universities in the Diocese of Joliet: Benedictine University, Lewis University and University of St. Francis to promote service-leadership in Catholic schools by:
 - a) Actively engaging the question of how a Catholic education differs from public education
 - b) Identifying prospective candidates and creating educational leadership courses that are specifically geared toward preparing administrators for service in Catholic schools
 - c) Emphasizing the “vocation” of leadership ministry in the Church and the unique way leaders are called by God to serve the Church’s educational mission
 - d) Seeking opportunities to collaborate with other arch/dioceses to coordinate and organize these efforts
- 1.2 The “Leaders for the Future” program will be expanded and more widely marketed in order to make educational leadership degrees more accessible for Catholic school teachers interested in pursuing positions as Catholic school administrators.
- 1.3 Principals will be challenged to a heightened awareness of their role in identifying and encouraging the next generation of Catholic school leaders.
- 1.4 The Catholic Schools Office, in collaboration with school administrators, will develop a succession plan that identifies and tracks future leaders from within the school community. The plan will include a forecast of principal vacancies and create a funnel to offset demand.
- 1.5 In larger schools that require an assistant principal position, hiring preference will be given candidates with potential to become a future Catholic school leader. Upon hiring, specific duties and graduated responsibilities will be assigned and performance evaluated to develop and prepare the individual for Catholic school leadership.
- 1.6 Spiritual and theological in-service and support for educational leaders, including regular retreats, opportunities for spiritual direction and ongoing discussions of relevant issues in faith and morals, will be provided through appropriate diocesan agencies to further faith formation of school leaders.
- 1.7 Principals new to administration will be assigned a mentor principal by the Superintendent from among experienced and successful principals in the Diocese. The Catholic Schools Office will further develop guidelines for the mentoring program in collaboration with Joliet Diocesan Principals Association.

1.8 Newly hired principals, including those new to the Diocese, will be required to participate in an orientation process during the first year of administration conducted by the Catholic Schools Office. The orientation will address the mission of Catholic school education, the spiritual and religious education components of Catholic school leadership, teachings about Catholic schools as found in Church documents, and best practices regarding the development of spiritual life and faith formation programs in schools. Policies, procedures and practices specific to serving as a principal in the Diocese of Joliet will also be shared.

2. Hispanic and bilingual educators will be identified and recruited to serve the growing number of Hispanic students in Catholic schools. Wherever schools serve a multi-cultural or particular ethnic groups or cultures, the need for educators from those communities with the necessary language and culture skills will be considered.

Strategies

- 2.1 Starting at the parish level, through high school and college settings, bilingual students will be invited to consider a career of service within a Catholic school. Individuals will be highlighted who have pursued this direction and are serving in Catholic schools.
- 2.2 “Leaders for the Future” program will be expanded to provide financial assistance for Hispanic undergraduates who are pursuing education degrees and are willing to commit to teaching in Catholic schools.
- 2.3 Current school teachers and administrators will be encouraged to enroll in Spanish language courses to enhance communication skills and serve more diverse populations.
- 2.4 Schools emphasizing outreach to Hispanic families will give priority to hiring bilingual administrators, teachers and staff as positions become available.

3. The role, responsibilities and accountability of school principals will be clarified.

Strategies

- 3.1 The Catholic Schools Office will develop a clear set of expectations for the Catholic school principal or head administrator and communicate these to local school boards, pastors and school administrators.
- 3.2 Principal candidates will meet qualifications stipulated by the Catholic Schools Office. Prior to being interviewed or hired at the local level, all principal candidates will be screened and approved through the Catholic Schools Office. All local schools will be required to hire pre-approved principal candidates.
- 3.3 The Catholic Schools Office will specify the principal selection process to be followed by all parish and diocesan schools. The Catholic Schools Office will be directly involved in the process.
- 3.4 Pastors with schools will be expected to fully comply with all policies and procedures regarding principal hiring, termination, non-renewal and evaluation as outlined in the Handbook of School Policies. Any concerns regarding non-compliance will be directed to the Bishop of the Diocese for review and resolution.

- 3.5 Each principal will develop annual goals focused on improving Catholic identity, achieving academic excellence, growing the school and managing the day-to-day school operation.
- 3.6 Principal performance in relation to goal attainment must be evaluated. The process will be established by the Catholic Schools Office. The pastor will be a key person in the evaluation process, however, appropriate input will be provided by the Catholic Schools Office and school board. Performance input from the school board will be limited to areas within the direct responsibility of the board outlined in the governance section of the plan, and in accordance with the school's bylaws. An improvement plan will be developed as a result of the process to address specific areas. The Catholic Schools Office will assist the pastor to monitor progress and assist the principal in areas needing further development.

4. The current school leadership model will be reconstituted to meet the multi-dimensional and changing role of the 21st century Catholic school leader.

Strategies

- 4.1 The principal's leadership role has expanded beyond traditional responsibilities and the model no longer supports the new dimensions required. The competencies and skills required to manage all dimensions of a vibrant Catholic school and provide effective leadership for the educational enterprise will be developed under the leadership of the Catholic Schools Office. These competencies and skills will be shared with pastors, school boards, administrators, and others as appropriate.
- 4.2 Key elements essential for the success of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet will be identified (i.e. faith formation, development program, alumnae relations, effective school board, marketing/public relations, financial management, etc.).
- 4.3 A common administrative model will be designed with an awareness of the complexities and multifaceted support structure required for Catholic schools to be successful today and into the future. This model will have some flexibility to function in varying situations: rural school settings, urban schools, large and small enrollment schools, etc.
- 4.4 The Catholic Schools Office will determine, with appropriate input from local school/parish leadership and school board, the appropriate implementation of the administrative model for the school and provide education, ongoing support and guidance to assist each school community in implementing the model.
- 4.5 Using the template developed by the Catholic Schools Office, each school will develop a timeline for when each key element of the administrative model will be fully operational. The Catholic Schools Office will hold local schools accountable for implementing the administrative model. Schools unable to meet the timeline will petition the Diocesan Board of Education for a waiver for a specified period of time. This waiver will include their plan and new timeline for execution.
- 4.6 Lay leaders with the necessary gifts and talents will be engaged in service and will be an asset to the school administration and pastor in advancing the mission of the school.
- 4.7 Pastors with schools and school administrators will be comfortable and equipped to work effectively with lay boards. Ongoing leadership formation and training will be provided to enhance the pastor and principal effectiveness in their respective roles.

5. The Catholic Schools Office will develop a plan to increase knowledge and broaden understanding of Catholic school education and its mission within the Diocese of Joliet.

Strategies

- 5.1 The Superintendent will provide an annual update on Catholic schools to the Presbyteral Council, to the Diocesan Pastoral Council and Finance Council, at deanery meetings and in other appropriate diocesan forums.
- 5.2 The Bishop will annually affirm diocesan support as well as the expectation for the support and cooperation of all members of the presbyterate for Catholic schools.
- 5.3 An annual meeting with all principals and pastors with schools will include a presentation and discussion of the state of Catholic education in the Diocese of Joliet and specific progress made in plan implementation. Principals and pastors with schools will be expected to attend.
- 5.4 The Priest Personnel Board will strive to recommend pastoral appointments that place priests in parishes with schools who have a passion for Catholic schools, understand the school as integral to the Church's educational mission, and who are able to engage in furthering the school's mission. The Catholic Schools Office will work with the Priest Personnel Board to determine the criteria for pastoral appointments for parish schools.
- 5.5 Pastors in neighboring parishes without schools will be expected to positively promote the benefits of Catholic school education to all parishioners and provide moral support to those engaged in this diocesan ministry. Best practices will be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and shared with pastors.
- 5.6 The Bishop of the Diocese will meet with pastors of non-school parishes to convey his expectations regarding the relationship between non-school parishes and school parishes. (i.e. cooperation and ongoing support in regard to communications, marketing, service opportunities and the like).

6. The Catholic Schools Office will provide leadership, oversight and service to the schools of the Diocese.

Strategies

- 6.1 The Bishop of the Diocese will give clear direction as to the future role and authority of the Catholic Schools Office to carry out diocesan policy, lead implementation of the plan, monitor progress, and have an appropriate level of oversight. This includes the responsibility to proactively identify problems or shortcomings and appropriate tools to bring accountability to schools.
- 6.2 The Catholic Schools Office will provide leadership for quality Catholic school education and hold schools accountable for delivering a strong religious and academically sound education. The Catholic Schools Office will provide leadership and oversight for the following areas in schools: religious education, Catholic identity, curriculum, student assessment, professional development, school board development and training, technology, marketing, development of financial resources, principal evaluation process, principal selection process, diocesan strategic planning for schools, and government funded programs.

- 6.3 The Catholic Schools Office will be adequately staffed to provide the services and necessary leadership identified in Strategy 6.2. A multi-year staffing plan will be prepared by the Superintendent based on the requirements to implement the strategic plan for Catholic schools. The plan will be submitted to the Finance Office and Bishop for approval and funding.
- 6.4 The Catholic Schools Office will research “Service Through Teaching” programs sponsored by Catholic institutions of higher learning designed to help under-resourced urban Catholic school communities (i.e. Alliance for Catholic Education at Notre Dame, Lalanne Program at the University of Dayton) to determine how these resources might be used to further the mission of Catholic education in the Diocese of Joliet.

7. Each elementary school principal and pastor will work with its local board to develop a comprehensive, multi-year strategic plan for the school. Each school will be guided by its plan and use it as a point of reference informing all decision-making processes.

Strategies

- 7.1 The plan will be comprehensive addressing Catholic mission, program improvement, finances, public relations, marketing, development and facilities with specific goals and measurable objectives.
- 7.2 The plan will be developed, implemented, monitored and updated annually with the involvement of key stakeholders.
- 7.3 Elementary school multi-year plans will be submitted to the Diocesan School Board for review to ensure coordination and facilitate planning for Catholic school education in the area. The Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office will be notified regarding concerns about enrollment, finances, viability or vitality of any school so that proactive steps may be taken in a timely manner to improve the situation.
- 7.4 The *Vision for Thriving Catholic School Education* will guide the planning process.
- 7.5 The Catholic Schools Office will develop a strategic plan template for each school to use.

VII. MARKETING/ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

A. Observations

1. Forty-one schools were less than 90% enrolled, leaving 4,353 empty seats in 2008-09. Overall, there were a total of 4,552 empty seats for all elementary schools in the Diocese. The lack of enrollment has driven up cost and lessened efficiency. This situation often stresses the finances of the school and can lead to compromises in programs and staffing.
2. Declining enrollment is a serious trend for 15 schools. Many more are under enrolled. Retention is a key variable to enrollment and in many schools low retention is a significant impediment to enrollment stability and/or growth.
3. Catholic school market share continues to decline at both the elementary and high school levels. Between 2003-04 and 2007-08 elementary schools experienced a .9% decline in market share. High schools experienced a .5% decline in market share.
4. Given that a smaller percentage of Catholic families are sending children to Catholic schools than in previous decades, the value proposition of Catholic schools as compared to public education is not enough to entice parents to enroll children in Catholic schools. This is particularly true in many areas having high quality public schools.
5. Preschool program enrollments are not growing. The programs are essential as feeders to Catholic elementary schools. They help sustain enrollment, facilitate transition into first grade and promote curriculum continuity. These programs need to grow and be marketed widely.
6. There is limited marketing of Catholic schools at the diocesan level. Neither is there a state-wide coordinated effort of all Catholic dioceses, nor is there marketing done at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops level, leaving individual schools to communicate the value of Catholic school education.
7. Marketing at the local level has been conducted as needed and generally without a great deal of sophistication. Resources have not been allocated to build integrated marketing programs.
8. In light of the declining number of elementary school students, each high school must actively seek to enroll a greater percentage of Catholic elementary school graduates and a higher number from public and private elementary schools.
9. In 2008-09, 43% of graduating eighth grade students continued their education in Catholic high schools in the Diocese.
10. Cooperation among schools needs to be further encouraged so schools avoid unhealthy competition with one another and work together to best serve the mission of Catholic school education in the Diocese.
11. Hispanic population is growing throughout the Diocese. Hispanic families are typically Catholic with multiple children and generally under-represented in Catholic schools. Programs, financial resources, and teacher training are needed to accommodate these children and facilitate their transition into Catholic schools. Increased outreach directed toward these families is needed.

B. Goals and Strategies

- 1. Catholic school education will be marketed effectively to create a strong public image throughout the Diocese, promote the benefits and value of Catholic schools, support development efforts and increase enrollments. The Catholic Schools Office will provide leadership and set direction for this effort.**

Strategies

- 1.1 A diocesan-wide marketing plan for both recruiting new and retaining existing students for PreK-12 will be developed and implemented to assist individual schools. Elements to include:
 - A compelling value proposition that makes clear the benefits of Catholic school education and its role in teaching the Catholic faith, combined with appropriate and consistent messaging to communicate these benefits at the diocesan and local levels.
 - The value proposition will focus on what parents actually want when choosing a school for their children rather than what we think they want or what has been traditionally given them.
 - Each school will be provided a template with the value proposition and logo etc., so there is consistency in building brand identity. Each local school board and principal will enhance this value proposition by adding distinguishing strengths that makes each unique.
 - Create, maintain and increase the visibility of a Catholic school brand in the Diocese of Joliet. Build on the identity Catholic schools have within the Diocese to promote strong brand recognition.
 - Results from the Community Engagement Survey will be used to inform the plan and make adjustments to strengthen the program.
 - The Catholic Schools Office will create and implement strategies for outreach to the Hispanic community. Such efforts will tie in as appropriate to diocesan and local parish Hispanic ministries. The Catholic Schools Office will assist leadership in schools with potential to enroll more Hispanic children to implement these strategies.
 - A diocesan marketing committee could be established to assist with the marketing plan.

- 2. The Catholic Schools Office will provide leadership, expertise and resources necessary to train and assist local school communities in the development and implementation of marketing and recruitment plans.**

Strategies

- 2.1 A coordinator/expert for marketing/enrollment management position will be established and will report to the Superintendent of Schools.
 - The coordinator will possess a strong background with a proven history of successful marketing/enrollment management experience and a passion for and commitment to the mission of Catholic school education.

- The coordinator will serve as a resource for developing local school marketing plans and provide leadership, direction, and assistance to administrators and school boards in developing their plans.
 - Professional experts will be used on an as-needed basis to address specific aspects of marketing/enrollment management.
- 2.2 Schools with less than capacity enrollment will be identified. A priority will be given to working directly with these schools to stabilize and increase enrollments.
- 2.3 A framework will be developed that lists all areas each school will include in its local marketing effort. For example, schools should have parent ambassadors, exit interviews for staff and students, follow-up protocols for initial contacts and so on.
- 2.4 The Catholic Schools Office will effectively use the diocesan website, other diocesan communication tools as well as emerging technologies in the marketplace to advance the Diocese of Joliet Catholic school brand, ensure consistent messaging points and support Catholic school education.
- 2.5 A system will be developed to collect contact information for all families with newly baptized children. Data from parishes with and without a Catholic school will be collected on an annual basis and used to establish ongoing, meaningful connections between these families and the Catholic school community. A similar program will identify private preschool programs and develop ways to establish connections between specific schools and preschools in a given area.
- 2.6 The Catholic Schools Office will ensure training is provided for local school personnel in the fundamentals of enrollment management. The program will include but not be limited to:
- Local school marketing plan development
 - Customer service training for all school receptionists and secretarial staff, and other appropriate personnel to increase awareness of their respective roles in marketing the school
 - Practical methods proven to engage and sustain relationship between local media outlets and schools
 - Best practices for conducting open house events for prospective parents
 - Creating and using print materials and other marketing tools to strengthen the school's public image
 - Website creation and ongoing content management
 - Student recruitment and retention processes/procedures
- 2.7 The Catholic Schools Office will investigate, identify and evaluate marketing resources (i.e. software, protocols, magazine articles, publications, etc.). These resources and "Best Practices" will be posted and updated regularly on the diocesan website to assist schools in implementing local marketing strategies. Schools will be informed in how to access and use these resources.
- 2.8 The Catholic Schools Office will work with the Catholic Education Foundation to identify and solicit prospective donors with an interest in funding marketing and enrollment management initiatives at the diocesan level.

- 2.9 The Catholic Schools Office will collaborate with diocesan agencies, and in particular with the Catholic Education Foundation Office, to ensure consistency in promoting the value proposition, messaging and branding to various constituents.
- 2.10 The Catholic Schools Office will work with a market research firm to obtain marketing/mailed data for the Diocese. This data will be made available to local schools and boards to use for marketing/mailed programs.

3. Individual schools will implement focused marketing/recruitment/retention programs to increase enrollments and consistently operate at 90% of capacity or above.

Strategies

- 3.1 Local school boards and principals will be accountable for developing, implementing and evaluating a marketing/recruitment/retention plan using the diocesan marketing template. Each school will establish a marketing/recruitment/retention committee, generally an extension of the school board.
- 3.2 Each school will submit its plan to the Diocesan Board of Education and the coordinator for marketing/enrollment management for review and feedback annually.
- 3.3 Each school will incorporate the use of the Diocese of Joliet Catholic school brand value proposition and messaging points in their local marketing program.
- 3.4 Each school will identify someone to serve as the local coordinator responsible for implementing the marketing/recruitment/retention plan. The Catholic Schools Office will meet with these individuals on a regular basis to educate, provide support, share best practices and promote networking among coordinators.
- 3.5 All members of the school community will be encouraged to recognize and fulfill their role in building a positive image of the school and participate as appropriate in student recruitment and retention programs.
- 3.6 Every school will maintain an up-to-date website with the primary purpose of communicating the school value proposition to new families and reiterating the value proposition to currently enrolled families.
- 3.7 Every school will use the student recruitment tracking tool developed by the Catholic Schools Office to identify all sources through which prospective students learn about the school, to track the number of initial inquiries that convert to enrollees, to track the number and points of follow-up contact and to document the reasons initial inquiries do not enroll.
- 3.8 The leadership of schools located within the same geographic area will collaborate to promote a unified image of Catholic school education and maximize visibility in the local community.
- 3.9 Elementary schools without preschool programs will study the feasibility of opening a preschool program to serve as an internal source of student enrollment.

- 3.10 Strategies will be developed that establish active and meaningful connections with parents of the newly baptized infants (i.e., copies of school newsletters, invitations to school play, Christmas program, school liturgies, etc). Strategies will also strengthen alumni connections because alumni often return to enroll their own children and they can be ambassadors for their school.
- 3.11 Local schools and the Diocese will intentionally promote PreK to 12 Catholic school education. Elementary schools will communicate to parents the expectation that the local school is the first step of a PreK to 12 Catholic educational experience for their children. High schools will recognize the foundation Catholic elementary schools provide students and communicate to parents that Catholic school education is a PreK to 12 enterprise.
- 3.12 Strategies will be developed and implemented to improve the retention of students from PreK through 12th grade.
- 3.13 Faculty, staff, parents and parishioners will be educated regarding their role in marketing for the school. Select parents will be solicited to become “ambassadors” for the school.
- 3.14 Every school will allocate in the annual operating budget an amount sufficient to successfully attract new and retain current students. This will be viewed as an essential, not optional, expenditure.

4. Diocesan and local school marketing efforts will include a program to actively recruit Hispanic children. Wherever schools serve a multi-cultural or particular ethnic community, the need for marketing initiatives specific to those communities will be assessed.

Strategies

- 4.1 The Catholic Schools Office will conduct market research on the Hispanic community in the Diocese and, in collaboration with the Office of Hispanic Ministry, identify appropriate ways to market Catholic school education and actively recruit Hispanic children. The Office of Hispanic Ministry will play a key role in providing overall advice and connecting recruitment initiatives to its active Hispanic family ministries.
- 4.2 Successful programs in other dioceses will be researched and best practices identified. A list of best practices will be created and shared with school leadership.
- 4.3 The Catholic Schools Office will identify the group of schools with potential to enroll larger numbers of Hispanic children. Schools in this group will customize strategies for this community in its particular locale, including assisting parents to work through registration processes and maintain meaningful connections to the schools. Efforts will be supported by bilingual marketing materials and hiring of bilingual school personnel.
- 4.4 The Education Foundation Board will have a key role in identifying sources of revenue and raising funds to enhance and support this recruitment program.
- 4.5 The Diocese of Joliet will establish a partnership with the University of Notre Dame’s Alliance for Catholic Education and the Institute for Educational Initiatives to assist school leaders with recruitment and retention of Hispanic students. The Catholic Schools Office will coordinate this partnership which will include a feasibility study about opening new schools in areas where the Latino population is strong as well as In-

Services for school leaders to learn to work better with this growing population in the diocese.

5. Catholic schools will be embraced as integral to the Church's educational mission. Parishes with and without a school will actively encourage parents to choose a Catholic school education for their children.

Strategies

- 5.1 The role of all pastors in marketing Catholic schools will be articulated and best practices shared. The Bishop will reinforce that Catholic schools are a key evangelizing tool for building the faith and the responsibility of all parishes with or without a school. The Bishop will require clergy support for Catholic school education and invite their participation in school life.
- 5.2 Each school will work with area parishes without schools to promote Catholic school education and facilitate the dissemination of information to parishioners, especially to parents with young children. Pastors will allow elementary and secondary school representatives to speak with parishioners regarding the possibility and desirability of enrolling in a Catholic school. Consideration will be given to conducting a coordinated diocesan-wide effort leading up to the annual celebration of Catholic Schools Week.
- 5.3 Specific action plans will be developed to identify and attract students enrolled in parish religious education programs. This effort will be coordinated at the diocesan level and done in collaboration with appropriate diocesan agencies and local parish leadership.

VIII. Governance of Schools

A. Background of Existing Governance Models

Governance of schools can empower or strangle good leadership. It can provide stability or create instability within the institution.

The parish model emerged under conditions different from today. The strengths and challenges of the parish model are presented later in this section. While the parish model serves many schools well, several situations are present where the parish-specific model of governance is not adequate to achieve desired outcomes; so an alternative model is needed. The desired characteristics of an alternative model are presented later in this section.

The recommendations that follow propose changes that will strengthen the parish model and establish a new multi-parish model. The recommendations draw upon the national experience of Catholic schools over the past 20 years and they respond to the unique context of Catholic education in the Diocese of Joliet. The recommendations will tend to remain at a conceptual level, with the details to be worked out in implementation. Further explanation for each model is provided in the appendix.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Schools throughout the Diocese will subscribe to one of two governance models: the parish school model or the multi-parish school model. Schools will consistently follow the same template so that governance operates in a consistent manner across all schools.**

Strategies

- 1.1 All parish schools will conform to the bylaws prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office. Variations may be allowed in certain circumstances only with the approval of the Catholic Schools Office.
- 1.2 The Diocesan Handbook for Boards will be updated to reflect recommendations for the governance model.
- 1.3 Where school boards are functioning and not in agreement with the bylaws as delineated in the Diocesan Handbook for Boards, a review will be conducted by the Catholic Schools Office and the school, and a determination will be made about changes needed.

- 2. School boards will be given responsibility in limited areas based on responsibilities delegated by the pastor.**

Strategies

- 2.1 In a parish school, the pastor holds final jurisdiction in all matters. However, a delegation of responsibility is strongly recommended. A range of possible areas for delegation will be identified later in this section. Some discretion will be allowed at the parish level.

- 2.2 In a multi-parish school, responsibility is given to the school board in limited areas as approved by the school's Board of Members and as designated in the bylaws of the board. The pastors' signatures will be required to approve the bylaws of the board.
- 2.3 Delegation of responsibility will be documented in the form of bylaws. All bylaws will be approved by the Catholic Schools Office. The school board, pastor(s), school administrator, business manager, parish pastoral council, finance council and Catholic Schools Office will all be fully informed about the responsibility of the board.
- 2.4 The pastor will charge the school board with responsibility in specific areas as delineated in the bylaws. The school board will be authorized by the pastor to make decisions in these specific areas as long as they are consistent with the mission of the school and parish, in the best interest of the school and parish, and in keeping with diocesan policy. The pastor's advice is sought when the board is in process of making decisions so that the pastor is informed and given the opportunity for input. The board will provide an appropriate explanation and rationale for major decisions to the pastor. If the board decision is not in keeping with the bylaws of the board and/or does not meet the criteria as stated above, the pastor may exercise his canonical authority and change the decision; however, this is intended to be an exception rather than the norm.
- 2.5 Responsibilities of the local school board will be reviewed every three to five years. Adjustments can be made as long as they are within the guidelines of the Diocesan Handbook for Boards and receive the approval of the Catholic Schools Office. Again all affected parties must be fully informed of any changes.
- 2.6 When it is necessary to assign a new pastor, the governance structure of the school will be shared with potential pastor candidates by the Catholic Schools Office and Priest Personnel Board to ensure they understand the situation they will enter into and they will be supportive of the established governance structure.
- 2.7 When a new pastor is assigned to a parish with a parish school or a parish involved with a multi-parish school, the principal and local school board will meet with him to review the governance structure of the school, including its bylaws. The Catholic Schools Office will also consult the pastor to ensure the pastor has a current working knowledge of school governance, diocesan policy, and procedure.

3. School boards will follow best practices.

Strategies

- 3.1 Local school board members will be selected through a consistent process of establishing criteria, nomination, discernment and appointment for a tenure not to exceed six years of consecutive board service. This process will be documented in the school's bylaws. Board appointments will be made by the pastor or executive pastor in a multi-parish school based on the input collected from the nominee, input from other pastors in a multi-parish school, principal and school board through the discernment process. Criteria for board membership will be established with an emphasis on commitment to the mission of Catholic education and a specialized expertise (finances, education, law, etc.).
- 3.2 Board membership will be comprised of individuals both with and without students enrolled in the school who have demonstrated ability to act independently from their

own specific individual interests. Boards are strongly advised to have some members who are not parents of current students.

- 3.3 Local school boards will collaborate with the Diocesan Board of Education and other area schools to share ideas, best practices and, as appropriate, resources.
- 3.4 School boards will utilize a collaborative process to make decisions within the scope of their responsibility, seeking consensus on key issues facing their Catholic school.

4. School boards, pastors (including those sitting on a Board of Members), business managers, and school administrators will be well oriented and trained in their respective roles.

Strategies

- 4.1 Orientation for new school board members and ongoing in-service for existing boards will be provided annually.
- 4.2 In-service for all local school boards will be provided through the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Board of Education, and will be required of all school board members on a regular basis.
- 4.3 The Catholic Schools Office will determine what orientation and in-service is mandatory for all school boards.
- 4.4 The Catholic Schools Office will work closely with the departments/officials of the Diocese who oversee ongoing in-service for pastors, business managers, parish pastoral councils, and parish finance councils. Consistency in training is needed so that all these groups function together in a productive manner for Catholic schools and for the parish as a whole.
- 4.5 The Diocesan Handbook for Boards will delineate the relationship and role of the school board with other councils within the parish; specifically the parish finance council and parish pastoral council.

5. The Catholic Schools Office will provide support to principals and chief administrators so they can acquire the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to work with and build successful boards.

6. Schools will have parent associations that function separately from the school board and under the oversight of the principal. Strong communication and collaboration is needed between the parent association, the principal, and the school board.

Strategy

- 6.1 To encourage collaboration, there will be regular communications between the parent association and school board, including participation by a representative(s) from the parent association in appropriate school board meetings.

B. Parish Governance Model

Background of Parish Governance Model

The one parish-one school model has served the mission of Catholic schools for many years. In this model, the school is part of the parish and the parish has full responsibility for the school. Key features are:

- The pastor is canonical administrator and has final authority.
- The principal is hired and terminated by the pastor.
- The pastor is expected to follow diocesan policy.
- The pastors are encouraged but not required to delegate responsibility for administration of the school, finances, planning, or other areas to the principal or to a school board.
- The school is a ministry of the parish and the principal is generally considered part of the parish staff.
- The school board is consultative to the pastor and principal. The pastor is advised to consult the board before making key decisions.
- The parish is responsible for all finances related to the school.
- School buildings are part of the parish facilities and are the responsibility of the parish to care for them.
- The parish finance council and parish business manager may have significant influence over school finances and related decisions.

Strengths of the Existing Parish Governance Model

- A strong tradition exists for the school being viewed as a ministry of the parish. The school is a clear extension of the mission of its parish.
- Parish ownership is generally strong because the parish has full responsibility for the school.
- Faith formation is centered in the parish.
- The parish and school communities are intertwined. Each is made stronger because of the other.
- Many school families are active parish members.
- The parish has a stake in funding capital improvements because school facilities are parish-owned and often used for other parish ministries and functions.
- School boards have the potential to bring fresh ideas, new energy, expertise, and financial resources to assist the pastor and principal in their jobs.
- School boards are a channel for communication among key groups in the school and parish community.
- The model has been in place for a long time. Many schools are operating with effective boards who feel trusted by their pastor.

Challenges of the Existing Parish Governance Model

- Since the pastor is the canonical administrator of the parish and school, the role of the school board is subject to the desires of the local pastor. The role given to the school board varies depending on the parish/school tradition and leadership style of the local pastor.
- The pastor has final authority over all aspects of the school. He can choose to delegate responsibility as much or as little as he wants. The pastor can make decisions unilaterally, sometimes alienating others without regard to a strategic vision.
- Laity have a role when invited by the pastor and responsibility is delegated by the pastor.
- When pastors move between parishes, they encounter widely varying governance practices.
- Pastors have varying gifts and expertise, and not all pastors have the required level of ability or leadership to successfully administer a Catholic school.
- Pastors are stretched with responsibilities and tasks, making it increasingly difficult for many to administer schools along with other responsibilities.
- Principals do not always feel they have the time to develop and support a school board. They do not consistently have experience or comfort in working with school boards.
- Initial and on-going training for school boards is not mandatory, so many school boards are not fully formed or equipped to fulfill the role and responsibilities for which they were intended.
- School board selection does not always result in the right membership mix with the desired qualifications, expertise and experience. New board members may not receive good formation.
- It is difficult for school boards to maintain the quality of membership with turnover every three years.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARISH SCHOOLS

- 7. Parish schools will have school boards with specific responsibilities as defined by the bylaws for the school board with the agreement of the pastor, as specified in the Diocesan Handbook for Boards. The pastor will honor this relationship of delegated responsibilities unless there are extreme circumstances where intervention is necessary.**

Strategies

- 7.1 The school board will perform in a professional and Christ-centric manner, where all actions and interaction will be conducted to elevate Catholic identity in our Catholic schools, and with the goal of enhancing the schools' long-term success.
- 7.2 Pastors are strongly encouraged to delegate responsibility for administration of the school to the principal. Parish business managers and principals will work in support of one another, but the business manager will not have authority over the principal.
- 7.3 If a pastor is inclined to overrule a decision of the school board, he is advised to communicate his reasons to the school board. If the matter is serious, the pastor will consult with the Catholic Schools Office before making a final decision.
- 7.4 The school boards may be delegated by the pastor responsibility to provide advice and counsel to the pastor and principal, including appropriate measurement and oversight, in the following areas:

- Establish short and long-term goals for the institution and for the board itself, accompanying metrics for these goals, and a process whereby institutional and board effectiveness is regularly assessed.
- Develop a strategic plan. When the strategic plan is approved by the pastor, provide accountability for and assist with plan implementation.
- Develop plans for and give support to local initiatives relating to school advancement, marketing, recruitment, and public relations. Monitor the effects of these initiatives, with particular emphasis on enrollment.
- Oversee financial status of the school. Review financial reports no less than quarterly to ensure that school finances are managed in accordance with existing budgets and financial limitations. The board will work in a collaborative manner with parish business management staff in this regard.
- Review the budget that has been prepared by the principal or a working finance committee of the board. As part of the budget review process, the board will make recommendations in areas such as parish investment, tuition, increases in expenditures, and related areas. Final approval of the budget rests with the pastor.
- Develop a plan for facilities, a budget for maintenance and upgrades, and a funding plan for any such projects.
- Develop policies for the local school in agreement with diocesan policy.
- Participate in the selection of the school principal through the search process established by the Catholic Schools Office. The pastor will give approval to the final choice of principal from among candidates recommended and screened in the search process.
- Gather and disseminate information regarding pending legislation that could affect the school.

- 7.5 While it must be acknowledged that the Diocese has schools and school boards that are operating at the standards envisioned herein, it must also be acknowledged that there are individual situations where school boards are not operating up to these standards. In such cases the pastor and principal will take the necessary steps to reformulate the board with members and responsibilities that will achieve the high level of performance needed. All boards must take steps to continually improve both institutional and board effectiveness and the school's strategic plan must include strategies for ongoing board development.
- 7.6 In cases where a school board is new or evolving, the pastor can choose to initially retain more responsibility or grant the principal responsibility for areas that should normally be delegated to the school board. Then, upon review every six or twelve months, additional responsibilities may be gradually handed over to the school board as the board matures and is ready to take on more responsibility. Changes in delegated responsibility may result in updating the bylaws of the particular school.
- 7.7 The principal must have sufficient time to support the work of the school board and assist with board formation. In larger schools, the principal should have an administrative team where responsibilities are shared. The principal is an ex-officio non-voting member of the school board.

C. School Supported by Multiple Parishes

Overview

When multiple parishes take ownership for and support a Catholic school, the leadership model must be built on clear lines of authority and accountability. Decision making must occur efficiently and strategically without the political wrangling that can emerge from pleasing multiple constituents. Many of the strengths identified under the parish governance model can also be strengths in a multi-parish school.

Success Factors

The following list highlights factors deemed particularly important in the Diocese of Joliet.

- a. The school offers a quality program, superior to other choices, particularly to public schools.
- b. New resources are invested to provide an enhanced program for students. The new school can achieve an efficient class size and operate with full enrollment. Excess capacity has been eliminated from within the system and facilities are proportionate to school enrollment.
- c. The school board has the responsibility to determine what facilities it does and does not need to fulfill the school's ongoing mission.
- d. An administrative team is in place where the principal can delegate to other professionals administrative responsibilities for development, boards, marketing, communications, finances, curriculum, and so forth. A substantive role is identified for the laity and the board structure encourages their participation and contribution. Many times outside talent and resources are brought into the school through lay involvement.
- e. The school board is delegated specific responsibility with appropriate support and authority in areas related to institutional effectiveness as defined in Section 8.7 below. This board has a meaningful role in leading the school, as described herein.
- f. The Catholic Schools Office and other diocesan office agencies provide expert support in the set up of the new school and at key points of transition such as a change in leadership. The Catholic Schools Office provides an appropriate level of oversight and accountability for the board and administrator of the school.
- g. Sponsoring parishes are identified early in the process and a relationship of trust is established. Other parishes that do not officially sponsor the school but that share a common ministerial mission in the contiguous geographic area will also be identified, with the relationship being clarified including any financial support to be provided to the school. Communication is timely and serves to connect school and parish leaders.
- h. Establishing the new school is done in a way that parishioners and parents buy into the idea and support the transition.
- i. The role of pastor, principal, school board and others such as the Catholic Schools Office is clearly defined. They work together well and do not infringe on each other's designated role and responsibility.
- j. Clergy have a significant and appropriate role in the school, as described herein.
- k. Sponsoring parishes are supportive of the new school and involve themselves in marketing and participation in school events and service projects. Pastors and parishes provide strong spiritual support to families through their ministries and outreach programs.

1. Competent and visionary leadership is hired for key positions. The leadership works well with the pastors of the supporting parishes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MULTI-PARISH SCHOOLS

- 8. Multi-parish schools will function with a two-tiered system of governance comprised of a Board of Members and a School Board. The Board of Members will retain final authority but may delegate responsibility to the School Board. The bylaws of the school will specify those matters where the Board of Members must give approval and those matters given to the School Board to decide. The School Board is technically advisory to the Board of Members and the principal; however, for the model to work well significant responsibility will be delegated to the School Board when the board has the formation and talent necessary to make wise judgments.**

Strategies

The Catholic Schools Office will develop a governance manual for multi-parish schools. The manual will assist the Board of Members and the School Board in understanding their role and function.

- 8.1 The decision-making process and authority of the Board of Members will be established in the bylaws of the multi-parish school. All multi-parish schools will follow a template developed by the Catholic Schools Office.
- 8.2 The Board of Members will be comprised of the pastors from the supporting parishes and the Superintendent of Schools or his/her appointee. All members, including the Superintendent or appointee will have a full vote.
- 8.3 One pastor from the Board of Members will be designated as the executive pastor. He will be appointed by the Bishop for a 12-month period, and can be extended with an annual review by the Bishop. This appointment may move among the pastors or remain with the same pastor as determined by the Bishop. The Bishop should select the executive pastor based on that pastor's administrative gifts and vision for Catholic education.
- 8.4 In the event the Board of Members is not able to agree on a decision and becomes deadlocked, the executive pastor will have the authority to make a final decision.
- 8.5 The school board will perform in a professional and Christ-centric manner, where all actions and interaction will be conducted to elevate Catholic identity in our Catholic schools, and with the goal of enhancing the schools' long-term success.
- 8.6 The school board will be delegated responsibility including appropriate measurement and oversight, in the following areas:
 - Establish short and long-term goals for the institution and for the board itself, accompanying metrics for these goals, and a process whereby institutional and board effectiveness is regularly assessed.
 - Develop a strategic plan. When the strategic plan is approved by the Board of Members, provide accountability for and assist with plan implementation.

- Develop plans for and give support to local initiatives relating to school advancement, marketing, recruitment, and public relations. Monitor the effects of these initiatives, with particular emphasis on enrollment.
 - Oversee financial status of the school. Review financial reports regularly to ensure that school finances are managed in accordance with existing budgets and financial limitations. The board will work in a collaborative manner with parish business management staff in this regard.
 - Review the budget that has been prepared by the principal or a working finance committee of the board. As part of the budget review process, the board will make recommendations in areas such as parish investment, tuition, increases in expenditures, and related areas. Final approval of the budget rests with the Board of Members.
 - Develop a plan for facilities, a budget for maintenance and upgrades, and a funding plan for any such projects.
 - Develop policies for the local school in agreement with diocesan policy.
 - Participate in the selection of the school principal through the search process established by the Catholic Schools Office. The Board of Members will give approval to the final choice of principal from among candidates recommended and screened in the search process.
 - Gather and disseminate information regarding pending legislation that could affect the school.
- 8.7 In cases in which the school board determines that a particular facility is not needed to fulfill the school’s ongoing mission, it will make recommendation to the Board of Members. The Board of Members must make a decision in the best interest of the school and not according to the interests of their particular parish.
- 8.8 If the Board of Members is inclined to overrule a decision of the school board, they are advised to communicate the reasons to the school board.
- 8.9 In cases where a school board is new or evolving, the Board of Members can choose to retain more responsibility or grant the principal more responsibility for areas that will normally be delegated to the school board. Then, upon review every six or twelve months, additional responsibilities may be gradually handed over to the school board as the board matures and is ready to take on more responsibility. Changes in delegated responsibility may result in updating the bylaws of the particular school.
- 8.10 The principal must have sufficient time to support the work of the school board and assist with board formation. In larger schools, the principal will have an administrative team where responsibilities are shared. The principal is an ex-officio non-voting member of the school board.

9. Sponsoring parishes will have written agreements stipulating their support of the school.

Strategies

- 9.1 All parishes in the area served by the school are to be included as either a sponsoring parish or as having a clearly delineated role vis-à-vis the school. In either case, the specific ministerial, administrative and financial expectations between the school and

these parishes will be agreed in writing between the parties. The agreement will follow a template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.

- 9.2 The funding formula will reflect an ongoing parish investment regardless of the number of children attending from a specific parish.
- 9.3 A facility use agreement will be agreed to with any parish whose facilities are used by the school but owned by the parish. The agreement will follow a template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.

10. The governing bylaws and agreements will be approved by all sponsoring parishes and the Bishop.

Strategy

- 10.1 Sponsoring parishes will not be allowed to unilaterally withdraw from these agreements. Any change in parish sponsorship will need approval of the Catholic Schools Office and Bishop.

D. Recommendations for Diocesan Board of Education

11. The Diocesan Board of Education will have specific responsibilities as defined by the bylaws for the Diocesan Board of Education with the agreement of the Bishop and Superintendent. These delegated responsibilities will be honored unless there are extreme circumstances where intervention is necessary.

Strategies

- 11.1 The Diocesan Board of Education will perform in a professional and Christ-centric manner, where all actions and interaction will be conducted to elevate Catholic Identity in our Catholic schools, and with the goal of enhancing the schools' long-term success.
- 11.2 The Diocesan Board of Education members will be selected through a consistent process of establishing criteria, nomination, discernment and appointment for a tenure not to exceed six years of consecutive board service. This process will be documented in the Diocesan Board of Education's bylaws. Board appointments will be made by the Bishop based on the recommendation of a nominating committee of the Board and the Superintendent. Criteria for Board membership will be established with an emphasis on commitment to the mission of Catholic education and a specialized expertise (finances, education, law, etc.).
- 11.3 The Diocesan Board of Education will optimally function in a consultative manner with the Superintendent in relation to the delegated responsibilities outlined in Section 12.6.
- 11.4 If the Superintendent is inclined to overrule a decision of the Diocesan Board of Education, he or she is advised to communicate his or her reasons to the Board. If the matter is serious, the Superintendent will consult with the Bishop before making a final decision.
- 11.5 The Diocesan Board of Education will sponsor and participate in the establishment and ongoing dialogue between clusters of local schools in periodic meetings. These meetings will be held to ensure that Diocese-wide best practices are being shared and implemented in order to take advantage of the intellectual capital engaged in schools

across the Diocese. The meetings are intended to foster information sharing and collaboration between schools as appropriate, and will not create a separate governance structure for local schools or the diocesan school system. The participating Diocesan Board member will report back to the Superintendent and Diocesan Board of Education the issues being faced, assistance needed, quality of the collaboration between schools, and the progress being made by each of the schools.

- 11.6 The Diocesan Board of Education will be delegated responsibility to provide advice and counsel to the Superintendent, Bishop, Catholic Schools Office personnel, local boards, and other appointed diocesan delegates including appropriate measurement and oversight, in the following areas:
- Establish short and long-term goals for the Diocesan school system and for the board itself, accompanying metrics for these goals, and a process whereby institutional and Board effectiveness is regularly assessed.
 - Develop and participate in the implementation of the Diocesan strategic plan. As appropriate, support the local boards to help them establish their local strategic plans, and once approved by the pastor, to assist with plan implementation.
 - Assist local boards in developing, implementing and/or refining their strategic plans, and in meeting their targeted goals. As appropriate, the Diocesan Board of Education will share their expertise and Diocesan-level knowledge to assist efforts to increase local board effectiveness.
 - Assist in developing plans for and providing support to local initiatives relating to school advancement, marketing, recruitment, and public relations. Monitor the effects of these initiatives, with particular emphasis on enrollment.
 - As defined by the Finance Committee and in collaboration with the Diocesan Finance Office, the Diocesan Board of Education will monitor financial status of the schools. Financial reports will be reviewed periodically to ensure that school finances are managed in accordance with existing policies and budgets. The Diocesan Board of Education will work in a collaborative manner with Diocesan Finance Office.
 - The Diocesan Board of Education will work in partnership with the Diocesan Finance Office to support local facility plans that are in line with the long-term Diocesan-wide strategic plan.
 - Develop Diocesan policies to address either the needs of the Diocesan strategic plan or specific issues; such policies will be implemented at the local school level.
 - Participate in the selection of the Superintendent through individual board members sitting on a selection committee to be appointed by the Bishop in the event of a new Superintendent search. This selection committee will be charged with providing one or more recommended candidates, for the final hiring decision to be made by the Bishop.
 - Work with regional and local Legislative Action Groups to disseminate information regarding pending legislation that could affect our schools.
- 11.7 Superintendent performance in relation to goal attainment will be assessed by the Bishop with appropriate input from the Diocesan Board of Education. Performance input from the Diocesan Board shall be limited to areas within the direct responsibility of the Board as outlined above.

11.8 The Diocesan Board of Education must take steps to continually improve both institutional and its own Board effectiveness, and the Diocesan strategic plan must include strategies for ongoing Board development at both the local and diocesan levels.

11.9 The Superintendent must have sufficient time to support the work of the Diocesan Board of Education and assist with Board formation. The Superintendent will have an administrative team where responsibilities are shared.

E. Private Catholic Schools

12. If a lay group establishes an independent private preschool, elementary or high school and requests that it be recognized as a Catholic school in the Diocese of Joliet, diocesan leadership (i.e., Bishop and Superintendent) will establish expectations and criteria for approval to operate as a Catholic school.

Strategies

12.1 The Catholic Schools Office will develop a written agreement that presents the criteria for being approved as a private independent Catholic school and the expectations for maintaining such recognition.

12.2 The written agreement will be reviewed and approved by the local school board and the Diocesan Board of Education who will make recommendation to the Superintendent and Bishop. Final approval is given by the Bishop. Documentation will be kept on file at the Catholic Schools Office.

IX. HIGH SCHOOLS

A. Observations

1. Seven Catholic high schools operate in the Diocese: Bishop McNamara Catholic High School in Kankakee, Immaculate Conception in Elmhurst, Providence Catholic in New Lenox, Benet Academy in Lisle, Joliet Catholic Academy in Joliet, Montini Catholic in Lombard and St. Francis in Wheaton.
2. Enrollments at the seven schools range from 348 students to 1,332 students in 2009-10. Collectively these schools enroll 5,481 students. Overall enrollment has been relatively stable the past six years, with a decrease of -4% since 2003-04.
3. The Diocese is a corporate board member of St. Francis High School. A diocesan representative appointed by the Bishop currently serves as a member of its board of directors.
4. The Diocese is represented on the Bishop McNamara Catholic High School board, though it is a diocesan high school.
5. Providence Catholic High School's advisory board functions with the approval of the Bishop and Provincial of the Order of St. Augustine. The specific role of the Bishop in relation to the board is unclear.
6. Agreements and legal relationships between the Diocese and some high schools originated many years ago and in some cases predate current school and diocesan leaders.
7. These schools operate at the invitation of the Bishop and are recognized as valuable educational institutions that serve the Church's educational mission in partnership with the Diocese providing quality high school education for young adults in the Diocese of Joliet.
8. The Superintendent of Schools meets with the leadership of these schools periodically to promote ongoing communication and support for the mission of Catholic secondary education.
9. In the past some high schools turned to the Diocese of Joliet as a source of financial support. The Diocese generously agreed to provide loans to specific schools requesting financial assistance. This practice is no longer an option.
10. In many cases schools are beneficiaries of land acquisitions donated by the Diocese.

B. Goals and Strategies

Many of the goals and strategies throughout the plan are applicable to high schools as well as elementary schools. This is particularly true in the sections on Catholic Identity, Academic Excellence, Leadership, and Marketing/Enrollment. In the drawing up of an implementation plan, areas with direct implications for high schools will be identified. In the section on Catholic Identity - Chapter IV, goals and strategies are identified specifically for Catholic high schools.

1. The formal documented and undocumented agreements established between the Diocese and individual high schools will be reviewed by the Diocese with school leadership and/or the religious order and updated as needed. Areas to address include:

- The extent of ownership of the Diocese of Joliet (i.e. reverter clause, agreement to re-convey property)
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Board representation
- Financial obligations, loan status
- Other matters

2. Where an institution's bylaws call for diocesan representation on the school board or board of directors, the Superintendent of Schools or a designee will be appointed to serve.

Strategies

- 2.1 In each case, agreements and relationships will be clearly defined and documented and shared among appropriate diocesan, religious order and school leadership personnel.
- 2.2 Diocesan representation will be appointed to any high school board where the school has financial obligations to the Diocese or where diocesan property is involved.

3. The Catholic Schools Office and other appropriate diocesan offices will work with religious orders that operate high schools in the Diocese to ensure the school is operating properly, is financially stable and in alignment with diocesan policy.

Strategies

- 3.1 The Diocese will maintain ongoing communication with leadership of religious orders that administer high schools in the Diocese about their plans and long-term commitments to their institutions.
- 3.2 The Catholic Schools Office will work with religious orders to ensure leadership succession plans are in place.
- 3.3 Each school will be requested to provide the Diocese with its annual budget/financial information and enrollment numbers.

X. FACILITIES

Among the factors influencing public perception of Catholic schools and the ability of schools to deliver quality education is the adequacy and condition of school facilities. Schools must be maintained in good condition and have appropriate educational space if they are to remain marketable to prospective students, parents and donors.

A. Observations

1. School buildings are generally clean and functional. Most schools have modern facilities that provide for all aspects of the educational and co-curricular programs (i.e. science labs, cafeterias, technology needs, performing arts, gymnasium, athletic fields, etc). Another group of schools operate in facilities that are in need of updating and require renovations and capital investment.
2. Costs associated with aging facilities and deferred maintenance cannot be addressed solely through tuition or the operating budget. Major capital investments will require special funding initiatives attracting new money and new sources of funding.
3. Many schools do not have an ongoing facility plan to address repairs and improvements. Few schools provide adequate funding on an annual basis to meet these needs.
4. Most schools were built at a time when preschool programs were not in demand. As the need for such programs increased, schools typically found space by renovating sections of existing buildings, purchasing mobile units, or in rare cases undertook new construction. Forty-five of the elementary schools offered some form of preschool in 2008-09. Eleven schools did not have a preschool program. Appropriate space for early childhood programs is still an issue for some schools.

B. Goals and Strategies

- 1. Every school will have a long-range facilities plan. It will be an integrated part of the school's strategic plan.**

Strategies

- 1.1 Facility plans will identify repair and maintenance needs as well as improvements and renovations to keep the school safe, current with educational needs and competitive in the educational marketplace.
- 1.2 The Diocesan Office of Buildings and Properties will provide technical support to schools needing assistance to develop and prioritize a long-range facility plan.
- 1.3 Planning for school facilities will be integrated with parish planning and sensitive to parish needs. Priorities will be established and addressed in a timely manner to ensure that parish and school needs are met.
- 1.4 When practical, new facilities will be designed with flexibility to accommodate other parish ministries during non-school hours.

2. A capital funding plan will accompany each facility plan.

Strategies

- 2.1 Parish councils and finance councils will work in collaboration with school boards and local school administrators to establish a capital funding plan. A template will be developed to assist local parishes in this effort.
- 2.2 An annual capital expense budget will be established and partially funded with a small percentage of the school operating budget. A suggested percentage is 3% of the budget. Schools may need to phase this into their budgets over several years, preferably five years or less.
- 2.3 Funds received for capital projects and not used in any given year will be placed in a balance sheet account as restricted savings for future facility expenses.
- 2.4 Capital fund drives will be a regular part of funding for facilities upgrades. They can be integrated with larger parish initiatives and will be a component of the school development program.

3. If a parish has a school building that is no longer used for a Catholic school, and if the building is made available as rental property, the building will not be rented to another entity that could potentially compete with other Catholic schools for students or funding.

Strategy

- 3.1 The Diocese will develop a policy that will be appropriately promulgated which documents the parameters for outside agencies to rent former school properties.
- 3.2 Existing agreements that parishes without schools have with outside agencies to lease parish facilities for educational programming will be reviewed by the Catholic Schools Office. The process used will determine if the outside agency is damaging the viability of Catholic schools in the area at a harmful level. The lease may not be renewed if the agency is creating harmful competition.
- 3.3 With regard to early childhood programs sponsored by parishes without schools, the Catholic Schools Office will develop a process of approval for new programs and oversight for existing programs.

XI. NEW DIRECTIONS AND RESTRUCTURING

A. Grundy, Kankakee and Kendall Counties (and Park Forest/Steger, and Wilmington City)

KANKAKEE AREA

Aquinas Catholic Academy, Kankakee
Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School, Bourbonnais
St. Joseph School, Bradley
Bishop McNamara High School, Kankakee

- 1. Begin planning for the relocation of Aquinas Catholic Academy to updated facilities at St. Martin of Tours Parish. The relocation should take place no later than the fall of 2012.**

Strategies

- 1.1 Using the 2010-11 school year to plan for the move, develop a strategic plan that not only moves to new facilities, but offers new and expanded opportunities for students. The plan should include a master site plan. The school should open in new facilities by fall 2011 and no later than fall 2012.
- 1.2 Support the strategic planning process with a marketing initiative to showcase the strength of the school's programs now and plans for further improvement in the future. The school must not open at St. Martin of Tours as the school people used to know, but as the new Aquinas Catholic Academy with superior program and inspired leaders.
- 1.3 Assess the potential to conduct a modest capital fund drive. Launch the capital fund drive by 2011. New investment will provide facility additions and upgrades that are needed to complete the plan as a permanent home for the school. A campaign also has the potential to attract new support and interest in the school.
- 1.4 Launch a marketing campaign around the new site. Promote a new image, new offerings and new opportunities for students.
- 1.5 Develop a facilities use agreement with St. Martin of Tours Parish following the template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.
- 1.6 The role of all pastors in marketing Catholic schools will be articulated and best practices shared. The Bishop will reinforce that Catholic schools are a key evangelizing tool for building the faith and the responsibility of all parishes with or without a school. The Bishop will require clergy support for Catholic school education and invite their participation in school life.

Rationale

- a. Enrollment has been declining at Aquinas Catholic Academy for each of the past four years from 237 in grades K to 8 in 2005-06 to 152 in grades K to 8 in 2009-10. 25% of the enrollment comes from outside a five-mile radius of the school.
- b. Stabilizing and turning back enrollment trends will be greatly helped by enhanced facilities on a spacious site. Aquinas Catholic Academy currently operates at St. Patrick Parish, where there are two school buildings with 14 classrooms, computer room, cafeteria, partial gym,

and auditorium. The primary building was built in 1923, and upper grade building was built in 1928.

- c. Even though the school has worked hard to make improvements since moving to the current site two years ago, the age of the buildings and their layout and limitations of the site leave many issues to be addressed in the future. A professional assessment of the school facilities was conducted for Aquinas Catholic Academy by Healy Bender. The study indicated the cost of achieving a fully complete and modern campus at the current site is many millions of dollars.
- d. The St. Martin of Tours site offers more space for physical education and athletics. Facilities are easily adaptable to a Catholic elementary school, although some renovation or new construction is desirable and needed long-term.
- e. Total population declined in Kankakee City from 27,491 in 2000 to 26,608 in 2007. Population ages 5-14 also declined. Declines have happened among the White population and Black/African-American population. The area has a larger minority and Hispanic population than 10 years ago. Enrollment growth is limited from within the city. The school must be well positioned and strong enough to attract students from a wide area. Within the last four years two new villages have been formed, Limestone and Sammons Point, each located within Aquinas Academy service area.

2. The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with the leadership of Aquinas Catholic Academy will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them.

Strategies

- 2.1 Criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status.
- 2.2 As soon as possible, a long-range plan will be developed and used as a road map for the school board and administration to follow. The Catholic Schools Office will monitor progress on an ongoing basis and provide timely reports on the school's status to the Diocesan Board of Education. The long-range plan will include a financial projection.
- 2.3 Aquinas Catholic Academy has been able to operate with a balanced budget and stay out of debt. However, the funding model is constrained by a dependence on parish subsidy to generate additional revenue and expand tuition assistance. Declining funding from parishes is a real concern for the future. Make changes to the model for funding and use the financial projection to demonstrate financial viability.

3. The administration and board of Aquinas Catholic Academy will be committed participants in the partnership between the Diocese of Joliet and University of Notre Dame's ACE and IEI programs.

4. All parishes supporting Aquinas Catholic Academy should receive the same rate of tuition and share equitably in ownership and sponsorship of the school.

Strategy

- 4.1 Develop a formal agreement for financial support from the supporting parishes. Do not tie the formula to number of students, as this will create a disincentive for parishes. The agreement will follow a template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.

Rationale

- a. Aquinas Catholic Academy should be a mission of all the parishes in Kankakee. The cost to support the school exceeds the resources of any one parish and requires a broader base of support.

5. Conduct a formal study to investigate the feasibility and benefits of opening a 7th/8th grade junior high program at Bishop McNamara Catholic High School.

Strategies

- 5.1 The way in which the study is conducted is important to ensure key stakeholders are well-informed and appropriately involved. The study would benefit from an objective professional from outside the area leading the research and decision process. The proposal to bring the 7th and 8th grades to a central location is not a foregone conclusion
- 5.2 The proposed junior high would operate as a distinct program within the high school and with a dedicated staff. A larger enrollment would allow for specialized staff and expanded opportunities for students.
- 5.3 The study should address the following:
- What the program will provide and how it would be an advantage to students
 - Projected cost and possibilities for funding
 - Assess support in the community and among parents for the new program
 - Possibilities for building a stronger system of Catholic education for PreK through 12th grade
 - Facility requirements at the Bishop McNamara Catholic High School campus
 - Best practices, policies and procedures to successfully educate two distinct age groups within the same institution
 - Positive and negative impact on elementary schools
 - Formulate a funding model that will make a quality 7th/8th grade program successful and sustainable
- 5.4 All the Catholic schools and parishes in the immediate area must cooperate with the study to achieve the best recommendations and ultimate support for whatever decision is finally made.

Rationale

- a. A junior high program with a larger enrollment could be capable of hiring more specialized staff, offering an expanded curriculum, providing more co-curricular options, and providing attractive facilities. The site at Bishop McNamara Catholic High School offers more space for physical education and athletics.
- b. The quality of the junior high program and the range of enrichment opportunities could be greater for many students under the model. Larger enrollment combined with the resources of the high school could expand the education 7th and 8th graders are receiving today.
- c. Catholic education could be marketed as PreK through 12th grade. Student retention could be improved through 12th grade.
- d. Students would likely have access to accelerated educational programs and high school services like guidance counselors, etc. Expanded co-curricular opportunities could be developed because the high school facilities are available.
- e. Parents and parishes could get more for their tuition and parish investment because classes would be of efficient size and a strong program would be available to students.
- f. Elementary schools would have classrooms available for new programming or expansion. Some schools and their parishes would find operations more affordable if they operate with PreK to 6th grade.
- g. Bishop McNamara Catholic High School has unused capacity in the building. The cost of locating a 7th/8th grade at the high school is lower because facilities already exist.
- h. Bishop McNamara Catholic High School straddles the City of Kankakee to the south and the growth areas to the north. It is a central location for all the schools and parishes in the region.
- i. Any plan that would strengthen enrollment in the feeder system will be very important for maintaining enrollment over 400 at Bishop McNamara Catholic High School.

6. Plan for long-term growth in the region of Kankakee by studying the feasibility of opening a new school or expanding Maternity BVM School. Several long-range options should be considered.

Strategy:

- 6.1 Formally commission a market study of enrollment demand in the region to determine if there is sufficient interest and an adequate number of students to justify expansion. The study is not needed immediately, but at a point in the future when the growth has brought a population deemed sufficiently large to consider a school. All affected parishes should be involved. Options to study are:

Option 1: Expand Maternity BVM School at the present site. Work with Olivet University in planning for utilization and acquisition of property. Develop a master plan for parish facilities that will lead to expansion of the school and a new church.

Option 2: Study the long-term feasibility of building a new school at St. Joseph Parish, Manteno or in St. George. If a new school is built, expansion of Maternity BVM may not be necessary.

Rationale

- a. More information is needed to determine what the real demand is in the community now and the potential for the future. Adding school capacity where growth is expected would be forward-looking and would help to sustain Catholic education at the elementary and secondary level.
 - b. Eventually, population growth is expected north of Bourbonnais/Bradley in the areas of Manteno and possibly St. George. Shifting demographics call for a long-range plan to adjust the capacity in Catholic schools.
 - c. Enrollment is strong with waiting lists at Maternity BVM School. Enrollment grew for K-8 from 193 in 2003-04 to 288 in 2009-10.
 - d. Enrollment turnover at St. Joseph School in Bradley is a concern in the last few years. Enrollment declined for K-8 from 244 in 2003-04 to 185 for 2009-10. Enrollment decline is also a concern for Aquinas Catholic Academy. Care must be taken to not take too many students from these schools in the process of opening a new school or expanding Maternity BVM.
 - e. Thirty-one children from St. Joseph Parish in Manteno are enrolled in Catholic schools. St. Joseph Parish provides financial assistance to families attending Maternity BVM School.
 - f. Manteno is growing significantly with I57 giving access to employment in the Chicago area. Manteno Village grew from 6,414 in 2000 to 8,493 in 2007, a 32% increase.
 - g. Bourbonnais Village and Manteno Village had the most growth in Kankakee County from 2000 to 2007.
 - h. St. Joseph Parish in Manteno has around 1,000 households and 380 enrolled in religious education. Annual baptisms average 50 infants and annual First Communions average 47.
 - i. Parish demographics appear stable at St. Joseph in Bradley and at Maternity BVM. Maternity BVM Parish has had higher baptism numbers in recent years.
 - j. Expanding at Maternity BVM is less expensive than a new school, and builds on the strong reputation of the school. It could prove to be easier than starting a new school at a parish with no school tradition. The waiting lists indicate more enrollment is possible if seats are available.
 - k. Expansion would be very important to keep a solid feeder base for Bishop McNamara High School.
- 7. Bishop McNamara Catholic High School needs to take the next steps to continue investing in facilities for the future and move ahead with planning for a new capital campaign.**
 - 8. Update the strategic plan for Bishop McNamara Catholic High School. The plan would provide a case for a capital campaign. Build the plan on an enrollment between 400 and 440. More enrollment is not likely, and holding at current levels will be a challenge given the decline in elementary school enrollment in the Kankakee area as a whole.**
 - 9. Develop a financial projection to integrate all elements of the plan and to address concerns about affording competitive compensation to attract and retain quality faculty at Bishop McNamara Catholic High School.**

- 10. Bishop McNamara Catholic High School should deepen and widen the base of support among parishes in the region as well as build stronger ties with Catholic elementary schools in the region.**
- 11. Compile data and conduct a special study if necessary to get a clear understanding of why families do and do not enroll their children at Bishop McNamara Catholic High School. Evaluate the perception parents have of the competition compared to Bishop McNamara Catholic High School. Determine if the value of Bishop McNamara Catholic High School is perceived at a level on par with the tuition.**

MOMENCE

St. Patrick Academy, Momence

- 12. Close St. Patrick Academy at the end of the 2009-10 school year. Insofar as possible, use parish resources currently invested in school operations to provide transportation for students to other Catholic schools and for financial assistance to parishioner families who desire a Catholic education for their children.**

Strategies

- 12.1 The Catholic Schools Office will offer its assistance to families enrolled in St. Patrick Academy to help them find a place in other Catholic Schools. Such assistance will include but not be limited to: arranging multiple opportunities for the parents of students from St. Patrick Academy to meet representatives of neighboring schools and providing an understanding of the incentives available for their children to attend other schools.
- 12.2 The Diocese of Joliet will offer a scholarship of \$500.00 per child transferring from St. Patrick Academy in Momence, St. Mary School in West Chicago, or St. Joseph School in Joliet to another Catholic school within the Diocese of Joliet, for a period of two years. These funds would be provided directly to the school enrolling the child upon verification of enrollment.
- 12.3 Insofar as possible, students from St. Patrick Academy will be given first priority of entry into neighboring schools with openings.
- 12.4 Schools receiving children from St. Patrick Academy will be asked to receive those children at the same rate of tuition they were paying at St. Patrick Academy, if that tuition was less than the new school, for a period of two years (adjusted by an inflation factor of 3-4% in year 2).
- 12.5 The Catholic Schools Office will make every effort to assist the administration and faculty from St. Patrick Academy in finding positions in other Catholic schools.
- 12.6 Collaborate with the schools in Kankakee, Bradley and Bourbonnais to facilitate the transition of St. Patrick students.
- 12.7 To facilitate the transition, encourage collaboration among teachers at St. Patrick Academy and the Catholic schools families seem to identify with.

12.8 Investigate options for providing transportation from Momence to neighboring Catholic schools.

Rationale

- a. Overall K to 8 enrollment declined 50% (60 students) between 2003-04 and 2009-10. St. Patrick Academy operated at 58% of capacity in 2008-09. Average class size was 14 with 8 grades combined. Grades 1 and 2, Grades 3 and 4, Grades 5 and 6 and Grades 7 and 8 operate as multi-age classes.
- b. K to 8 enrollment is 60 students in 2009-10. St. Patrick Academy enrollment declined an average of 10 students per year over the past six years.
- c. In 2009-10, the smallest enrolled classes are first and third grades with 3 students in each class. In the recent past enrollment ranged between 3 and 12 kindergarten students. In 2008-09 the kindergarten was combined with the PreK program. Healthy kindergarten enrollment is necessary to create a strong base of students for upper grades.
- d. The Momence Public School District recently opened a preschool program. This free alternative is expected to have negative implications for St. Patrick Academy enrollment. Public school enrollments are reportedly in decline.
- e. In 2008-09 tuition was \$2,800 at St. Patrick Academy and \$3,550 at St. Joseph School in Bradley, a \$750 differential.

Parish Statistics – Average 2002 to 2008

Parish	Registered Households	Infant Baptisms	First Communion	09-10 K-8	
				2008 RE Enrollment	School Enrollment
St. Patrick	623	39	32	95	60

- f. The number of parishioners, infant baptisms, children receiving First Communion and those registered in the parish religious education program are small limiting the potential pool of children to populate the school.
- g. Tuition at St. Patrick Academy for the 2008-09 year was \$2,800, the lowest in Kankakee County and lower than the average diocesan tuition of \$3,290. Tuition at Aquinas Academy was \$2,810 and at St. Joseph School was \$3,550 during the same period. Despite low tuition, enrollment has fallen.
- h. In 2007-08 St. Patrick Parish invested 25% (\$53,000) of parish offertory income in the school. In 2006-07 parish support was \$166,000. Support decreased because the parish could not sustain the level of financial commitment and support other essential parish ministries.
- i. The school endowment was \$100,000. All funds were expended in past years, depleting this fund.
- j. In 2007-08 fundraising activities realized about \$137,000. While the effort generated substantial funds for the year, considerable monies will be needed every year to continue funding school operations.

PARK FOREST AND STEGER

St. Mary School, Park Forest
St. Liborius School, Steger and Crete

- 13. Merge St. Mary School in Park Forest with St. Liborius School in Steger to create a new multi-parish school at the Crete campus. During the transition period, the facility at St. Mary in Park Forest and St. Liborius in Crete may be used until a capital investment is made to provide adequate facilities at the Crete site. Study options to maintain pre-kindergarten programs at St. Mary in Park Forest for the long term.**

Strategies

- 13.1 Begin planning immediately for the transition and move forward as soon as feasible to assure a smooth transition and high retention. The new grade configuration and changes to facilities under a transition plan should be complete no later than the 2011-12 school year.
- 13.2 The parishes will work together to create a transition plan for the 2010-11 school year. Both parishes must prepare a realistic financial plan to balance their budgets in the transition year. The plan will be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office and Diocesan Finance Office for approval in order for the schools to operate in 2010-11. If the plan is not acceptable, reorganization of the schools will have to be considered for 2010-11.
- 13.3 Until facilities can be built at the Crete campus, locate the lower grades and PreK at the site of St. Mary School in Park Forest and the upper grades at the site of St. Liborius School in Crete. Discontinue use of the facilities in Steger as soon as possible.
- 13.4 In the plan for consolidation place special emphasis on marketing, tuition assistance, and excellent programs in a safe environment. Sensitivity must be given to diversity of cultures and backgrounds in the student body.

Rationale

- a. Enrollment for K-8 at St. Mary in Park Forest steadily declined in all grades from 189 in 2003-04 to 109 in 2009-10. The school operated at 45% of its enrollment capacity in 2008-09, and then combined 8 grades into 4 classes for 2009-10.
- b. Enrollment for K-8 at St. Liborius in Steger declined from 258 in 2003-04 to 176 in 2009-10. The school operated at 69% of its enrollment capacity in 2008-09, and then combined 2 grades into 1 class for 2009-10.
- c. Enrollment declines have continued despite active marketing and recruitment.
- d. Both sponsoring parishes have accumulated huge debts to the Diocese. Combined, these debts are over \$500,000 as of June 2009. While both parishes are back to making payments on their bills, the schools are not financially viable long term as they currently operate.

Parish Statistics – 2002 and 2008

Parish	Registered Households		Infant Baptisms		First Communions		2008 RE Enrollment
	2002	2008	2002	2008	2002	2008	
St. Mary, Park Forest	410	390	36	10	21	18	30
St. Liborius, Steger	2,500	2,187	89	65	93	75	240

- e. The school-age population has been declining around both schools.
- f. The schools are only 3.5 miles apart from each other.
- g. The Steger campus of St. Liborius is a 100 year-old building with long-term maintenance issues. Facilities at St. Mary in Park Forest also have maintenance issues. Concentrating capital investment at the Crete campus and adding new facilities will strengthen the quality of education and marketability of the new school.
- h. A combined school with good marketing, quality programs and modern facilities should be able to achieve sufficient enrollment to operate efficiently with one class per grade.

WILMINGTON

St. Rose School, Wilmington

14. St. Rose School will reinvent and promote itself as the Catholic school for Wilmington, South Wilmington, Braidwood, Coal City, Elwood, Diamond, Custer City, and Essex, and as a ministry shared by area parishes.

Strategies

- 14.1 Write a new mission for the school to reflect the role of the school and its relationship with other Catholic parishes in this area of the Diocese.
- 14.2 The Elwood area can also be served by St. Joseph School, Manhattan.

15. Parish and school leadership at St. Rose School will develop a plan to establish stronger, meaningful and ongoing relationships with all area Catholic parishes: Immaculate Conception Parish in Braidwood, Assumption Parish in Coal City and St. Lawrence Parish in South Wilmington. The purpose of the plan is to recruit additional students, increase enrollment and build the school’s image as the Catholic school for the area.

Strategies

- 15.1 The plan could incorporate the following possibilities:
 - Gather leadership from area parishes and build support for Catholic education and for the new mission of St. Rose School
 - Invite clergy and parish leaders to visit St. Rose School
 - Include all pastors and parish staffs on the school’s mailing list and communicate regularly
 - Create opportunities for all parish communities to participate in the life of the school
 - Consider a role for representation from these parishes to serve on the school board

- Identify service opportunities or other ways to connect student parishioners to their respective parishes and recognize their parish affiliation
 - Each parish openly shares baptismal data with St. Rose School and cooperates in connecting families of the newly baptized to the school
 - Invite parents of the newly baptized to attend school activities and become involved in the life of St. Rose School
- 15.2 An agreement between each parish and St. Rose School will be developed to support Catholic education and the families in these parishes desiring a Catholic education for their children. The Catholic Schools Office will facilitate a process to secure a commitment from each parish.
- 15.3 The agreement will be reviewed by each Pastoral Council and signed by each pastor. As new pastors come to the parishes, they will be expected to add their signatures to the document.
- 15.4 When it is necessary to assign new pastors, the agreement will be shared with potential pastor candidates. New pastors will be assigned knowing they are expected to support the agreement.
- 15.5 The agreement will be reviewed every three years according to the process stated in the agreement. Unless changes are recommended, it will remain in force. Changes will require the final approval of the Bishop.

16. St. Rose School should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable.

Strategy

- 16.1 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all members of the school community and service area parishes. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

Rationale

- a. St. Rose is the only Catholic school option for parents in Wilmington. If St. Rose School were to close, the presence of Catholic school education would no longer exist in this section of the Diocese. The nearest Catholic school is St. Joseph School in Manhattan to the northeast, a distance of 14.9 miles.
- b. Enrollment comes primarily from the town of Wilmington with smaller numbers of students from Coal City, Braidwood and South Wilmington, each of which has a Catholic parish. Smaller numbers of students also come from Custer Park, Elwood and Diamond, towns with no Catholic parishes.
- c. Overall K to 8 enrollment declined 22% (31 students) between 2003-04 and 2009-10. St. Rose School operated at 59% of capacity in 2008-09. Average class size was 16 with four grades combined. Grades 3 and 4 and grades 6 and 7 operate as multi-age classes. In 2009-10, kindergarten enrollment increased to 24 students.

- d. There was a small increase in the average number of registered households and in infant baptisms and a decline in First Communions for St. Rose Parish from 2002 to 2008.

PARISH STATISTICS AND PARISH DEMOGRAPHICS

Parish Statistics - Average 2002 to 2004 and 2006 to 2008

Parish	Registered Households		Infant Baptisms		First Communions		2008 RE Enrollment	09-10 K-8 School Enrollment
	St. Rose, Wilmington	738	781	38	40	40	30	137
Assumption, Coal City	1,105	832	63	36	46	30	259	
St. Lawrence, So. Wilm.	260	315	12	9	13	14	87	
I.C., Braidwood	573	607	21	22	31	21	136	

- e. St. Rose School declined 12 students on average for the past six years (2004-05 to 2009-10). Most of this decline is in the middle grades and reportedly due to a limited sports program for this age group. Kindergarten enrollments have ranged from 12 to 15 students. This number does not provide a feeder base that is financially viable for the long term.
- f. The parish invested 59% of parish offertory income in the school in 2008-09.
- g. Within the St. Rose School service area small overall population increases are estimated from 2000 to 2013. School-age population is projected to increase from 2000 to 2013.

B. Will County – City of Joliet

Observations and Rationale

Enrollment

School	03-04 K-8 Enrollment	09-10 K-8 Enrollment	% Change 03 to 09	08-09 % Catholic	08-09 K-8 Capacity	08-09 % of Capacity	08-09 # of Classes	08-09 Avg. K-8 Class Size
Cathedral of St. Raymond	450	471	5%	98%	522	90%	18	26
St. Paul the Apostle	356	359	1%	95%	474	76%	18	20
St. Patrick	285	170	-40%	88%	277	61%	9	19
St. Jude	240	170	-29%	91%	277	61%	9	19
St. Joseph	181	163	-10%	84%	260	63%	9	18
St. Mary Nativity	247	124	-50%	92%	277	45%	9	14
St. Mary Magdalene	90	closed		50%	213	38%	7	12
Total	1,849	1,457	-21%					

- a. Overall K to 8 enrollment decline since 2003-04 in the City of Joliet has been 392 students. No changes have been made to the organization of schools despite this decline, although one school was closed in June 2009.
- b. St. Mary Nativity School has had the greatest enrollment loss, declining by 123 students in K to 8 from 2003-04 to 2009-10.
- c. The second greatest enrollment loss was St. Patrick School, declining by 115 students in K to 8 from 2003-04 to 2009-10.
- d. The third greatest enrollment loss was St. Jude School, declining by 70 students in K to 8 from 2003-04 to 2009-10.
- e. Two schools have exhibited consistently strong enrollment: Cathedral of St. Raymond and St. Paul the Apostle.
- f. Many schools in Joliet have been actively marketing and still struggle to fill empty seats.
- g. For the 2008-09 fiscal year, only two parishes were able to cover their operating expenses: St. Paul the Apostle and Cathedral of St. Raymond.
- h. Four parishes have outstanding debts to the Diocese. These outstanding debts accrue because parishes fall delinquent on payments for property insurance, health insurance for staff, and diocesan assessment. As of June 30, 2009 St. Joseph, St. Patrick, St. Jude and St. Mary Nativity Parishes had total outstanding receivables to the Diocese of \$1,391,668.
- i. Parishes are running deficits and they do not have a plan to cover them. The ones most concerning are St. Joseph, St. Patrick, and St. Jude with deficits of \$236,000 and \$201,000 and \$240,000 respectively for 2008-09. Similar sized deficits are anticipated for 2009-10. The Diocese is not able to subsidize these deficits.
- j. St. Mary Nativity School is also a concern because the parish ran an operating deficit in 2008-09 of about \$140,000; however the parish was able to cover the deficit by using parish savings. St. Mary Nativity will continue to run operating deficits for 2009-10, but again the parish can cover those deficits by using savings. Over time, the depletion of savings will weaken the parish and school financially.
- k. For fiscal year 2008-09, parishes had deficits from operations of \$822,528. The parishes could not cover these deficits resulting in an indirect subsidy from the Diocese recorded as past due accounts receivable or unpaid bills.
- l. The cost of operating St. Joseph School, St. Mary Nativity School and St. Patrick School is likely to incur deficits of \$437,097 for the 2009-10 fiscal year. The parishes are not able to

absorb all of these deficits. The Diocese could be left to subsidize a potential shortfall of \$437,097.

- m. Operating the schools another year to allow time for a plan to come together for the Joliet area is likely to incur additional deficits which could be around \$677,000 for 2010-11. The parishes are most likely not able to absorb all of these deficits. The Diocese could be left to subsidize a potential shortfall of \$677,000.
- n. A recent facility review of St. Joseph School indicated the need for extensive capital improvements given the age of the building.
- o. The teacher:pupil ratio ranges from 20:1 to 12:1. When ratios drop below 19:1, the cost becomes more expensive and drives up subsidy or leads to unfunded expenses.
- p. The City of Joliet is a diverse population. The City of Joliet has 42,000 persons who are Hispanic or Latino, 29% of the population. There is also a significant African-American population of 23,600 persons, or 16% of the population.
- q. Depending on the area of the city, the Hispanic population can be 22% up to 46% of the population. In those areas with a high Hispanic population up to one-third of the population would speak Spanish at home.
- r. Three schools in the Joliet area reflect significant diversity: St. Patrick, St. Mary Nativity and St. Joseph.
- s. Depending on the area of the city, median family household income can range from \$44,700 to \$80,900.

17. In the fall of 2010, in partnership with the University of Notre Dame's ACE and IEI programs, begin a study of the feasibility of establishing a new Catholic school on the east side of the City of Joliet to serve the specific needs of the large immigrant population in that area of the city. Models such as the San Miguel Schools and Nativity School, which specifically address the educational needs of families in impoverished neighborhoods, will be given strong consideration. Common elements in such schools are support services for students and their families, exceptional academic programs with small classes, an extended academic day and longer school year, and in-depth awareness of critical cultural and language issues. These schools have depended largely on the generosity of donors to support their mission.

18. Close St. Joseph School at the end of the 2009-10 academic year and assist families in enrolling in another Catholic school in Joliet. Encourage St. Joseph Parish to assist parish families with tuition at a new school by use of earnings from its education endowment.

Strategies

- 18.1 The Catholic Schools Office will offer its assistance to families enrolled in St. Joseph School to help them find a place in other Catholic Schools. Such assistance will include but not be limited to: arranging multiple opportunities for the parents of students from St. Joseph School to meet representatives of neighboring schools and providing an understanding of the incentives available for their children to attend other schools.

- 18.2 The Diocese of Joliet will offer a scholarship of \$500.00 per child transferring from St. Joseph School in Momence, St. Mary School in West Chicago, or St. Joseph School in Joliet to another Catholic school within the Diocese of Joliet, for a period of two years. These funds would be provided directly to the school enrolling the child upon verification of enrollment.
- 18.3 Insofar as possible, students from St. Joseph School will be given first priority of entry into neighboring schools with openings.
- 18.4 Schools receiving children from St. Joseph School will be asked to receive those children at the same rate of tuition they were paying at St. Joseph School, if that tuition was less than the new school, for a period of two years (adjusted by an inflation factor of 3-4% in year 2).
- 18.5 The Catholic Schools Office will make every effort to assist the administration and faculty from St. Joseph School in finding positions in other Catholic schools.
- 18.6 Collaborate with all the schools in the Joliet area to facilitate the transition of St. Joseph students. Create opportunities for students and families to visit other Catholic schools to gain knowledge and build relationships.
- 18.7 All receiving schools will design a welcoming program for any new incoming families from St. Joseph School. After families move, retention should be a high priority.
- 18.8 Invite the Catholic schools in the Joliet area to a schools fair at St. Joseph School. Provide information to St. Joseph families. Track the plans each family has for their students and have a process for personal follow-up to ensure each family finds the best education for their children.
- 18.9 Study the feasibility of providing quality pre-kindergarten and kindergarten program with extended day care at St. Joseph School.

19. St. Mary Nativity should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office.

Strategies

- 19.1 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.
- 19.2 St. Mary Nativity Parish and School will provide quarterly reports to the Diocesan Finance Office within four weeks of the end of each quarter. In addition and as a condition of operating the school for 2010-11, the parish will provide a balanced budget based on realistic assumptions by March 1.
- 19.3 The parish will not be allowed to use restricted funds, savings or other assets to fund annual operating costs. If this is not possible immediately, a plan will be submitted and approved by the Diocese to achieve this. While investment income from these sources

including endowment funds can be used, the principal will be preserved for special projects, capital improvements, or endowment and not for operations. If a donor makes a donation specifically for underwriting operational expenses, the school must have a plan to continue funding after the gift has been used.

- 20. St. Patrick School should continue in accordance with its proposal/report, which commits the school to academic excellence, financial stability, and repayment of debt. By February 28, 2010 a more detailed plan regarding quality education, marketing, enrollment and financial initiatives must be submitted and discussed with the Catholic Schools Office and Diocesan Finance Office.**

Strategy

- 20.1 An evaluation will be conducted and completed no later than February 1, 2011, to determine if the parish and school has made sufficient progress to continue school operations in the 2011-12 school year.
- 20.2 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

- 21. St. Jude School should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office.**

Strategy

- 21.1 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

- 22. The pastors, administration and boards of St. Mary Nativity, St. Patrick and St. Jude Schools will continue to work together to evaluate options to best provide Catholic school education in their areas of the city. Furthermore, they will be committed participants in the partnership between the Diocese of Joliet and the University of Notre Dame's ACE and IEI programs.**

- 23. Establish an effective structure to promote and coordinate collaborative initiatives among all the parishes and schools in the City of Joliet.**

- 24. Continue to develop the partnership with St. Francis University and schools in the City of Joliet to enhance student and teacher learning opportunities.**

C. Will County – Outside of Joliet

BOLINGBROOK

St. Dominic School and St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Bolingbrook

- 25. St. Dominic School in Bolingbrook should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office.**

Strategy

- 25.1 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

- 26. The long-standing relationship between St. Dominic School and St. Francis of Assisi Parish should continue and be formally documented with agreed-upon terms.**

Strategies

- 26.1 The agreement will include financial considerations, meaningful participation by St. Francis Parish in the life of St. Dominic School, and marketing St. Dominic School as a ministry of both parishes. The agreement will be designed around a template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.
- 26.2 The agreement will be reviewed by each Pastoral Council and signed by each pastor. As new pastors come to the parishes, they will be expected to add their signatures to the document.
- 26.3 When it is necessary to assign new pastors, the agreement will be shared with potential pastor candidates. New pastors will be assigned knowing they are expected to support the agreement.
- 26.4 The agreement will be reviewed every three years according to the process stated in the agreement. Unless changes are recommended, it will remain in force. Changes will require the final approval of the Bishop.
- 26.5 St. Francis of Assisi Parish will have a meaningful role in the life of St. Dominic School. For example: representation on the school board as outlined in the bylaws; St. Dominic Parish will provide an annual school financial report to St. Francis of

Assisi Parish; participation in the school development program; involvement in school community functions and events; providing spiritual programs for staff and students.

27. The pastor and administration of St. Dominic School will be committed participants in the partnership between the Diocese of Joliet and the University of Notre Dame's ACE and IEI programs.

28. A marketing plan will be developed to promote St. Dominic School as a ministry of St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi Parishes and to increase enrollment from both parishes.

Strategies

- 28.1 Create and utilize school brochures, website, letterheads, advertising materials, etc. that identify St. Dominic School as a ministry of both parishes.
- 28.2 Initiate and coordinate a program that connects all families of newly-baptized children from both parishes to St. Dominic School. Include these families on the school's mailing list, communicate on a regular basis and invite them to school activities and events.
- 28.3 Conduct focus groups with parents of school-age children in both parishes to learn how St. Dominic School is viewed and to better understand what motivates parents to choose a school for their children.
- 28.4 Meet with leaders in the Hispanic community from both parishes. Invite them to suggest the best ways to build support for St. Dominic School among Hispanic families. Pursue a similar initiative with other groups identified in the parish.

LOCKPORT

St. Dennis School, Lockport
St. Joseph School, Lockport

29. Continue PreK through 8 education at St. Dennis School and St. Joseph School in Lockport. Each school remains a parish school and will collaborate with the other as much as possible for the greater mission of Catholic education in Lockport. The schools will work together to build relationships with other Catholic parishes in Lockport and Homer Glen.

Strategies

- 29.1 Each school will develop its own strategic plan and identify common elements where both schools will collaborate in formal ways and share resources for the greater mission of Catholic education in Lockport. A plan for collaboration will be developed and presented to each board. The Catholic Schools Office will be given a designated role to hold these school communities accountable for collaboration and for the implementation of the plan.
- 29.2 St. Dennis School and St. Joseph School will refer and actively encourage parents of students who cannot enroll in one school due to limited space to enroll in the other Catholic school in Lockport.
- 29.3 Create an inter-parish tuition policy allowing parents to pay "in parish tuition rate" at either school.

30. **The two Lockport schools will work together in a unified effort to build relationships with St. John Vianney and Annunciation Byzantine Parishes in Lockport and St. Bernard and Our Mother of Good Counsel Parishes in Homer Glen to promote Catholic school education among parishioner families, recruit students and increase enrollment to 90% of capacity or better in each school.**

ROMEDEVILLE

St. Andrew the Apostle School, Romeoville

31. **St. Andrew the Apostle School in Romeoville should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office.**

Strategy

- 31.1 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.
32. **St. Andrew the Apostle School pastor, principal and school board will collaborate in efforts to stabilize and build student enrollment and operate at 90% or more of capacity. The Catholic Schools Office will continue to provide leadership training, assist in addressing personnel issues and ensure students receive a quality educational program.**

Strategies

- 32.1 Establish a marketing/recruitment/retention subcommittee of the school board to actively address school enrollment issues.
- 32.2 Initiate an enrollment management program to specifically address the retention of existing students from year to year.
- 32.3 Target students enrolled in the on-site "Polish School" and Hispanic parishioner families as new sources of additional student enrollment. Initiate a specific outreach to Hampton Park neighborhood families.
- 32.4 Assess the educational program and co-curricular offerings in light of enrollment declines. Specifically address the reasons for loss of enrollment from K to grade 1 as well as in grades 5-8.
- 32.5 Continue to develop the partnership with Lewis University to enhance student and teacher learning opportunities.

33. The pastor, administration and board of St. Andrew the Apostle School will be committed participants in the partnership between the Diocese of Joliet and the University of Notre Dame's ACE and IEI programs.
34. Consider the feasibility of Phase III of the parish building plan including the gymnasium only when enrollment levels in all grades are stable, waiting lists are beginning to develop and the school's financial position is strong.

D. DuPage County

ADDISON, BENSENVILLE, ITASCA AND WOOD DALE

St. Philip the Apostle School, Addison
 Holy Family Catholic School, Bensenville/Addison (formerly St. Charles Borromeo and St. Joseph – formed in September 2009)
 St. Peter the Apostle School, Itasca
 Holy Ghost School, Wood Dale

35. Operate three schools to serve the Addison, Bensenville, Itasca, Wood Dale area: St. Philip the Apostle School (Addison), Holy Family Catholic School (located at St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bensenville) and a multi-parish school created by the consolidation of Holy Ghost School (Wood Dale) and St. Peter the Apostle School (Itasca).

Rationale

- a. There are too many schools with excess capacity in this section of the Diocese. Demographic data and parish statistics do not indicate future populations will justify operating four schools and achieving optimum enrollments.
- b. Overall K to 8 enrollment in the schools declined 374 students from 2003-04 to 2009-10. Each school offers single classes of PreK3 to grade 8. Four of five schools operated at 57% or less of capacity in 2008-09. St. Peter the Apostle School operated at 49% of capacity and Holy Ghost School operated at 57% of capacity in 2008-09. Only St. Philip the Apostle School operated at optimum capacity, 97%. Overall, there were 403 empty seats across all five schools in 2008-09.

Enrollment

School	03-04 K-8 Enrollment	09-10 K-8 Enrollment	% Change 03 to 09	08-09 K-8 Capacity	08-09 % of Capacity
Holy Ghost	187	163	-13%	277	57%
St. Peter the Apostle	179	117	-35%	245	49%
St. Philip the Apostle	287	282	-2%	277	97%
St. Joseph	179	0		275	44%
St. Charles Borromeo	240	0		242	50%
Holy Family (opened 9/09)		136			
Total	1,072	698	-35%	1,316	60%

- c. The ethnic composition of the student population varies among the schools. St. Philip the Apostle and St. Peter the Apostle Schools serve the least ethnically diverse population. Continued growth in Hispanic population is projected in Addison, Bensenville, Itasca and Wood Dale.

Ethnic Composition of Enrollment 2008-09

School	Other/				
	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-Racial
Holy Ghost	3%	1%	11%	80%	5%
St. Peter the Apostle	7%	0%	1%	91%	1%
St. Philip the Apostle	5%	0%	3%	92%	1%
St. Joseph	6%	0%	42%	48%	3%
St. Charles Borromeo	5%	0%	23%	68%	4%

- d. Holy Family Catholic School is a newly-formed school resulting from combining two parish schools. Holy Family School, a merger/consolidation of St. Joseph School and St. Charles Borromeo School, opened in September 2009 with 136 students in K to 8. The total K to 8 enrollment was 240 for the two schools in 2008-09. The two school communities have experienced many challenges through the change process and continue working through the transition.
- e. St. Philip the Apostle School has a strong tradition of operating with full enrollment and from a strong financial position.
- f. Overall K to 8 enrollment in St. Peter the Apostle and Holy Ghost Schools declined 86 students from 2003-04 to 2009-10. K to 8 enrollment at St. Peter the Apostle is 117 and 163 at Holy Ghost in 2009-10. Average class size in 2008-09 at St. Peter the Apostle was 13 students and at Holy Ghost was 18 students.
- g. School-age population is projected to remain stable in Itasca and decline in Wood Dale from 2000 to 2013. Small growth in school-age population is projected for Addison and Bensenville.

36. Consolidate St. Peter the Apostle School and Holy Ghost School into one multi-parish school at the Holy Ghost site, starting with the 2010-11 school year. Begin discussion immediately regarding a new name for the school, school administration and faculty, and school board formation.

Strategies

- 36.1 Encourage collaboration among teachers of same grade levels from both schools to engage students in common academic, social and co-curricular experiences. Take steps to bring the school communities together.
 - 36.2 Provide opportunities for faculties to come together for staff development, professional enrichment and social gatherings.
 - 36.3 Provide shared opportunities for school communities to celebrate the religious mission of the schools (i.e. liturgical seasons of the Church, sacraments, Catholic Schools Week).
 - 36.4 Provide administrators and teachers opportunities to further their understanding and appreciation of Hispanic culture.
- 37. The executive pastor, administration and board of Holy Family School will be committed participants in the partnership between the Diocese of Joliet and the University of Notre Dame’s ACE and IEI programs.**
- 38. Holy Family Catholic School, currently operating at two sites, should consolidate to one site at St. Charles Borromeo Parish, beginning with the 2010-11 school year. Holy Family Catholic School should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable**

according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office.

Strategies

- 38.1 As a condition of operating the school for 2010-11, the school will provide a balanced budget based on realistic assumptions by March 1. Holy Family School will provide quarterly reports to the Diocesan Finance Office within four weeks of the end of each quarter. If Holy Family School does not provide the required financial data in a timely manner, the Diocese will take additional measures to intervene.
- 38.2 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

39. Parish and school leadership at St. Philip the Apostle, Holy Family, St. Peter the Apostle and Holy Ghost will collaborate in planning intentional ways for these school communities to work together.

Downers Grove

St. Joseph School, Downers Grove
St. Mary of Gostyn School, Downers Grove

40. Parish and school leadership at St. Joseph School and St. Mary of Gostyn School will create opportunities to work together in formal ways to strengthen Catholic education and share resources in Downers Grove.

Strategies

- 40.1 Develop and operate with a common school calendar.
- 40.2 Identify staff positions and programs that could benefit both schools, develop a budget and share costs.
- 40.3 When waiting lists occur, St. Joseph and St. Mary of Gostyn school leadership will actively encourage parents to enroll in the other Catholic school in Downers Grove.
- 40.4 Maintain quality programs and excellent facilities so that both schools are strong institutions and one does not become weak and the other become stronger.
- 40.5 Initiate an annual joint meeting of both school boards.
- 40.6 Develop partnerships with the business community and professional organizations in Downers Grove to strengthen educational initiatives and expand opportunities for students.

40.7 Initiate discussions between St. Joseph School and St. Mary of Gostyn School to investigate the future possibility of a multi-parish school in Downers Grove.

41. St. Joseph School and St. Mary of Gostyn School will work together in a unified effort to build relationships with the leadership and parishioners of Divine Savior Parish.

Strategies

- 41.1 Provide opportunities for leadership of the three parishes to meet and discuss what is needed to further develop existing relationships and how to accomplish this.
- 41.2 Include Divine Savior Parish leadership in all school communications. Promote school programs/achievements within the parish community. Invite participation in school events and functions.
- 41.3 Form an agreement with Divine Savior Parish to document and formalize the relationship. An agreement should also be formed with other parishes without schools located within the area served by St. Joseph School and St. Mary of Gostyn School. The agreement will follow a template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.
- 41.4 The agreement will be reviewed by each Pastoral Council and signed by each pastor. As new pastors come to the parishes, they will be expected to add their signatures to the document.
- 41.5 When it is necessary to assign new pastors, the agreement will be shared with potential pastor candidates. New pastors will be assigned knowing they are expected to support the agreement.
- 41.6 The agreement will be reviewed every three years according to the process stated in the agreement. Unless changes are recommended, it will remain in force. Changes will require the final approval of the Bishop.

42. Continue to function with two classes per grade in both schools but monitor enrollment trends so neither school starts down a path of funding small classes at a high cost.

Strategy

- 42.1 If enrollment drops below a predetermined number, particularly at kindergarten or 1st grade, seriously consider operating with only one class instead of two. A number like 22 per class would be an appropriate threshold.

Rationale

- a. The schools are geographically close to each other, a distance of .7 miles, and share common enrollment areas.

Enrollment

School	04-05 K-8 Enrollment	09-10 K-8 Enrollment	% Change 04 to 09
St. Joseph	418	405	-3%
St. Mary of Gostyn	522	486	-7%
Total	940	891	-5%

- b. Overall enrollment in these schools declined 49 students (-5%) between 2004-05 and 2009-10. As school-age populations further decline, fewer classes will be needed to serve the base of students in this geographic area.
- c. Average class size in grades 1 to 8 at St. Joseph School and St. Mary of Gostyn School was 22 and 28, respectively, in 2008-09. There are many classes now operating at 60% to 70% of capacity.
- d. School-age population (ages 5-14) is projected to decline from 2000 to 2013 in Downers Grove. Elementary public school enrollments were stable between 2002-03 and 2007-08.
- e. Divine Savior Parish is the only other parish in Downers Grove. It does not have its own school. Both St. Joseph and St. Mary of Gostyn Schools draw enrollment from this parish. In the past Divine Savior Parish had contributed to the financial support of St. Joseph School.

Parish Statistics – Average 2002 to 2004 and 2006 to 2008

Parish	Registered Households		Infant Baptisms		First Communion		2008 RE Enrollment
	2002	2004	2002	2004	2002	2004	
Divine Savior	2,185	2,218	47	36	71	51	406
St. Joseph	2,185	2,217	107	68	111	103	417
St. Mary of Gostyn	2,926	2,775	115	103	155	142	602
Total	7,296	7,210	269	207	337	296	1,425

- f. There was a decline in numbers of infant baptisms and First Communion between 2002 and 2008 in each parish. Religious education enrollment numbers decreased in St. Joseph Parish and increased in St. Mary of Gostyn Parish and Divine Savior Parish from 2007 to 2008.
- g. The decline in overall baptisms is of particular concern since schools rely on newly baptized infants as feeders for future enrollment in preschool programs. The decline is most pronounced at St. Joseph Parish, a 36% decline in infant baptisms.

LOMBARD AND VILLA PARK

Sacred Heart School, Lombard
 St. Alexander School, Villa Park
 St. Pius X School, Lombard
 Christ the King Early Learning Academy, Lombard

- 43. Continue to provide PreK through 8 education at St. Pius X School and Sacred Heart School in Lombard. Continue to operate each school as a parish school.**
- 44. Continue Christ the King Early Learning Academy in Lombard as a PreK3, PreK4 and kindergarten program. The Academy should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office.**

Strategy

- 44.1 Christ the King Early Learning Academy should not add a 1st grade since there is no viable plan to serve those children through 8th grade. Rather, children who wish to enroll in first grade should enroll at St. Pius X School or Sacred Heart School.

44.2 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

- 45. St. Alexander School in Villa Park should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office. An evaluation will be conducted and completed no later than February 1, 2011, to determine if the school's proposal for continuance has made sufficient progress to continue school operations in the 2011-12 school year.**

Strategy

45.1 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

- 46. Parish and school leadership in Lombard and Villa Park will create opportunities to work together in formal ways to strengthen Catholic education and share resources in this area of the Diocese.**

Strategies

- 46.1 If faced with limited space in their respective preschool programs, St. Pius X School, Sacred Heart School and St. Alexander School will continue to refer and encourage parents of preschoolers to enroll at Christ the King. Christ the King will actively direct parents of children completing their preschool program to enroll in grade 1 in St. Pius X, Sacred Heart or St. Alexander Schools.
- 46.2 Conduct an annual joint meeting of school boards to enhance communication, build relationships and create support for their common mission.
- 46.3 Establish an inter-parish policy whereby parents enroll children in any school at the parishioner tuition rate.
- 46.4 Identify staff positions and programs that could benefit these schools, develop a budget and share costs.
- 46.5 Create a common marketing brochure with information about each school.
- 46.6 Develop partnerships with the local business community and professional organizations to strengthen educational initiatives and expand opportunities across all schools.

- 47. St. Pius X Parish, Sacred Heart Parish, and St. Alexander Parish will develop formal agreements with Christ the King Parish to promote active moral and financial support, ongoing communication and involvement in Catholic education. The will follow a template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.**

Strategies

- 47.1 The agreement will be reviewed by each Pastoral Council and signed by each pastor. As new pastors come to the parishes, they will be expected to add their signatures to the document.
- 47.2 When it is necessary to assign new pastors, the agreement will be shared with potential pastor candidates. New pastors will be assigned knowing they are expected to support the agreement.
- 47.3 The agreement will be reviewed every three years according to the process stated in the agreement. Unless changes are recommended, it will remain in force. Changes will require the final approval of the Bishop.

- 48. St. Pius X School, Sacred Heart School and Christ the King Early Learning Academy will work together in a unified effort to build relationships and promote Catholic education among families in St. John the Apostle Parish and Divine Mercy Polish Mission.**

Strategies

- 48.1 Provide opportunities for leadership of these parishes to meet and discuss what is needed to further develop existing relationships and how to accomplish this.
- 48.2 Include St. John the Apostle Parish and Divine Mercy Polish Mission leadership in all school communications. Promote school programs/achievements within the parish communities. Invite participation in school events and functions.
- 48.3 Form an agreement with St. John the Apostle Parish and Divine Mercy Polish Mission to document the relationship. The agreement will follow a template prescribed by the Catholic Schools Office.
- 48.4 The agreement will be reviewed by each Pastoral Council and signed by each pastor. As new pastors come to the parishes, they will be expected to add their signatures to the document.
- 48.5 When it is necessary to assign new pastors, the agreement will be shared with potential pastor candidates. New pastors will be assigned knowing they are expected to support the agreement.
- 48.6 The agreement will be reviewed every three years according to the process stated in the agreement. Unless changes are recommended, it will remain in force. Changes will require the final approval of the Bishop.
- 48.7 Recognize Seton Academy, a Montessori school serving students ages 3-12 at St. John's Parish. Study the relationship between the parish and the school to determine what, if any, implications an agreement between the St. John Parish and area Catholic schools may have on St. John's relationship with Seton Academy. The Catholic Schools Office

should review the situation to ensure the Seton Academy does not pose harmful competition to other Catholic schools in the area.

Rationale

Parish Statistics – Average 2002 to 2004 and 2006 to 2008

Parish/Mission	Registered Households		Infant Baptisms		First Communion		2008 RE Enrollment
Divine Mercy Polish Mission	378	940	55	89	69	82	900
St. John the Apostle Parish	637	680	24	22	21	13	73
Total	1,015	1,620	79	111	90	95	973

- a. Divine Mercy Polish Mission has large numbers of students in its religious education program and the number of infant baptisms is increasing.

WARRENVILLE, WEST CHICAGO AND WINFIELD

- St. Irene School, Warrenville
- St. Mary School, West Chicago
- St. John the Baptist School, Winfield

49. Close St. Mary School in West Chicago at the end of the current academic year and assist families in enrolling in other Catholic schools, especially St. John the Baptist in Winfield and St. Irene in Warrenville.

Strategies

- 49.1 The Catholic Schools Office will offer its assistance to families enrolled in St. Mary School to help them find a place in other Catholic Schools. Such assistance will include but not be limited to: arranging multiple opportunities for the parents of students from St. Mary School to meet representatives of neighboring schools and providing an understanding of the incentives available for their children to attend other schools.
- 49.2 The Diocese of Joliet will offer a scholarship of \$500.00 per child transferring from St. Patrick Academy in Momence, St. Mary School in West Chicago, or St. Joseph School in Joliet to another Catholic school within the Diocese of Joliet, for a period of two years. These funds would be provided directly to the school enrolling the child upon verification of enrollment.
- 49.3 Insofar as possible, students from St. Mary School will be given first priority of entry into neighboring schools with openings.
- 49.4 Schools receiving children from St. Mary School will be asked to receive those children at the same rate of tuition they were paying at St. Mary School, if that tuition was less than the new school, for a period of two years (adjusted by an inflation factor of 3-4% in year 2).
- 49.5 The Catholic Schools Office will make every effort to assist the administration and faculty from St. Mary School in finding positions in other Catholic schools.

50. In the fall of 2010, in partnership with the University of Notre Dame’s ACE and IEI programs, begin a study of the feasibility of establishing a new Catholic school at the St. Mary West Chicago site to serve the specific needs of the large immigrant population of the parish. Models such as the San Miguel Schools and Nativity School, which specifically address the educational needs of families in impoverished neighborhoods, will be given strong consideration.

Rationale

School	03-04 K-8 Enrollment	09-10 K-8 Enrollment	% Change 03 to 09	08-09 K-8 Capacity	08-09 % of Capacity
St. Mary	173	127	-27%	265	52%

- St. Mary School operated at 52% of capacity with 127 empty seats in 2008-09.
- St. Mary had a deficit of \$237,000 in 2008-09 that could not be funded by the parish. For 2009-10, the deficit is likely to be over \$300,000. The parish does not have a viable financial plan to continue operation of the school. A different approach is necessary for Catholic education to be viable.
- The St. Mary School facility is inadequate for the long term. The parish is in need of a new church building to serve the growing number of parishioners. Parking for parish activities is a major impediment.
- School-age population in West Chicago is projected to grow from 2000 to 2013. Much of this is attributed to growth in the number of Hispanic children.
- Overall population was projected to increase from 2000 to 2007 in West Chicago. However, St. Mary School has not drawn from this new population.
- St. Mary School enrollment in 2008-09 was 17% Hispanic; yet 61% of the general population within a three-mile radius of St. Mary School is estimated to be of Hispanic origin.

Parish Statistics – Average 2002 to 2004 and 2006 to 2008

Parish	Registered Households		Infant Baptisms		First Communions		2008 RE Enrollment
	St. Mary	2,694	2,246	231	187	95	89

51. **St. Irene School in Warrenville should continue as long as it is able to provide quality Catholic education and is financially viable according to benchmarks to be developed by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Finance Office. These benchmarks will include issues of enrollment, facilities, and funding.**

Strategies

- 51.1 The Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with school and parish leadership will develop specific and measurable benchmarks for viability with a timeline for accomplishing them. These criteria will be communicated to all leaders of the parish and school community. Enrollment and finances will be monitored in keeping with developed criteria and timeline. The Catholic Schools Office will be responsible for

reviewing the school's status and determining if the school should remain open or if restructuring is required.

- 51.2 St. Irene School will continue to work to execute the strategic plan for the school. Progress will be evaluated in conjunction with evaluating benchmarks.
- 51.3 As part of the strategic plan, develop a comprehensive facility plan and formulate a funding plan that will lead to a capital campaign.
- 51.4 St. Irene Parish and School will provide quarterly reports to the Diocesan Finance Office within four weeks of the end of each quarter. In addition and as a condition of operating the school for 2010-11, the parish will provide a balanced budget based on realistic assumptions by March 1.

52. St. Irene School and St. John the Baptist School in Winfield should examine how they can better serve the Hispanic community as well as other minority groups in the region. The pastors, administration and boards of these schools will be committed participants in the partnership between the Diocese of Joliet and the University of Notre Dame's ACE and IEI programs.

Strategies

- 52.1 Examine the school mission and determine how diversity will be part of the future of the school.
- 52.2 Examine programs and staffing to identify ways to better serve a diverse community.
- 52.3 Research and work directly with schools that have successfully made a transition to greater diversity. Identify best practices to recruit more students of diverse backgrounds, and in particular reach out to the Catholic community in and around West Chicago.
- 52.4 Collaborate with Diocesan Office of Hispanic Ministry to understand specific ways the office interacts with and serves Hispanics in the region. Seek advice and support of this office in promoting the value and benefit of a Catholic school education.
- 52.5 Create marketing materials in the Spanish language, hire bilingual school personnel and incorporate Spanish language into the school website.
- 52.6 Work with Hispanic families currently enrolled in Catholic schools in the region. Seek advice about motivators that lead families to enroll children and about what obstacles may prevent families from enrolling children. Invite and train these families to be "ambassadors" for Catholic education.

ELMHURST

Immaculate Conception High School, Elmhurst

- 53. Immaculate Conception High School will continue to operate as a parish high school governed by a board of trustees granted limited jurisdiction by the pastor. Several adjustments to the governance model are recommended, and financial reporting between the parish and high school will begin to properly identify and allocate costs associated with use of shared facilities.**

Strategies

- 53.1 Revise the bylaws of the board of trustees to specify the reserved powers of the parish pastor. Authority not specifically reserved to the pastor or to the Bishop is given to the board. The Bishop should approve the revised bylaws.
- 53.2 The specified powers of the board should be modified as follows:
- Section 4f: the board can receive a budget and recommend it for approval, but the pastor retains the right to approve. The board should also be required to recommend a balanced budget based in realistic assumptions.
- Section 4h: candidates for the board of trustees are recommended by the board but approved by the pastor. Furthermore, the Bishop, not the pastor, reserves the right to dismiss the board if the board acts in a manner that is inconsistent with the mission of the school or parish.
- Section 4k: the board may recommend removal of the principal but the pastor retains the right to approve.
- Section 4k: modify to say the board may recommend hiring of the principal but the pastor retains the right to approve. Add that principal candidates will be screened and preapproved by the Catholic Schools Office.
- 53.3 Add language to the bylaws to specify how the bylaws can be amended. Amendments should require the approval of the Bishop.
- 53.4 Financial reporting between the parish and the high school will identify and properly allocate costs associated with use of shared facilities. The high school should continue to receive the support of the parish for use of the facilities, but it should be recognized as an indirect parish investment rather than be a hidden subsidy.

XII. NEW SCHOOLS AND EXPANSION

Nine growth areas of the Diocese have been identified as potentially underserved by Catholic schools now or in the next twenty years. The counties of Grundy, Kankakee, Kendall and Will had a combined population growth of 174,086 from 1990 to 2000, and are projected to have a combined population growth of 745,000 from 2000 to 2030. Will County will have most of the growth, with the number of persons projected to increase 573,000 from 2000 to 2030.

Before any decision is made to move ahead with any proposed new school, the expectation is that a comprehensive and professional feasibility study will be conducted according to guidelines established by the Catholic Schools Office. The study will measure potential enrollment, evaluate competition, study impact on existing schools, verify demographic trends, assess parent expectations, test tuition parents will pay, and consider other related matters. Final decisions will be based on the outcome of the study.

The following recommendations are long-range and do not have specific timelines associated with them at this time.

A. Channahon and Minooka

1. Study the feasibility of opening a school in the Channahon/Minooka area to serve St. Ann and St. Mary Parishes.

Rationale

- a. From 1990 to 2007, Channahon grew 7,840 persons and Minooka grew 2,210 persons. According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Channahon is projected to reach 22,230 by 2030 and Minooka is projected to be 5,400.
- b. St. Ann Parish in Channahon increased the number of registered households each year between 2002 and 2008 from 717 to 1,277. St. Ann Parish recently built a new church to accommodate this growth.
- c. St. Mary Parish in Minooka increased the number of registered households from 800 to 1,050 between 2002 and 2008. The parish plans to build a new church to accommodate growth.
- d. The number of infant baptisms and children receiving First Communion increased in both parishes between 2002 and 2008.
- e. School-age (5-14) populations in Channahon and in Minooka are projected to continue to grow past 2013.
- f. Minooka public school enrollments increased 2,000 students (134%) between 2002-03 and 2007-08. Channahon public school enrollments increased 203 students (14%) during the same period. A second public high school was recently built to serve this area.

B. Frankfort

2. Study the feasibility of opening a school in the Frankfort area.

Rationale

- a. St. Anthony Parish has 3,500 households. About 130 children are baptized and about 225 children receive First Communion annually. Religious education enrollment is over 1,500 students.
- b. St. Anthony Parish may have a building that is designed for use as a Catholic school.

- c. A new parish could be established in this area and would be a natural feeder to a Catholic school.
- d. Frankfort Village could grow from a population of about 17,400 in 2007 to more than 55,000 by 2030.
- e. Noonan Academy in Mokena enrolls a number of St. Anthony parishioners. This should be factored into consideration of a new school in the Frankfort area and further cooperation with Noonan Academy should be explored.

C. Homer Glen

3. Study the feasibility of building a new school in the Homer Glen area.

Rationale

- a. Homer Glen is a large geographic area that could have a population close to 50,000 sometime in the future.
- b. St. Bernard Parish has 1,800 households. Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish has 1,400 households, almost doubling in size over the past six years. Combined, the parishes baptize about 130 children annually.
- c. The new I-355 corridor will bring growth and development to this area of Will County.
- d. Consideration of a school in Homer Glen must take into account potential impact on enrollment at St. Dennis and St. Joseph Schools in Lockport.

D. Kankakee

4. Plan for long-term growth north and west of Kankakee by studying the feasibility of opening a new school or expanding Maternity BVM School. Other options to consider: Expand Maternity BVM School at the present site; move Maternity BVM School to a new and larger site; or build a new school at St. Joseph Parish, Manteno or at St. George Parish, St. George.

Rationale

- a. Expansion must take into consideration enrollment trends among Kankakee schools. A plan to expand may be very long term and is dependent on economic growth in the region.
- b. Further rationale is given in the Strategic Plan. See *Chapter VIII. New Directions and Restructuring*.

E. Kendall County

5. Study the feasibility of opening a second school in Kendall County to serve the fast-growing population.

Rationale

- a. Growth in population in Kendall County was estimated to have increased 77% from 54,633 in 2000 to 96,818 in 2007, an increase of 42,528 persons. This county is located at the edge of the Chicago collar counties. The resident median age in Kendall County is reported to be 34.1 years. February 2009, USA TODAY reported Kendall County as the fastest growing county in the country. Continued population growth is projected to occur.

- b. Kendall County may have a projected population increase of 80,000 persons (82%) over the next 20 years.
- c. The city of Yorkville in Kendall County had the state's second largest increase in population from 2006-07 growing at an estimated 20.5%. Traditionally a farming community, Yorkville is growing quickly into a suburb.
- d. Oswego, also in Kendall County, ranked 7th in the state in percent population increases between 2007 and 2008.
- e. School-age population (5-14) is projected to continue growing from 2000 to 2013. The largest growth is projected to occur in Oswego Village.
- f. Transportation plans call for an extension of I-80 to run north through Kendall County just west of Yorkville and east of Plano opening. The new corridor will provide opportunity for growth and development.
- g. There are three parishes serving Catholic families in Kendall County: St. Anne in Oswego, St. Mary in Plano and St. Patrick in Yorkville. The number of registered households increased by a total of 2,382 (58%) between 2002 and 2008 to be 6,500 households. The number of overall baptisms increased 51 (18%) and the overall number children receiving First Communion increased 44 (12%) during the same period. The overall number of children in parish religious education classes is 2,500 for 2008.

F. Manhattan

6. Study the feasibility of expanding St. Joseph School in Manhattan, perhaps at a new site if the current site proves to be landlocked.

Rationale

- a. Manhattan Village is in a position to grow significantly. While population was only 6,700 in 2007, it could become more than 44,000 by 2030 or sometime after.
- b. Manhattan is potentially a bedroom community for the employment growth potential in northern Will County. Manhattan is connected to Chicago via Metra.
- c. Could an outer beltway connecting I-57 to I-55 to I-80 to the Prairie Parkway affect development around Manhattan?
- d. St. Joseph Parish was only 400 households in 1988 and is at 1,400 households in 2008.
- e. While the school is presently struggling for enrollment, demographics suggest a growing school-age population and solid enrollment base for the future.

G. New Lenox

- 7. Study the feasibility of expanding St. Jude School in New Lenox and/or building a new school if a second parish is eventually established in the New Lenox area.**

Rationale

- a. St. Jude Parish is 3,700 households. About 225 children are baptized and about 320 children receive First Communion annually. Elementary religious education enrollment is between 1,100 and 1,800.
- b. New Lenox Village is in a position to grow significantly. While population was 24,600 in 2007, it could become more than 90,000 by 2030.
- c. While the school is presently struggling for enrollment, demographics suggest a growing school-age population and solid enrollment base for the future.

H. Shorewood/Plainfield

- 8. Holy Family School in Shorewood should study the feasibility of doubling the number of classes from one class per grade to two classes per grade as well as expanding the PreK program.**

Rationale

- a. Holy Family Parish has about 2,500 households and religious education enrollment of over 1,000 students.
- b. Shorewood will more than double in population from 2008 to 2030.
- c. The City of Joliet expects significant growth to continue west of Interstate 55.

- 9. St. Mary Immaculate School in Plainfield should study the feasibility of expanding; alternatively, if plans eventually develop for the establishment of a new parish in Plainfield, consider the establishment of a Catholic school at that parish.**

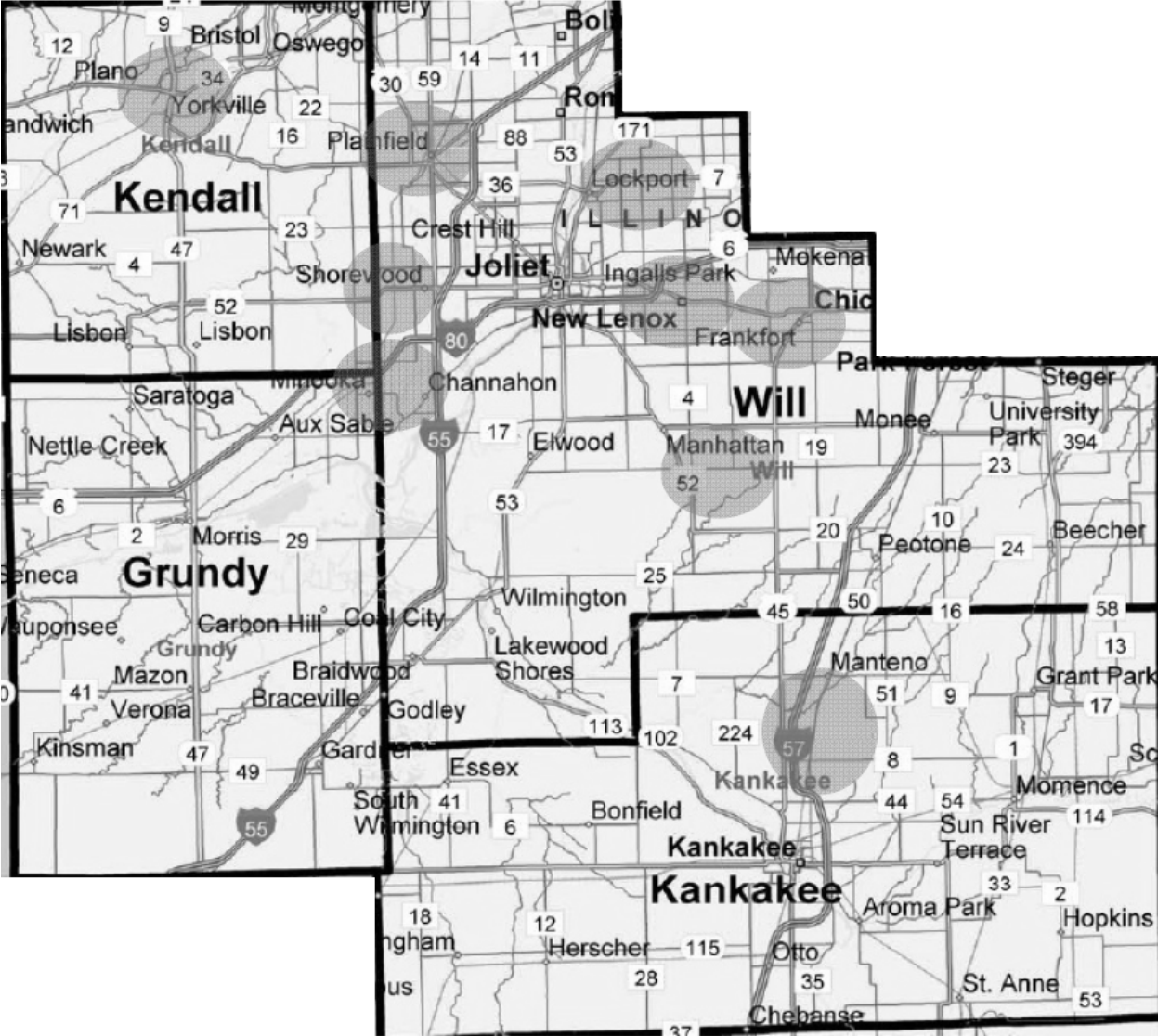
Rationale

- a. St. Mary Immaculate Parish has almost 7,000 households. Between 370 and 420 children receive First Communion annually.
- b. The City of Plainfield could more than double in population by 2030, growing from 34,400 in 2007 to 65,700 by 2030.

I. Summary

The map on the following page summarizes where new schools or school expansion should be studied. The areas identified are approximate and could shift based on further study.

NEW SCHOOLS AND EXPANSION
Diocese of Joliet



APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Governance Roles in Parish School Model

Pastor	Canonical administrator of the parish Has final authority in matters related to the parish and school Must operate the parish in compliance with diocesan policy Delegates administration of the school to the principal Delegates responsibility for specific areas to the School Board Gives final approval to school board members after selection process is complete Signs principal's contract Gives final approval to the selection of principal after following the selection process specified by the Catholic Schools Office
School Board	Delegated responsibility by the pastor in specific areas as delineated in the school bylaws Provides accountability for the principal in specific agreed upon areas Participates in principal selection and evaluation as part of the Catholic Schools Office process Principal is ex officio non-voting member of the school board
Principal	Given authority to administer daily operation of the school Hires and manages school personnel Authority to enact policy set by school board and Diocese Oversees operating budget Parent Association accountable to principal
Superintendent	Develops the principal performance review process and provides input to an individual principal's performance assessment Specifies the principal selection process. Provides counsel to the pastor and his selection committee on the principal selection process. Pre-approves candidates for consideration by the selection committee and pastor. Authority over matters of diocesan policy related to schools Authority to set diocesan policy with consultative approval of the Diocesan Board of Education and when necessary approval of the Bishop

APPENDIX B

Governance Roles in Multi-Parish School Model

Board of Members	<p>Comprised of the pastors from each of the sponsoring parishes and the Superintendent of Schools or his/her appointee.</p> <p>One pastor appointed by the Bishop as the executive pastor. Executive pastor chairs meetings of the Board of Members.</p> <p>Under normal circumstances, the Board of Members will make decisions as a group. If the board becomes deadlocked, the executive pastor can make a final decision after appropriate consultation.</p>
Executive Pastor	<p>Appointed by Bishop</p> <p>Directly involved in evaluation of school principal</p> <p>Signs principal's contract</p>
School Board Rec 5	<p>Delegated responsibility by the board of members as delineated in the school bylaws</p> <p>Does not become involved in daily operations. Deals with matters of policy, strategic planning, funding, facilities.</p> <p>Provides accountability for the principal in specific agreed upon areas.</p> <p>Participates in principal selection and evaluation as part of the Catholic Schools Office process</p> <p>Principal is ex officio non-voting member of the school board</p> <p>Executive pastor is ex officio non-voting member of the school board</p>
Chief Administrator/ Principal	<p>Given authority to administer daily operation of the school</p> <p>Hires and manages school personnel</p> <p>Authority to enact policy set by school board and Board of Members</p> <p>Oversees operating budget</p> <p>Supports strategic planning efforts of the school board</p> <p>Parent Association accountable to principal</p>
Superintendent	<p>Develops the principal performance review process and provides input to an individual principal's performance assessment</p> <p>Specifies the principal selection process. Provides counsel to the executive pastor and the selection committee on the principal selection process. Pre-approves candidates for consideration by the selection committee and pastor.</p> <p>Authority over matters of diocesan policy related to schools</p> <p>Authority to set diocesan policy with consultative approval of the Diocesan Board of Education and when necessary approval of the Bishop</p>
Pastors of Sponsoring Parishes	<p>Provide spiritual leadership and sacramental celebrations</p> <p>Represented at school board by executive pastor</p> <p>Pastors are the membership of the Board of Members</p> <p>Provide moral support and promotion of Catholic schools in the parish</p>