



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2022



Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.



Mission Statement

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington, rooted in Gospel values and the teaching mission of the Catholic Church, are learning communities of faith and service dedicated to educational equity and excellence for all students.

Introduction

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington (ADW) serve the mission of the Church by offering a foundation in faith and an excellent academic education to an increasingly diverse population. Our Catholic schools form students in faith, help them grow intellectually and demonstrate how to love and serve God through service to others. As critical agents of evangelization for the Church, Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington, rooted in Gospel values and the teaching mission of the Catholic Church, are learning communities of faith and service dedicated to educational equity and excellence for all students.

The importance of Catholic schools throughout the archdiocese is demonstrated by the number of families, both Catholic and non-Catholic, who choose a Catholic education for their children. The 92 Catholic early childhood programs, elementary, secondary and special schools serving the nation's capital and five surrounding counties in Maryland enroll over 26,000 students. Moreover, the diversity of those students enrolled in Catholic schools in the archdiocese has increased, with 48 percent of the students identified as non-white, and 24 percent as non-Catholic students. Their families are financially wealthy, middle class and live in poverty.

You are the light of the world, let your light shine before all.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2010-2015

Teacher Religion Certification and Annual Commissioning

All teachers of Religion must meet religious certification requirements by the completion of his/her third year of hire. All educators also acknowledge and commit to the tenets of the Catholic faith as a teacher or leader of Catholic schools through the annual commissioning of archdiocesan employees.

Teacher State Certification and Hiring of Qualified Candidates

In 2012, the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) assumed an intentional role in supervising this expectation that all new hires must be certified or close to certification completion upon hire. The support resulted in a three-year effort to become fully compliant with the certification policy and therefore, assuring a marker of excellence and credibility of archdiocesan schools as compared to local public schools.

Regionalization Agreements to Support Archdiocesan Schools

Increasingly, archdiocesan schools are supported by multiple parishes through regionalization agreements, which provide monetary, pastoral and administrative support from adjacent parishes for a school. Forty-two archdiocesan schools are party to a regionalization agreement with an adjacent parish. Ninety-six parishes in the Archdiocese of Washington sponsor or support an archdiocesan elementary school.

Implementation of 2009 Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools

Beginning in 2010, all policies and procedures were fully implemented in Archdiocese of Washington Catholic schools including Catholic Identity, Academic Excellence, Affordability and Governance.

Systemic Accreditation of Schools

The Archdiocese of Washington Catholic schools embarked on the comprehensive transition from individual accreditation of each archdiocesan Catholic school to one systemic accreditation process for our schools. This decision was reached after evaluation of the increasing comprehensive and systemic initiatives in which schools were required to participate, because of policy, and as a commitment to continuous improvement for schools.

Enrollment Management Emphasis and Resources

The Archdiocese of Washington has implemented a robust enrollment management program to support all schools. The program provides professional development for school leaders, personnel and volunteers to support the effective recruitment and retention of students in Catholic schools. In 2017, the Catholic Schools Office launched a research-based branding and marketing initiative to increase visibility and promote Catholic schools to current and prospective parents.

Systemic Administrative Technologies for Schools

Schools and parents have experienced a significant increase in the use of administrative technologies for schools across the Archdiocese of Washington. The Archdiocese of Washington adopted TA+DS®, in 2012-2013 for the financial aid assessment module, and in 2013-2014 for the online admissions and enrollment, billing, and tuition management modules. In addition, schools have adopted REDIKER as their student information system. These two systems integrate to support operational management and provide parents with a contemporary online experience in managing school payments and access to student records, school announcements and communication with teachers.

Catholic Identity Visits

The Secretariat for Education collaborates to conduct formal Catholic identity school visits with archdiocesan and independent Catholic schools. This visit is an opportunity for schools to highlight and identify how each school fulfills the mission of Catholic education through Mass and sacramental prep, prayer, religion instruction and integration, service and Catholic identity. The visit also allows schools to demonstrate how each aligns to the required *Policies for Catholic Schools* in the area of Catholic Identity.

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be.



The Strategic Plan

In 2015, following the milestone of achieving national accreditation with AdvancED two years earlier, the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic schools embarked on the process of archdiocesan-wide strategic planning. The strategic plan provides the general plan of action and describes resource allocation and other activities that will help ensure the viability of Catholic schools into the future.

The goals and rationale for implementing strategic planning included:

- to determine and communicate a continuous improvement model in each area of priority -- pillars of Catholic education: Catholic identity, academic excellence, accessibility and affordability, and governance
- to increase both archdiocesan and local school use of data in establishing priorities and decision-making
- to provide schools with a general plan of action to assist with local school planning and resource allocation
- to develop a multi-year strategic planning process that would be inclusive of archdiocesan leadership, pastors, principals, teachers and parents
- to create a strategic planning process that would be implemented and modeled, archdiocesan-wide, with the expectation that all schools would also implement strategic planning, by the year 2022

The Catholic Schools Office invested two years in preparing and creating the final strategic plan. A first for archdiocesan schools, this plan was developed by archdiocesan leaders working in subcommittees, including principals, pastors, teachers, and board of education members. The process provided opportunities, throughout the process, to engage stakeholders for a comprehensive plan.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN



THE FOUR PILLARS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

• CATHOLIC IDENTITY

- Academic Excellence
- Affordability and Accessibility
- Governance

Faith permeates everything within a Catholic school environment; it is not just an aspect of religion class. Catholic identity is integrated throughout the curriculum. Leaders and teachers work from the framework that Catholic identity is central to all learning and the belief that every child presents with gifts and talents as a child of God. Schools in the Archdiocese of Washington encourage all students to share and explore Christ's love through kindness and service to the community. All schools celebrate Mass, invite students to participate in daily prayer, and support the family as the primary educator.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

GOAL 1: Every Catholic school embodies Catholic identity authenticated by its mission.

- Objective 1.1: All school communities fully teach and promote tenets of the Catholic faith and efforts of evangelization in safe, faith-filled learning environments permeated with Gospel values and virtues.
- Objective 1.2: All school communities exemplify strong measures of mission and Catholic identity as determined by students' understanding and knowledge of the Catholic faith.

STRATEGIES FOR CATHOLIC IDENTITY:

- Develop Catholic identity committees to study issues and formulate recommendations
- Support the growth of the whole child through increased counseling resources
- Develop expectations, resources and monitoring of faith formation in all schools
- Provide faith formation annually to all educators
- Provide resources for discipleship and family formation for all schools
- Investigate additional Catholic identity measures and resources for all schools
- Investigate faith knowledge assessment resources that measure student growth
- Create a comprehensive Catholic identity school visit protocol
- Establish curriculum and resources to support the Catholic identity integration into academic subjects and daily instruction

THE FOUR PILLARS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

• Catholic Identity

• **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

• Affordability and Accessibility

• Governance

Our Catholic schools long have had an excellent reputation for academic achievement of all students. The Archdiocese of Washington and each of its schools, work tirelessly to ensure that our reputation continues to be deserved. Academic excellence is a hallmark of Catholic education. To that end, guided by the Catholic Schools Office, archdiocesan elementary schools have implemented standards-based curricula. Teachers throughout the entire archdiocese utilize data to inform instruction. Our overall goals for Catholic education must include the effort to develop, sustain and manifest a verifiable level of academic excellence.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

GOAL 2: All archdiocesan students experience learner-centered instruction that engages them in learning and prepares them for the 21st century.

Objective 2.1: Archdiocesan schools offer rigorous curriculum aligned with ADW standards and inclusive of Gospel values.

Objective 2.2: Archdiocesan students are engaged in quality instruction from effective faculty, who are adept at using instructional and assessment practices that promote academic growth for all learners.

Objective 2.3: Archdiocesan students meet individual targets in math and reading.

Objective 2.4: Archdiocesan schools have the capacity to provide faith formation and an academically excellent education to a diverse population of students.

STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

- Develop and implement a new teacher evaluation tool
- Determine teacher professional development needs, based on teacher evaluation data
- Provide data-driven professional development for administrators and teachers
- Review and update academic standards through established revision process
- Provide assessment data and resources to schools to inform professional development of teachers and instruction of students
- Increase school-level special education capacity to serve an increasingly diverse student population



THE FOUR PILLARS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- Catholic Identity
- Academic Excellence

• AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- Governance

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington are accessible to all students, welcoming families regardless of a faith denomination and offering inclusive educational practices to support students with different learning needs. Catholic schools have seen an increase in international students, families for whom English is not the first language, greater socioeconomic diversity, and families not identifying as Catholic or of a faith denomination.

The Archdiocese of Washington recognizes that the future of Catholic schools depends on the ability of working together to meet the increasing costs to educate students and to assist families who are making sacrifices to provide a Catholic school education for their children. The funds to keep Catholic schools open come from tuition payments, parish and archdiocesan subsidies, and school fundraisers. In the case of the high schools, for the most part, subsidies are also provided from the sponsoring religious community.

AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

GOAL 3: Archdiocese of Washington schools achieve aggregate enrollment targets through improved operational vitality.

- Objective 3.1: All archdiocesan schools will develop and achieve annual enrollment targets to improve financial viability.
- Objective 3.2: Archdiocese of Washington will annually brand and market Catholic education to support local schools' student recruitment and retention efforts.
- Objective 3.3: Archdiocesan schools will annually utilize the school budgeting processes provided by the CSO in accordance with ADW budgeting policies and procedures.
- Objective 3.4: Archdiocese of Washington will increase public and private sources of funding to support CSO programs and tuition assistance.
- Objective 3.5: Archdiocesan schools will annually implement an advancement program to achieve fundraising goals.



STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY:

- Provide ongoing enrollment management professional development for school personnel
- Establish a budget workgroup to recommend resources and update policies
- Provide professional development and training for pastors, principals, and bookkeepers
- Develop and implement a comprehensive three-year marketing plan for Catholic schools
- Implement Hispanic Enrollment Advisory Committee recommendations to support schools' efforts to recruit and retain Hispanic students
- Provide schools with timely and relevant parish, school and geographic data to support annual enrollment forecasting
- Develop and implement the *Family and Catholic Schools Partnership* to increase parent engagement and support student retention
- Support schools with local development training and initiatives
- Develop an archdiocesan-wide alumni network

THE FOUR PILLARS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- Catholic Identity
- Academic Excellence
- Affordability and Accessibility

• GOVERNANCE

The governance structures for Catholic schools vary depending on the sponsoring organization that has overall responsibility for the school. The Archdiocese of Washington, through parishes, has direct responsibility for all aspects of parish and archdiocesan-owned schools and for recognizing the affiliation of independent schools as Catholic schools. For independent Catholic schools, the responsibility for the day-to-day operations, instruction, financing and overall direction of the school rests with the sponsoring community or organization.



GOVERNANCE

GOAL 4: All archdiocesan schools have effective spiritual, instructional, and managerial leadership.

- Objective 4.1: All archdiocesan school principals are strong spiritual, instructional and managerial leaders.
- Objective 4.2: The superintendent for Catholic schools and pastors or canonical administrators regularly collaborate on the oversight of Catholic school operations and evaluations.
- Objective 4.3: As per the directives of the Archdiocese of Washington Synod, all policies in the *Polices for Catholic Schools* will be reviewed and revised, as needed, every five years.
- Objective 4.4: The Catholic Schools Office collaborates with pastor and principal teams to strengthen the connections between parishes and Catholic schools.
- Objective 4.5: The Catholic Schools Office researches, identifies, and assesses the effectiveness of various governance models to advance the mission effectiveness and operational vitality of every archdiocesan Catholic school.
- Objective 4.6: Archdiocesan school advisory boards and home school associations, in partnership with school leadership, help to advance the mission of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington.
- Objective 4.7: Catholic schools and the Catholic Schools Office staff regularly communicate planning processes and the effectiveness of plans related to Catholic identity, academic performance, finances, technology, and facilities.

STRATEGIES FOR GOVERNANCE:

- Continue to grow and enhance the accreditation process, as it aligns to the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Strategic Plan
- Provide data-driven professional development for school leaders
- Develop a new principal evaluation tool that responds to the depth of the role of the school principal and provides an opportunity for the superintendent for Catholic schools and the pastor of the school to collaborate in the evaluation process
- Revise Catholic schools policies and procedures as they relate to the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Strategic Plan
- Support the development of the pastor and principal leadership team by providing opportunities for the team to learn and study critical issues regarding Catholic education
- Investigate and introduce new Catholic school governance models to archdiocesan leadership teams and strengthen the ongoing consultation model
- Provide resources to support the effectiveness of parent leadership groups: the School Advisory Board and the Home and School Association
- Increase local school data transparency with resources and support for principals
- Update policies and procedures that support school safety and anti-bullying protocols and curriculum

STRATEGIC PLANNING

GOAL 5: All strategic planning and related decision-making that impacts Catholic schools will be informed by the use of data and a commonly agreed-upon improvement protocol.

- Objective 5.1: Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Strategic Plan will be fully implemented by 2022.
- Objective 5.2: Annual accreditation continuous improvement plans for schools are of increasing high quality, and include detailed action items that are aligned with strategies in the archdiocesan and local schools' strategic plans.
- Objective 5.3: Archdiocesan and local school leadership use varied data systems for annual analysis, decision-making, and strategic planning.

STRATEGIES FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING:

- Share and promote the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Strategic Plan, as the model template and process, to school leaders
- Provide an annual Data Summit for school leaders to review annual data critical to the mission of schools
- Monitor and report on the implementation progress of the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Strategic Plan
- Develop local strategic planning cohorts for local planning implementation
- Monitor and report on the implementation progress of local strategic plans
- Provide resources and support to schools requiring additional data
- Create an increase in local school data transparency
- Create data platforms that are real-time and accessible to school leaders and staff



PROGRESS MONITORING

The Catholic Schools Office rigorously monitors progress of the strategic plan to determine plan effectiveness. Annually, archdiocesan and school leaders, pastors and teachers receive the Strategic Data Portfolio and participate in the annual Data Summit, which provides updates on the progress of the strategic plan. New initiatives are introduced at the archdiocesan level, by aligning their importance to the strategic plan. Archdiocesan school leadership works with local school leaders and parents to lead local strategic planning efforts, committed to the same objectives and pillars of Catholic education: Catholic identity, academic excellence, affordability and accessibility, and governance.

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD,
plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*



The Future Outlook for Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Washington

Archdiocesan schools are committed to the mission of Catholic education, which includes strong Catholic identity and academic rigor in pursuit of excellence. The future of Catholic schools will depend on strengthening Catholic identity, effective governance models, leadership and the operational vitality of each school. Archdiocesan and school leadership will need to be open to the possibility of changes to school governance and operational models. In doing so, we will work collaboratively to determine the most effective governance model for a particular school, based on its unique circumstances.

Long-term viability also requires that schools be favorably marketed for adequate enrollment. Each school leader should be committed to an ongoing collaboration with stakeholders, to ensure that every

school is serving their parish community. The success of each school depends on the ability for an ongoing collaboration between pastors, principals, administrators, faculty, staff, parents, board members and volunteers.

The affordability of Catholic schools has the potential to affect the enrollment of all schools. This reality, combined with the fact that many of our schools are located in areas with great socioeconomic challenges, create a demand for long-term sustainable financial planning. In addition to providing tuition assistance to support families, financial planning will be necessary to provide for improvements to older facilities and resources to recruit, hire and train Catholic educators.

Continue Strategic Planning Work and Second National Accreditation Visit

The Archdiocese of Washington Catholic schools strategic plan will culminate in the spring of 2022. Continued work to implement strategies and monitor progress of the plan will remain a priority for archdiocesan and school leadership. During the school year 2020, the CSO will engage in its second national accreditation visit with AdvancED. Leadership from AdvancED and national archdiocesan school leaders will evaluate the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic schools, based on the national standards, but more importantly, on the implementation of the strategic plan. Following the national visit, the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic schools will utilize feedback and data from the national visit, as well as, the data available regarding our schools, to begin the evaluation process of planning for the next five-year strategic plan of 2023-2028.



2023-2028 PRIORITIES

- Development Initiative
- Hispanic Enrollment Initiative
- School safety professional development and resources
- Vigilance concerning the orthodoxy of teachers and textbooks/teaching materials
- Pastoral initiatives in schools
- Promotion of the Catholic identity of the school by lay teachers

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Strategic leadership of Catholic schools is increasingly more important as the landscape of operating Catholic schools continues to change. Leaders will need the capacity to anticipate and envision the future, maintain flexibility, think strategically and work with others to implement the mission and remain viable. With Christ at the center of all that we do, this Strategic Plan is an important tool that will guide our schools into the future. Many thanks to our pastors, principals, board of education, staff and other key stakeholders who contributed to the formulation of this plan.

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