



ST. MARY'S
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Strategic Plan





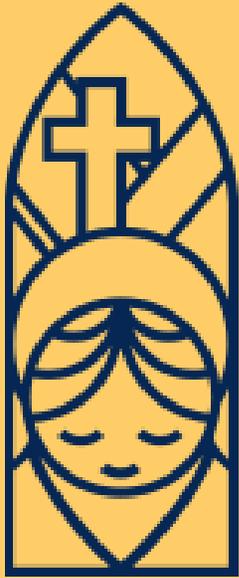
ST. MARY'S
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Strategic Plan 2015-2021

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MISSION

St. Mary's Cathedral School provides academic excellence and fosters Catholic identity by teaching and learning in Christ with our hearts, souls, and minds.

VISION

Inspired by our Catholic tradition, St. Mary's Cathedral School strives to nurture children to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens devoted to Christ.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary's Cathedral School community believes that each person is unique and created in the image of God. We affirm that this uniqueness is best fostered in a loving environment that helps the child develop the spiritual and academic gifts given by the Lord.

We believe in the integration of Catholic beliefs and values in all classroom sessions, liturgical worship and service to others. We believe in a strong academic program balanced by fine arts, technology and physical education.

OVER A CENTURY OF TRADITION AND HISTORY



TCCED ACCREDITED – TEA RECOGNIZED

HISTORY

St. Mary's Cathedral School, the oldest private school in Amarillo, was first established January 16, 1899, in Clarendon, Texas by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. The school was moved to its present location in Amarillo in 1913.



Through these 100+ years, St. Mary's has maintained its high standards with a strong academic program. Besides the excellent basic curriculum, other areas offered include state-of-the-art computer education, introductory Spanish classes for grades 1-5, a well-stocked library and a variety of extra-curricular opportunities.

A Montessori Preschool was added in the Fall of 1985. St. Mary's Montessori respects the child as an individual and therefore provides a method for guiding growth which fits the child's individual needs. An after school program was established in 1986.

School accreditation is the means used by the Texas Catholic Schools to foster excellence in elementary education. St. Mary's Cathedral School, accredited since 1926, continues to follow the policies and procedures compiled by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) and the Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission (TCCAC) and recognized by Texas Education Association (TEA).

ABOUT

St. Mary's Cathedral School, the oldest private school in Amarillo, is rich in tradition and history. Our school has provided the Texas Panhandle with over a century of academic excellence. We offer a Montessori Pre-School program for ages 3-5, as well as a strong academic and Catholic religion program for Elementary students in Kindergarten-5th grade. We welcome children of all faiths. As a part of the Diocese of Amarillo, St. Mary's Cathedral School is a feeder school for our secondary Catholic school, Holy Cross Catholic Academy.

Strategic Plan Overview

Pillar 1: Mission & Catholic Identity

St. Mary's Cathedral School fosters an environment rich in faith and Gospel values that promotes a community of believers and learners in the spirit of Jesus Christ united in prayer to proclaim the Gospel message and to serve others.

- Build on SMCS tradition, mission, & vision
- Remain steadfast in the truth of the Gospel & faithful to the Magisterium
- Increase visibility in our parish and community
- Increase knowledge of school through ongoing media exposure and outreach

Pillar 2: Academic & Educational Excellence

St. Mary's Cathedral School, inspired by our Catholic tradition, strives to nurture children to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

- Maintain academic excellence
- Provide opportunities for professional development
- Improve instructional use of technology to enhance curriculum
- Develop curricular bridge between Diocesan Catholic schools

Pillar 3: Administration, Governance & Finance

St. Mary's Cathedral School strives toward operational vitality, which focuses on the operations of the school – how it works and how it is supported in the following areas: finance, personnel, and leadership.

- Develop a culture of effective, ongoing strategic and financial planning
- Broaden current faculty evaluation, recruitment, hiring and mentoring tools
- Collaborate with stakeholders for success of St. Mary's Cathedral School
- Maintain affordability and build tuition assistance fund

Pillar 4: Environment & Physical Plant

St. Mary's Cathedral School endeavors toward providing facilities and an environment that will always be safe, comfortable, and functional for our students and parishioners

- Improve school structure and function
- Complete prioritized cost-effective repairs, maintenance, and upgrades
- Collaborate with the parish to create a Parish Strategic Plan that includes renovation, expansion, and/or new school facilities to accommodate anticipated needs and goals

MISSION & CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Data and Observation: The Catholic identity of St. Mary's Cathedral School is a key component to the value and strength of the school. A sense of community is shared among students and their families, as well as staff and parish families. There is an active Home & School Association. Students are taught that we are on Holy Ground. Sacraments are received and celebrated throughout each school year. The school has several programs focusing on student faith and stewardship. The active role the rector plays in the school greatly enhances the students' education and understanding of the Catholic faith and values. This active role further promotes consideration of future religious vocations. Students graduate with a sound foundation of understanding and experience in the Catholic faith.

					Year					
Pillar1: St. Mary's Cathedral School fosters an environment rich in faith and Gospel values that promotes a community of believers and learners in the spirit of Jesus Christ united in prayer to proclaim the Gospel message and to serve others.					15/ 16	16/ 17	17/ 18	18/ 19	19/ 20	20/ 21
Measurable Activity/Strategy	Person(s) Responsible	Cost	Source of Funding	Timeline/Evaluation						
1.1 Develop a Mission Statement that follows the TCCED format describing the purpose and reason for our school's existence. The mission statement will then be prominently displayed, as we become strategically mission focused at all times.	Administration; Faculty/Staff; Advisory Board; Parents	0	NCI	Spring 2016 On-going	✓ ✓					
1.2 Provide orientation to newly hired teachers (who are not Catholic or are new to Catholic school education) focusing on the ministry/mission of Catholic school education and the role in ensuring the Catholic identity of the school.	Administration	0	NCI	Implement Fall 2016; On-going		✓				
1.3 Revise format and content of the Parent/Student Handbook and the Faculty/Staff Handbook, so that we are up to date on current policies and procedures.	Administration	0	NCI	Summer 2017; Annually						
1.4 Investigate possibility of creating a Memory Book integrated through technology curriculum for 5 th grade.	Computer Lab Mgr.; 5 th Grade Teacher; 5 th Grade Students	TBD	NBI- Memory Bk. Sales	Fall 2016; On-going	✓					

1.5 Update website, which will serve as a great asset in terms of communication, public relations, and marketing.	Administration; Marketing Committee	\$2,500	NBI- Designated Donation	Spring 2016; On-going	✓						
1.6 Become well educated in the cultures of this region as we incorporate measures to recruit a more diverse population.	Administration; Marketing Committee; Teachers; Advisory Board	TBD		On-going							
1.7 Create a consistent “Brand identity” i.e., logo, tagline, colors, font appearing on all school products, clothing, newsletters, website, and social media.	Administration; Marketing Committee	\$150	BI	Spring 2016	✓						
1.8 Cultivate a sense of our school being a place of sacredness by talking and singing about being on Holy Ground when at school.	Administration; Teachers;										
1.9 Utilize various media to actively and aggressively promote within the local community to enhance the school’s marketability, enrollment, and positive image.	Administration; Marketing Committee	\$2,000	BI	On-going							
1.10 Redefine our mascot as the “Stars” in order to move away from the “Squirrels”, used as a term of endearment, when referring to the students, by the former pastor.	Administration; Teachers; Advisory Board;	0	NCI	Fall 2016		✓					
1.11 Continue to support and promote growth of Home & School Association (HSA) by fostering parental involvement.	HSA Officers; Faculty Liaison; Administration	0	NCI	On-going							
1.12 Distribute a year end “Catholic Identity” survey to parents and staff.	Administration; Advisory Board; Marketing Committee	0	NCI	Spring of Odd Years: 2017, 2019, 2021...							

BI – Budget Item (Indicate Line Item on Budget and Year)

NBI – Non-Budget Item (Indicate Source of Funding)

NCI – Non-Cost Item

ACADEMIC & EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Data and Observation: St. Mary's Cathedral School has a strong academic base, which includes friendly and dedicated faculty and staff, differentiated instruction, software support, Balanced Literacy and access to the local education service center. The curriculum includes a religion program, which supports service learning and social justice experiences for all students from Montessori through fifth grade. SMCS has a stable and caring faculty and staff. There is strong parish and school leadership in place. SMCS offers small class sizes. All classrooms have student computer stations and Smart Boards installed. The campus has a computer lab and school-wide Wi-Fi. SMCS offers Extended Day care. Our graduating students tend to be academically ahead of the norm.

Pillar 2: St. Mary's Cathedral School, inspired by our Catholic tradition, strives to nurture children to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.					Year					
					15/ 16	16/ 17	17/ 18	18/ 19	19/ 20	20/ 21
Measurable Activity/Strategy	Person(s) Responsible	Cost	Source of Funding	Timeline/Evaluation						
2.1 Provide opportunities for teachers to partake in outside professional development opportunities and hold them accountable for collaborating in professional development with fellow teachers.	Principal; Montessori Director	\$3,000	BI	On-going						
2.2 Participate in professional development with HCCA and St. Joseph's to plan/prepare for the implementation of the ProPEL strategies.	Principal; Core Teachers; Specials Teachers	\$3,000 \$1,000	Title I BI	2016-2017						
2.3 Provide opportunities for teachers to meet with other teachers for vertical alignment and curriculum development within the Diocese, through ProPEL training.	Principal	0	NCI	2016-2017						
2.4 Utilize Daily 5 for Reading to increase student fluency, comprehension and vocabulary on DRA benchmarks.	Elementary Teachers	\$500	BI	Pilot Spring 2016; Implement Fall 2016; On-going	✓	✓				
2.5 Weekly walk-through observations in every teacher's classroom using approved evaluation instrument.	Principal Montessori Director	0	NCI	On-going	✓	✓				

2.6 Utilize a variety of assessment tools to provide learning outcomes. (rubrics, technology based, performance based, and self /peer evaluations).	Teachers; Principal; Montessori Director	\$3,000	BI	On-going						
2.7 Create a rolling technology plan to ensure school stays on the cutting edge of its use of technology	Technology Committee	0	NCI	On-going						
2.8 Provide an opportunity for scheduled blocks of creative movement and music for Montessori students.	Principal; Montessori Director	0	NCI	Fall 2017						
2.9 Review and revise curriculum annually so as to move away from an abundance of “teacher driven” resources to more “scientifically research based” resources.	Teachers; Principal; Montessori Director	0- \$12,000	BI	Annually						
2.10 Distribute a year end “Academic Excellence” survey to parents and staff.	Administration; Advisory Board; Marketing Committee	0	NCI	Spring of Even Years: 2016, 2018, 2020...						

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GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION, & FINANCE

Data and Observation: St. Mary's Cathedral School has an Administration that consists of the Principal and the St. Mary's Cathedral Parish Rector. They are perceived as providing good vision and direction, strong leadership and sound decision making. SMCS also has a Montessori Director for its Preschool program. The Advisory Board consists of nine members. The Board is responsible for the strategic plan for the school, which includes the following areas: Mission and Catholic Identity, Academic and Educational Excellence, Governance, Leadership and Finance, and Plant and Facilities. The Principal is accountable to the SMCS Rector and the Montessori Director is accountable to the Principal. The Board role is advisory to the Parish Rector and the Principal. The Advisory Board participates with the Principal in budget planning and accountability. Maintaining affordability is a major concern of the Administration and the Advisory Board. SMCS has a Tuition Assistance program confidentially administered by the Finance Committee. Parents are encouraged to complete applications during the enrollment period.

Pillar 3: St. Mary's Cathedral School strives toward operational vitality, which focuses on the operations of the school – how it works and how it is supported in the following areas: finance, personnel, and leadership.						Year					
						15/ 16	16/ 17	17/ 18	18/ 19	19/ 20	20/ 21
Measurable Activity/Strategy	Person(s) Responsible	Cost	Source of Funding	Timeline/Evaluation							
3.1 Develop a culture of effective, ongoing strategic and financial planning.	Advisory Board; Rector; Administration	0	NCI	On-going							
3.2 Establish committees in the following areas: Finance, Marketing, Maintenance, and Hospitality.	Advisory Board	0	NCI	Spring 2016	✓						
3.3 Promote the <i>Amabilis Trust</i> in order to grow the endowment fund.	Amabilis Trust Committee; Rector; Principal;	0	NCI	Fall 2017							
3.4 Activate a tuition management system in order to decrease amount uncollected tuition and fees to less than \$1000.	Administration; Bookkeeper; Advisory Board	0	NCI	Spring 2016	✓						
3.5 Maintain a competitive benefits and salary scale to attract, retain and hire quality teachers.	Advisory Board; Finance Committee; Principal	0	NCI	Annually							
3.6 Review and edit, as necessary, the Board By-Laws.	Advisory Board; Administration; Pastor	0	NCI	Annually							

3.7 Consistently educate parents and families on the true cost of education and the value of their voluntary participation in the various events and fundraisers to meet “the gap” between tuition and actual cost.	Principal; Advisory Board	0	NCI	On-going						
3.8 Explore the benefits of establishing a formal alumni committee to communicate special events and school achievements.	Advisory Board; Marketing Committee	0	NCI	Spring 2018						
3.9 Pursue grant funding to address plant and facility needs.	Advisory Board; Finance Committee; Principal	0	NCI	On-going						
3.10 Promote and expand the annual <i>Light the Lamp</i> campaign.	Advisory Board; Finance Committee; Rector; Principal	\$800.00	NCI	Annually in Fall	✓	✓				
3.11 Revise budgets when prior year expenses are known, enrollment is known and salaries are finalized.	Principal; Finance Committee; Advisory Board	0	NCI	Annually in Spring						
3.12 Support and increase the percentage of instructional personnel who are progressing toward required certifications as set by Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and our local Office of Catholic Education.	Principal; Montessori Director	50% of Cost	BI	Annually						
3.13 Comply with regulations from the TCCED and Diocese of Amarillo.	Principal; Montessori Director	0	NCI	On-going						

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ENVIRONMENT, PLANT & FACILITIES

Data and Observation: St. Mary's Cathedral School has an enrollment capacity of 306 students (Montessori through fifth grade with each classroom at 18 students per classroom). It is beneficial to have the school campus located near the church and located in the heart of the city. The facilities currently utilized by the school include: sixteen classrooms with each of the elementary classrooms outfitted with a Smart Board. The campus includes a library, computer lab, music room, Spanish room, and three Atriums. There are three administrative offices, a cafeteria, a kitchen, the parish gym, and two playgrounds, one of which includes a soccer/baseball field. The current school building was built in 1913 with minor renovations since its completion. The building had new windows installed over 20 years ago and the addition of central heating and air about twelve years ago. Most recently the plumbing has been updated, except for that in the kitchen area. The building has been fairly well maintained, and has served the school and parish well over the years. However, there are certain aspects of the facilities that need to be renovated and modernized. The bathroom facilities and kitchen plumbing are dated, inefficient, and require ongoing maintenance. The school employs maintenance/custodial staff of 1 full time Maintenance Director and 2 part-time custodians.

Pillar 4: St. Mary's Cathedral School endeavors toward providing facilities and an environment that will always be safe, comfortable, and functional for our students and parishioners.						Year					
						15/ 16	16/ 17	17/ 18	18/ 19	19/ 20	20/ 21
Measurable Activity/Strategy	Person(s) Responsible	Cost	Source of Funding	Timeline/Evaluation							
4.1 Establish a Maintenance Committee.	Advisory Board; Maintenance Director; Administration;	0	NCI	Spring 2016	✓						
4.2 Conduct annual inspections of campus buildings and landscape, including the fire escapes and playgrounds. Generate a report by qualified individuals to identify the needs of the facilities and categorize those needs as critical, intermediate, or long-term.	Maintenance Director; Maintenance Committee; Advisory Board; Parish Finance Council; Rector; Administration	Cost may vary dependent on services.	BI	Annually							
4.3 Identify areas of need, either in continued maintenance, upgrades, or expansion.	Maintenance Director; Maintenance Committee; Administration; Faculty/Staff	0	NCI	On-going							
4.4 Explore possibility of remodeling the existing bathrooms and adding a bathroom on the first floor, so that there are boys and girls bathrooms on the first and second floors.	Maintenance Director; Maintenance Committee; Advisory Board; Administration;	Est. @ \$300K	Apply for Grants; BI	Spring 2017							

4.5 Develop custodial and maintenance guidelines and job descriptions.	Administration; Maintenance Director	0	NCI	Fall 2016		✓					
4.6 Retread stairs to improve safety and aesthetics of north end stairways.	Maintenance Committee; Advisory Board; Administration;	\$8,500	Grant; Donation	Fall 2016		✓					
4.7 Erect fencing around the elementary playground area to create a secure environment.	Parish Finance Council; Maintenance Director; Maintenance Committee; Advisory Board; Administration	TBD	HSA; Parish	Based on Funds							
4.8 Replace the cooling tower, which is leaking, has failing pipes and systems.	Maintenance Committee; Advisory Board; Administration	\$55,000	Grant; Donation	Summer 2017							
4.9 Investigate possibility of repairing kitchen plumbing issues.	Maintenance Committee; Advisory Board; Administration;	\$25,000	BI	See Maintenance Plan for Priority							
4.10 Develop a multi-year master facility plan based on the identified needs to prioritize and guide improvements, renovation, and new construction projects for the future.	Parish Strategic Planning Committee; Advisory Board; Marketing Committee; Administration	0	NCI	Spring 2022							
4.11 Include renovated and expanded or new facilities in the master plan as set by the Parish SPC for the school to accommodate anticipated needs and goals to continue building a quality school program as a continued ministry of St. Mary's Cathedral Church.	Parish Strategic Planning Committee Parish Finance Council; Advisory Board; Finance Committee; Rector; Administration	0	NCI	Spring 2022							
4.12 Plan for a major campaign, in conjunction with the Parish, which will include targeted priority projects and goals.	Parish Council; Parish Finance Council; Advisory Board; Finance Committee; Rector; Administration	0	TBD	Spring 2022							

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NBI – Non-Budget Item (Indicate Source of Funding)

NCI – Non-Cost Item

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Steering Committee

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Lora Hoelting, Chair

Kim Boyd
Kim Hall

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