A New Vision for Catholic Education

For Webster and the Surrounding Area

May 12, 2014
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I. BACKGROUND

How does Catholic education look today in Webster? The answer depends on what your point of comparison will be. Three schools continue today: St. Joseph School (founded 1892), St. Anne School (founded 1885) and St. Louis School (founded 1882). Together they have educated thousands of children over the decades, all fulfilling one of the most important missions of the Church. The schools look very different today from the last generation they served. And they must continue to change with each succeeding generation to remain relevant and effective in their mission. The missions of the schools share these elements: Catholic identity, educational excellence and supportive environment.

Enrollment in Catholic schools declined by 27% from 2007 to 2013. Without a bold change, Catholic school enrollment will continue to decline. This study and plan were initiated to stop the trend to fewer schools and less enrollment. The study set out to ensure strong Catholic schools would remain a strength of the parishes for generations to come. This is a pivotal moment to make changes for the good of the whole Church, preserving Catholic schools with substantial strength versus survivors’ weakness. Declines in enrollment demand, demographic changes, a new economy, competition, shifting family values, and the expectations for quality education are all coalescing and calling for proactive action.

The three schools have been functioning mostly autonomously with politeness, sharing an occasional program or event together. Each school has many strengths: dedicated and gifted teachers, excellent reputations, strong Catholic identity, and many other positive characteristics too long to list here. The study sees the possibilities that draw upon shared missions and combined strengths to make new directions possible and success highly probable.

Leading up to the present study, the Diocese of Worcester undertook a comprehensive study of Catholic education in all areas of the Diocese early in the year 2014. The purpose was to provide objective data that decision makers could use to anticipate and proactively shape the future rather than reacting to forces out of their control. The analysis identified the challenges Catholic schools will face if the status quo prevails. The report provided significant data verified by outside sources and specifically addressed the situation in South County making a compelling case for:

1. Sustaining Catholic education in the Town of Webster to serve populations in the Town and the surrounding area; this is of vital importance.
2. Examining enrollment numbers and reducing redundancy within Catholic schools in Webster given the capacity and duplicity the schools maintain.
3. Incorporating new strategies to address the changes in demographics, new demands on education, and the challenges currently facing Catholic schools.
4. Moving from status quo as this option will not produce a desirable result over the next decade.

The study made the following recommendation:

“Formulate a Joint Study Committee with a clear mandate to shape a new vision for Catholic education in Webster and the surrounding area.”

What followed was the creation of a Joint Study Committee comprised of the pastors, parish leaders, the Catholic Schools Office, and community leaders. Their role is to bring local knowledge and experience to inform the study, provide leadership in local parishes and community, support communications by keeping their respective constituencies informed, solicit input from leaders in parishes and schools while keeping perspective on the big picture, bring a renewed vision for
Catholic schools back to local parishes and schools, build consensus and support for the new vision among leaders and the community.

The membership is:

- Mr. Ron Arcieri
- Mr. Stephen Curtis
- Rev. Msgr. Anthony S. Czarnecki
- Christine L. Holmes, Ed.D.
- Dr. Delma L. Josephson
- Mrs. Sylvia Kitka
- Mrs. Sheila Kusek
- Mr. Paul LaFramboise
- Rev. Joseph A. Marcotte
- Mr. Michael McDonough
- Deacon Peter Motyka
- Mr. William J. Mulford
- Mrs. Cathy Preissler
- Rev. Adam Reid
- Rev. William F. Sanders
- Professor William Steglitz
- Mr. David Surprenant
- David Zalewski, Ph.D.

The Diocese provided professional assistance to the work of the committee through the services of Meitler, a national consulting firm with extensive experience in strategic planning for Catholic schools. The Catholic Schools Office provided expertise and guidance throughout the process. This report is the product of the work done by the Joint Study Committee with support from the consulting firm Meitler and the Catholic Schools Office.

The study followed an organized and transparent process that listened to constituents, looked at objective data, sought to build consensus, and deliberated about how the future would be different.

Rounds of parish leader consultations:

- **Parish Leader Consultation**
  - December 12, 2013
  - *Looked at the challenges and defined the problems through data and analysis. Considered the scenario of continuing with the status quo versus what could be different under a new approach. All options were on the table.*

- **St. Joseph Parish Leader meeting**
  - January 22, 2014
  - **St. Louis Parish Leader meeting**
  - January 23, 2014
  - **Sacred Heart Parish Leader meeting**
  - February 26, 2014

  Parish leaders discussed the challenges facing Catholic schools. They recalled the areas to be proud of and strengths. There was opportunity to pose solutions to the challenges. And finally there was discussion of what the vision for the future should be, that is what Catholic schools should look like in the next ten years for another generation of children.

- **Parish Leader Consultation**
  - May 12, 2014

  Presentation of proposed plan as developed through the work of the Joint Study Committee. All input and data collected through the study was carefully considered. Invitation given to provide alternative proposals with stronger rationale than what is presented. Proposed plans to be refined based on input received, supporting reasons, and new facts.
II. PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE THE PROCESS

The principles set the standard for what an acceptable plan will be and put boundaries on what will and will not be considered. The principles were agreed upon and assumed from the beginning of the process. The initiative was established with the following principles:

1. The plan must be conscious of the connection between Catholic schools and parish mission, respectful of traditions and histories, and embrace the strengths and unique character of each school.

2. A status quo plan where each school works to survive on its own is not acceptable. Letting changes occur by the lack of a plan is neither strategic nor responsible.

3. A satisfactory solution will need to engage all three schools and parishes in Webster: St. Anne School, St. Joseph School and St. Louis School. The solution must look at the needs of the greater community while also considering the needs of the individual parishes.

4. Good communications and appropriate consultation are necessary for shaping a vision that the community with its many stakeholders can support.

5. All schools in Webster will be capable of functioning according to the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools and in accordance with norms established by the Catholic Schools Office for the Diocese of Worcester.

Note: Standards are found at www.catholicschoolstandards.org/files/Catholic_School_Standards_03-12.pdf

6. Any solution must be financially viable as demonstrated by a financial analysis. This means the schools must operate in the black and demonstrate a reasonable dependence on parish support. Parishes with debts to the Diocese will have to negotiate individually how those debts will be satisfied over time, as the debts from the past are parish debts not school debts.

7. Diocesan support will not include direct or indirect subsidy, but rather financial aid for families and professional assistance from the Catholic Schools Office.

8. The financial model proposed must anticipate a reasonable level of compensation for teachers to ensure the quality of teaching and retention of teachers for the future.

9. Utilizing facilities should be accomplished in a cost-efficient manner that does not burden Catholic schools with overhead and expense that their enrollment or the scale of their programs does not justify.

10. While the parish model for supporting and governing schools is the preferred model and has proven to have many advantages for schools and the Church over time, another model can be considered if it can be shown the new model has greater potential to achieve long-range goals.

11. The plan must focus on serving children over preserving traditions or buildings. All reasonable options should be considered while being sensitive to parish histories and the ownership for schools that is an asset for the Catholic community.

12. The final proposed plan must demonstrate realistic potential to produce schools that are fully enrolled. Maintaining underutilized buildings long term is not acceptable.

13. Schools will operate for the 2014-15 school year as they are. Any change will begin taking place in 2015-16, and could be phased in over a period of time.
III. THE PROBLEM

The comprehensive study of Catholic education in all areas of the Diocese determined the following rationale for why change was needed in Webster.

1. K to 8 enrollment in Webster Catholic Schools was 502 in 2007-08 and declined to 367 in 2013-14. In Webster, the declines were concentrated at St. Anne School and St. Louis School.

2. In 2013-14, the schools operate at 48% to 56% of the K to 8 capacity for the number of classes and number of staff. There are 342 empty seats in K to 8 among the three schools in Webster in 2013-14.

3. Enrollment numbers do not justify three Catholic schools in Webster. If the goal for every school was to be fully enrolled at 90% of capacity (K to 8), the three schools in Webster would need an increase of more than 300 students to be enrolled with full classes.

4. The three schools serve the same exact geographic area resulting in redundancy for Catholic school education. The schools are all within .3 to .7 mile of each other. Students come to Webster schools from 16 surrounding parishes.

5. While the schools have individual strengths, unique identities, and unique histories and ethnicities, their mission overlaps in many ways.

6. The demographics of the community as defined by a 5-mile radius around Webster show an 11% decline in the number of school-age children between the years 2000 and 2013.

7. Overall, the pool of Catholic children is declining as indicated by a 20% decline in infant baptisms over the past five years. Analysis of other data shows a similar trend with First Communions. Kindergarten classes still draw from a pool baptized five years ago, and will draw from a much smaller pool in the future.

8. Competition is coming from new public school facilities and surrounding public school districts that have strong reputations and many resources for students.

9. Catholic schools in Webster are spending $2.5 million annually. Resources could be better allocated and significant efficiencies achieved. However, more efficiency may not be possible within individual schools as they already operate with lean budgets.

10. Schools struggle to balance their budgets. As recourse, schools and parishes have had to use savings, depend on a major donor, or accrue unpaid bills with the Diocese. The deficits combined with a fragile savings leave the schools vulnerable to financial insolvency, and this is very likely for one or more schools in the long run.

11. Given that there are 342 empty seats in grades K to 8 among schools in Webster, cost per pupil is driven upward and pressure mounts to hold expenses. Average class size is 12.7 to 16.0, inefficient and expensive. The results of maintaining too many classrooms are bare-bone budgets and inadequate funds for enrichment, added services, teacher development, and so on. Schools still continue to do these things to varying degrees, but their resources have been growing thin.
12. A major area where expenses are held is staffing and staff compensation. In the long-run, this will undermine the ability of schools to attract and retain high quality teachers. The average starting salary for a new teacher is 63% of the average starting salaries in public schools; and salaries are 77% of the expense in Catholic schools. The disparity grows with teachers of greater seniority and experience. Benefits are lacking in Catholic schools. The cost to rectify this is greater than any one school can bear.

13. The quality of education and opportunities for students varies across schools for particular subject areas, learning resources, and extra-curricular offerings. While overall Catholic schools deliver a good education, across the schools there is inequity in specific areas.
IV. THE SHARED MISSION OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Catholic schools are the responsibility of the whole Church. Bishop McManus states, “The Diocese of Worcester has a long and faith-filled history of spreading the good news of the Gospel. Integral to that evangelizing mission is our Catholic schools - for Christ is our teacher who offers us the words of truth and everlasting life.” Source: Bishop Robert McManus, 2012-13 Annual Report on Catholic Schools

The three schools, St. Anne, St. Joseph and St. Louis, have common elements in their mission.

- **Catholic identity**: expressed as “Catholic spiritual development”, “integrates faith”, “Gospel values”, “Christian values”, “bring about the reign of God”, “educate the whole child...spiritually”.

- **Educational excellence**: expressed as “excellence in education”, “academic excellence” and “educate the whole child...intellectually”.

- **Supportive environment**: expressed as “nurture a positive climate”, “strong sense of community”, “warm supportive environment”, “community atmosphere”, “happy and peaceful atmosphere”, “educate the whole child...socially”.

The Declaration on Christian Education from the Second Vatican Council says about the Catholic school:

...its proper function is to create for the school community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, to help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism as they develop their own personalities, and finally to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith. Source: Gravissimum Educationis, no. 8
V. A NEW VISION FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Children who are now in kindergarten will be retiring in 2074. Think about the changes they will navigate in their lifetime. We have no idea what the world will look like five years from now, much less 60 years, yet we are charged with preparing our students for the future.

Catholic schools are a vital part of the teaching mission of the Church. They should “provide young people with an academically rigorous and doctrinally sound program of education and faith formation designed to strengthen their union with Christ and His Church.”

The vision describes what Catholic schools could be and should be in the future to remain relevant, valuable, competitive, and effective for the Church and society. The vision is already realized to varying degrees in the schools of Webster today. However, no individual school has all the elements; and for those elements that are present, there is room to reach an even higher level of excellence.

It is this vision the plan aspired to realize for all children.

1. Catholic schools are a means of evangelization for the Church.
   a. The parish community surrounds parents and students with love and support.
   b. The academic program integrates faith into all aspects of education.
   c. Students think critically and ethically about the world around them using the lenses of Scripture and the Catholic intellectual tradition.
   d. There is a rigorous program of religious studies and catechesis.
   e. Schools are attractive to people from all faiths and point students and their families toward God.

2. Catholic schools provide a value that is unique and goes beyond what other schools can offer.
   a. Values, morals, and ethics are taught, modeled, and grounded in the Gospel.
   b. Catholic school communities are marked by respect, kindness, and caring.
   c. Service learning is integral to academic excellence, living Gospel values, and teaching about social justice.
   d. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) methods to plan/deliver instruction, working with students of all abilities.
   e. The education is enriched by co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and experiences beyond the classroom which are relevant, research-based, and infused with Catholic faith and traditions.
   f. Fine arts and performing arts are well-developed and well-resourced programs with many opportunities for students at all grade levels.

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g. Explore possibilities for specialization in areas. In a new vision for the future, consider an academy model that would feature specific areas:

- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
- Teaching 21st century literacies including researching, analyzing, synthesizing, critiquing, evaluating and creating new knowledge in a collaborative environment with people around the world.
- Global classrooms.
- Green education.
- Teaching students who are bi-lingual.
- Feature an expanded arts-based curriculum: Teaching through the arts requires students to engage in the act of creative art. Teaching through the arts helps students experience concepts rather than simply discussing or reading about them.

h. Catholic schools are competitive with school districts surrounding Webster. Catholic schools will be a superior value for the tuition paid.

i. Families will be embraced as partners in education. Education programs and community events will serve to strengthen the family and engage all in their child’s education.

3. Students are prepared to succeed in high school and post high school education.

a. Teachers meet State standards and go beyond with a clearly articulated rigorous curriculum.

b. Schools set benchmarks and use current assessment methods (formative and summative) to inform instruction and continually improve.

c. Opportunities are provided for advanced learning to ready students for fast track/AP courses in high school.

d. Students participate in a wide range of education experiences such as speech contests, presentations, and debates.

e. Students who are advanced learners are challenged constantly through the 8th grade.

f. Partnerships are formed with high schools and universities.

g. The middle school program will be exceptional and very competitive, retaining students through the 8th grade.

4. Schools are educating the whole person with 21st century skills.

a. Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to become creative, reflective, innovative, literate, critical, and moral evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers, and socially responsible global citizens.
b. 21st century skills are learned through an interdisciplinary, integrated, project-based curriculum that utilizes these skills:

- Critical thinking and problem solving.
- Collaboration across networks and leading by influence.
- Agility and adaptability.
- Initiative and entrepreneurialism.
- Effective oral and written communication.
- Accessing and analyzing information.
- Curiosity and imagination.

c. Students will be proficient in 21st century literacies, including multicultural, media, information, emotional, ecological, financial, and cyber literacies.

- Rethink the commonly held assumptions about what all students should know and be able to do. What knowledge consists of is no longer static and requires redefining the traditional understanding of school, teacher, student, curriculum; and in so doing, shape a new vision for what effective teaching will look like in the 21st century.

5. Professional development for teachers is thoughtfully planned and adequately funded to attract, hold, and grow excellent certified teachers.

a. Teachers will be encouraged to teach to their passion and share that passion with the teaching and learning community.

b. Teachers will train teachers.

c. Individualized professional development plans for teachers will be an expectation. These plans will be revisited annually. Goals that have been met will be celebrated and new goals will be developed.

6. Technology tools will be provided for teaching and learning.

a. Technology will be utilized effectively by teachers to enhance the learning process. Regular in service and supportive services will develop greater technology competence among teachers.

b. Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning will prepare students to become expert users of technology and live in a technology-filled world.

c. Technology plans will provide strategies, action steps, and budgets for schools to achieve their technology goals. They will be connected to their school strategic plans and will be adequately funded.

7. Schools will increase in diversity of students ethnically, racially, and culturally. Diversity will enrich the experience of students.

a. Promote and celebrate diversity.

b. Courses in language and culture are a part of student learning (e.g., Polish, French, Spanish) with demonstrations and explanations of customs and traditions.

c. Families are involved in the sharing of their customs and traditions.
8. Schools in Webster cooperate to achieve shared goals.
   a. Adopt an ‘academy’ model. Explore focus/specialty areas for schools based on physical space and consider which spaces may be best fit for a focus on perhaps arts, sciences, technology, early childhood, or other.
   b. Meet the needs of the community through before and after school care, enhancing the home to school connections, inviting and serving the home schooling community.
   c. Explore the possibility of a small van/bus for transportation between campuses with shared cost (perhaps for before/after school programming).
9. The message about Catholic education in Webster is consistent and regularly communicated among all parishes.
   a. Parishes cooperate and collaborate and offer a variety of opportunities for all parishioners and community members.
   b. Mass, devotions, opportunities for Penance, retreats are offered.
   c. Coordination of adult catechesis opportunities for parents and guardians.
10. Students are educated with global understanding and world knowledge.
    a. As we look to the future it is important to remember that our students are and will face many emerging issues such as global warming, famine, poverty, health issues, a global population explosion, and other environmental and social issues. These issues lead to a need for students to be able to communicate, function and create change personally, socially, economically and politically on local, national and global levels.
11. Schools will function strategically with a long-range view.
    a. School boards will be properly in-serviced to carry out meaningful roles.
    b. School leaders will operate with professional and updated strategic plans.
12. Schools will operate efficiently.
    a. Enrollment will be managed to keep full classrooms. Schools will operate at 90% of capacity.
    b. Catholic schools will achieve a greater market share thereby holding and possibly growing enrollment.
    c. More families who are not Catholic will seek Catholic education for their children.
    d. Recruitment and marketing will function at a professional level with an adequate budget.
13. Schools will be financially solvent.
    a. Budgets will be balanced year to year and schools will not accrue deficits.
    b. Schools will be able to develop some savings for the future.
    c. Teacher compensation will be competitive and attractive to ensure the quality of teaching and retention of teachers for the future.
    d. Facilities will be utilized in a cost-efficient manner.
    e. Future facility maintenance and upgrades will be planned and funded.
14. Schools will have attractive and modern facilities.
   a. Facilities by design and décor will exude a clear Catholic identity.
   b. Dedicated spaces will be well equipped with modern technology and updated furnishings for instruction in science, art, music, and other subject areas. Students will have access to gyms that meet competition regulations. Schools will have cafeterias.
   c. Facilities will be technologically current to support learning for a new generation.
   d. Facilities will be well maintained and clean.
   e. Facilities will be attractive with a refreshed “curb appeal”. Facilities will be marketable to the community and give a sense of quality that justifies the tuition.
VI. OPTIONS STUDIED

The Joint Study Committee was given the freedom to consider all options that met the goals of the study, addressed the problems identified, and realized the vision for Catholic education. For any change to be accepted, it must be demonstrated to be better for children and a more sustainable long-term solution than the status quo. It was a given the status quo would not be an acceptable option. The solution may preserve parish ownership of schools as it has traditionally functioned, or find a different model that continues a strong connection with parishes. Consideration was given to the following options:

OPTION 1: Increase cooperation and communication among Webster schools but not change the structure.

Option 1 is not recommended for these reasons: Participation would be voluntary, and subject to some satisfaction of self-interest for real cooperation to take place. Long-term cooperation would depend on pastors, principals and others in leadership agreeing and maintaining working relationships even through leadership transitions. Sustainability is not very high when voluntary participation gives way to self-preservation. Difficult decisions for the good of the whole never get made.

OPTION 2: Kindergarten through 8th grade at two sites with one class per grade at each site. This is essentially two schools instead of three.

Option 2 is not recommended for these reasons: Two sites of K through 8 essentially closes one school and leaves two schools competing with each other for students and resources. Duplication of programs, particularly in the upper grades, results in more cost with diminished capacity to deliver the best quality programs at either site. Staffing is inefficient because both sites need all programs. Smaller enrollment numbers at any one school reduces the ability to hire specialists or justify special programs. Having one grade in each building forces both schools to maintain all grades with a classroom all the time even if enrollment is low for that grade. Schools compete for fundraising/development dollars rather than put forward a unified bigger vision in the community. The vision for the future is only partially realized.

OPTION 3: Kindergarten to 4th grade at one site, and 5th to 8th grade at the other site.

Option 3 is the preferred option.
VII. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW VISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

1. Operate Kindergarten through 4th grade at one site, and 5th to 8th grade at another site.
   a. Utilize the facilities that have the greatest opportunity to realize the new vision for education and be competitive for the long-term. 5th to 8th grade should be at the site of St. Joseph Parish, and K to 4th grade should be at the site of St. Louis Parish.
   b. Provide an outstanding prekindergarten. Locate prekindergarten at St. Anne School. Investigate the possibilities for expanded services.
   c. Retain the best of all the schools. Celebrate their histories, build on their strengths, and continue the best traditions of Catholic education.

2. Implement the change beginning in the 2015-16 school year. Take the entire 2014-15 school year to plan and prepare for a successful transition.

3. All three schools come together to form a single new school. All three parishes are owners of the new school which functions on behalf of the parishes as an extension of their educational mission.
VIII. VISION AND RATIONALE FOR A NEW MODEL

A. Vision for Catholic Identity and Mission

The schools would continue to serve as an extension of the educational mission for Sacred Heart Parish, St. Joseph Parish and St. Louis Parish. Their Catholic identity is supported through the pastoral leadership of all three pastors and the Catholic vibrancy of all three parishes.

1. A new mission statement will be formulated for the new school.
2. Catholic identity will permeate all aspects of school planning: from academics to extracurricular programs, from internal culture to external branding, from faculty to buildings. Building a strong connection for school parents with their parish community will be a high priority.
3. The pastors will serve as spiritual leaders for the new school as well as their respective parishes. In collaboration with the head of school and school staff, they will support the spiritual development of the faculty, staff, and student body. They will be present at school functions where a pastoral presence is important. They will celebrate Mass, preside at liturgies, lead prayer services, and guide planning for retreat days. Pastors will communicate with each other to coordinate pastoral care.
4. The best of traditions and charisms from the three schools will be brought into the new school. The teachers will be instrumental in retaining traditions that enrich the Catholic identity and heritage of students.
5. An intentional effort will be coordinated with parishes to actively engage families and students in their respective parishes.

B. Vision for Academics

1. The academic program will pursue the vision put forth in this document. Academic standards will be as high as or higher than they are in the schools today. The new school will be able to offer programs and enrich student learning in ways that it could not before.
2. The academic program will be competitive with the best public school districts in the wider region.
3. Adopt an ‘academy’ model. And as part of the model identify one or more areas of special focus, that is an area of strength where the school will be differentiated from other options, not just “me too”. Several areas identified for consideration are science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) as well as religion and the arts. An arts program at a whole new level from what is available now could emphasize music, drama, or visual arts.
4. Teachers will participate in higher levels of professional development that are adequately funded. A learning community will emerge in support of the best teaching staff in the region.
5. The school will be able to staff positions that were not possible before. New positions envisioned and budgeted for are:
   - Part-time athletic director
   - Guidance counselor
   - School nurse
- Dedicated teacher for art
- Teacher for foreign language
- Teacher for music
- Specialist for reading, advanced math, and other subject areas
- Teacher for resource program \textit{(assist students with mild to moderate learning disabilities)}
- As many as 5 aides for lower grades
- A teaching team of 6 teachers departmentalized and specialized for the developmental needs of 6\textsuperscript{th} through 8\textsuperscript{th} grades. This team is assisted by other subject-specific teachers, for a total of 13.
- Technology will be integrated into teaching throughout all the grades.

Advantages will be better or new programs for students, saving money, avoiding duplication, creating a critical mass to justify a program, specializing in a specific area, offering more than the competition, and so on. There are many possibilities that can benefit students, provide value to the schools, and save significant cost. The list below is a starting place to think outside the box.

**BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS**

- Provide faith formation opportunities for teachers to strengthen religious education for students.
- Enroll in advanced courses for upper grades.
- Participate in specialized programs like a STEM program that requires a critical mass of students to justify the cost of teachers and resources, including labs.
- Experience high quality extra-curricular programming.
- Experience specialized programs in visual and performing arts, robotics, languages, advanced mathematics.
- Benefit from new subject content and innovative teaching.
- Benefit from cultural learning and exchange.
- Rejuvenated learning community.

**VALUE TO SCHOOLS**

- Unified plan for marketing and recruitment with a budget to fund these activities.
- Teachers serve all children even between campuses, particularly in specialty areas or in subjects like language, math, and science. This provides additional opportunities for advanced learners.
- Provide a technology specialist and technology support that is too expensive for any one school alone.
- Specialists like counselors, therapists, and nurses serve all students on multiple sites.
- Greatly enhance offerings in fine arts like instrumental and other music programs. Offer a specialized fine arts program in drama and tie into a high school or college.
• Offer the Destination Imagination program. This is an after-school program that encourages teams of learners to have fun, take risks, focus and frame challenges while incorporating STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), the arts and service learning. Teams may showcase their solutions at a tournament. The mission is to inspire learners to utilize diverse approaches in applying 21st century skills and creativity. (www.destinationimagination.org)

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
• Provide summer programming. This can enhance student success and be a significant recruitment tool.
• Enhance home to school and community connections.
• Partner with local universities.
• Provide high quality early childhood programming. Consider year round services.
• Provide high quality after school programming for all students (examples to consider: chess club, robotics and game design, intramural sports, clubs, field trips).
• Introduce and share customs and traditions.
• Provide programs to support bilingual families, a growing need in the community.
• Expand community service projects and pursue missions work in collaboration with parishes.
• Provide athletic programs that were not previously possible or consistently available: quality coaching, equipment, and facilities. The school buildings have three gyms to use.
• Increase social interaction with others through larger school size.
C. Vision for Enrollment

Enrollment for the school may take some losses in the transition year. But with the assumption kindergarten can be stabilized at 56, overall enrollment will grow and within one year after opening enrollment will be higher in 2016-17 than it was in 2013-14. The enrollment plan assumes with all the changes described in the new vision for Catholic education in Webster, the school will build toward full enrollment and be close to 500 in five years.

Figure 1
Enrollment Projection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Grade</th>
<th>2013-14 Actual</th>
<th>2013-14 Projected</th>
<th>2018-19 Projected</th>
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<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal K-4</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal 5-8</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total PreK-8</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

K-8 enrollment capacity: 709  K-8 percent of capacity: 52%  
# of empty K-8 seats: 342

Retention from Grade to Grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>1st to 2nd</th>
<th>2nd to 3rd</th>
<th>3rd to 4th</th>
<th>4th to 5th</th>
<th>5th to 6th</th>
<th>6th to 7th</th>
<th>7th to 8th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total | -7         |

1 Actual number of K to 8 classes in 2013-14.
2 Average class size does not include pre-kindergarten.
3 Assume 10% loss for all grades in 2015-16 in transition year. Assume rebuild enrollment from K up beginning 2016-17.
4 Number of K to 8 classes projected for 2018-19 using 25 per class and adjusting for efficiency.
5 Assume improved retention rate from historical trends. Assume PreK and K enrollment will be steady. Assume higher could occur from 4th to 5th grade.
6 The plan increases availability of aides in lower grades. The adult to student ratio remains strong.
The enrollment projection assumes the following:

1. The first year of the new school will be 2015-16.

2. Historically, kindergarten was 59 to 61, so the assumption of a kindergarten with 56 is conservative. Furthermore, the new plan makes Catholic schools stronger and more able to hold enrollment into future years.

3. Enrollment holds fairly steady for next school year 2014-15 because there is no change to the present structure. The drop comes in 2015-16, but by the next year enrollment rises above starting levels. Enrollment grows on the assumptions kindergarten is steady and retention is improved.

4. A possibility not included in the projections is more Catholic and non-Catholic families could enroll with the improvements to programs and more sophisticated marketing/recruitment initiatives.

5. If for some reason enrollment exceeds expectations or comes in under expectations, the new school can expand or contract without threatening to close, closing down a grade, or causing expensive scenarios of under enrolled classes.

6. In 2015-16, the projection assumes a normal net loss of 7 students, plus an additional loss of 10% for a total net loss of 32. Net loss means more students leave than come, and the expectation is some new students will come in almost all grades as this is the normal pattern in years past. While the school would like to retain all students and every effort will be made to do so with careful planning, the changes may be more than some current parents are ready for.

7. As small classes graduate, larger classes take their place. With the new vision, the retention trend should be corrected. The projection improves upon retention trends in the past. With the upper grades offering far more than they do now, it is hoped the school will deliver a strong program that parents will want for their children, and retention to 5th grade will be higher than projected.
D. Vision for Finances

The primary question was “what is the cost to operate under the proposed new model as compared to the current model?” and “what is the cost savings but with new expenditures to fund the vision?”

A careful review of all accounts for all schools confirmed the total cost to operate the three schools in 2012-13 was $2.48 million. The resulting cost per pupil was $5,839. Note: Cost per pupil calculated by taking total expenditures divided by PreK-8 enrollment. Assume PreK enrollment is .5 full-time equivalency.

Figure 2
Pro Forma Financial Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2013-14 Expenditures</th>
<th>New Vision</th>
<th>Savings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Salaries/Rel. Salaries/Rel. Benefits</td>
<td>$1,243,603</td>
<td>$1,094,094</td>
<td>$149,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin/Clerical/Maint/Other Salaries</td>
<td>407,113</td>
<td>203,556</td>
<td>203,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary - After School Programs</td>
<td>71,737</td>
<td>62,573</td>
<td>9,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>308,147</td>
<td>184,888</td>
<td>123,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Expenses/Equipment</td>
<td>148,682</td>
<td>111,692</td>
<td>36,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building - Repair &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>33,574</td>
<td>28,530</td>
<td>5,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building - Insurance</td>
<td>38,089</td>
<td>27,953</td>
<td>10,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building - Utilities</td>
<td>35,557</td>
<td>31,250</td>
<td>4,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building - Heat</td>
<td>92,380</td>
<td>69,951</td>
<td>22,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenditures</td>
<td>22,259</td>
<td>14,914</td>
<td>7,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym/Hall Expenses</td>
<td>32,389</td>
<td>32,389</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,481,531</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,909,791</strong></td>
<td><strong>$571,740</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 3

#### K to 8 STAFF Full-Time Equivalent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>OPTION 1</th>
<th>OPTION 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St. Anne</td>
<td>St. Joseph</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Administration</strong></td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Professional Support</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Athletic Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor</td>
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<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology/Computer</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Prof. Support</strong></td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K teacher</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st grade teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd grade teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd grade teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grade teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th grade teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th grade teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th grade teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade teacher</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th grade teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subjects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated reading</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer science</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language-French</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language-Polish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign language-Spanish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math-Advanced</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math-Standard</td>
<td>0.3</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Specialist-ELL</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource person</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Faculty</strong></td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After School Program</strong></td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before School Program</strong></td>
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<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aides</strong></td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clerical</strong></td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance</strong></td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2013-14 full-time salary averages:
- Administration = $54,427
- Faculty = $34,403
- Early Childhood = $26,234

* Teachers would be specialized in grades 6-8. Specialization could be Religion, Science, and so on.
Under the new model the resulting cost is estimated at $1.9 million (in 2012 dollars). This was arrived at after a careful examination of each school’s expenditures and with the following assumptions:

1. Fewer staff are needed to teach traditional grades. However, a significant shift is made by expanding current positions or creating ones to support education, providing specialists for specific subjects, or increasing various support roles. There are 14 different positions (full-time and part-time) that will be either new or expanded. The savings from fewer staff are offset by expansion of other staff, with the net effect being a small net decrease in overall staff.

2. Prekindergarten would be able to at least break even. It should have potential to earn income.

3. Teacher and administrator salaries were increased 4%. The increase will be a first step toward closing the gap in compensation.

The resulting savings is $571,740. The final step is to consider how the savings are used. The pro forma already assumed a new staffing plan and an increase in compensation, the largest item in the budget.

The savings would have these benefits:

- New investment in professional development, educational supplies and equipment, technology, marketing and recruitment. Could be $200,000 to $250,000.
- Eliminate operating deficits and operate with balanced budgets. Removes $323,000 to $373,000 from expense. Parishes are no longer at risk of large surprise subsidies they cannot afford. Endowment principal is left in tack and savings are preserved for the future. Donors do not have to save the school from closing, but can invest in children and their futures.

The plan for revenue assumes:

- Parish subsidy is set at a manageable level all parishes can afford. The subsidy can be based on a variety of factors that are formula based. Some financial support is anticipated because it will ensure parish commitment, fund tuition assistance, keep tuition affordable, and preserve Catholic education as part of parish mission.
- In 2011-2012 and 2012-13 schools received $1,132,359 in donations through fundraising and development. These generous donors are only a representation of the donor base yet to be cultivated. The support base may shift, but with a fresh vision and a clear connection with parish mission, many donors will want to support a successful enterprise.
- The St. Louis School Endowment Fund has been a generous supporter of Catholic education over the years. The opportunity for the endowment fund to continue the educational mission of St. Louis Parish is significant, as the school remains at the parish in parish facilities.
- Tuition could degrade a little in the first year, depending on enrollment. But within 2 years, tuition revenue will grow because enrollment will grow and the value of education will be noticeably increased along with the marketing/branding that will raise the value for parents.
- A combination of savings, development revenues, and internal funding should provide a growing and strategic fund for financial assistance. With the strategic use of financial assistance, enrollment goals will be supported and Catholic schools will be more accessible.
- The new approach has potential for revenue to grow, where the status quo had very little possibility for revenue growth.
- The tuition model must be reworked and a transition plan put into place. Current families should experience modest changes in their tuition so as not to be shocked bringing into question their choice of school. In time, new families will enter the school under a new tuition model undergirded by enhanced programs and higher value.
E. Vision for Facilities

All sites and facilities were carefully evaluated for their merits. Most important was: 1) how the building serves the vision for a 21st century education, 2) number of classrooms in relation to projected enrollment. While the condition of buildings is an important consideration, all buildings have been relatively well maintained, so maintenance was not a primary factor in whether to consider or not consider a building. Décor was also not a primary factor as any building used will need an ongoing plan for maintenance and improvements like painting, carpet, lighting, security, etc. What is clear is the future school does not need all the buildings presently in use and a reduction in the amount of facilities maintained is necessary to achieve a cost-effective plan. Future capital improvements should be directed at projects that are strategic and will have long-term benefit.

The St. Anne School building has been well maintained. It has a relatively new gym/parish hall/preschool across the street from the main school. The street is on a dead-end road, so traffic has not been a safety issue. The gym is a full gym with a regulation-size court for sports. The new school would take full use of the gym for athletic programs. The preschool room would also be used along with some classrooms in the main building for the preschool program.

St. Louis School is the largest facility, and makes the best fit for the lower grades. Key points are classrooms are larger and the building can house all programs. As soon as it is feasible, this site would be the ideal place for prekindergarten and the addition of prekindergarten classrooms is doable. A full prekindergarten is critical to full enrollment in the rest of the school.

St. Joseph School makes the best fit for the upper grades. The site will soon have a new gym and cafeteria, an important advantage for physical education and athletics for older students. The building can house all programs with an adequate number of classrooms. Flexible-use rooms allow for departmentalization and subject specialization.

Figure 4
Facilities Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St. Anne School</th>
<th>St. Joseph School</th>
<th>St. Louis School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria in new building across street</td>
<td>New larger cafeteria</td>
<td>Cafeteria room/2 lunch rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings separated by road</td>
<td>Buildings connected</td>
<td>Single building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue with parking</td>
<td>Good parking across street</td>
<td>Great parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof is newer than other buildings</td>
<td>Plenty of outside space/adjacent town facilities (park)</td>
<td>The most outside space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New boiler a few years ago and well maintained</td>
<td>Plenty of real estate</td>
<td>Real estate to add on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathrooms for students are on lower level</td>
<td>Good access</td>
<td>Great access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not good play area outside</td>
<td>Plenty of nurse space</td>
<td>The best nurse facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very limited real estate</td>
<td>Has new regulation-size gym</td>
<td>Small gym can be used with younger students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No nurse facilities</td>
<td>Has performing arts stage area</td>
<td>Lunch rooms nice for small kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lots of flex space for programs</td>
<td>Can house all programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wide hallways</td>
<td>Pre-K does not fit nicely, space needed for K-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Addition of lockers would add classroom space</td>
<td>Can be expanded easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bathrooms on all floors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accommodate 125-225 students</td>
<td>Accommodate 260-324 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Page 22 updated May 15, 2014)
F. Vision for Prekindergarten

All the schools presently have a prekindergarten program, each offering a 3-year old and 4-year old class. Presently the 3-year old classes may have from 5 to 14 students, and the 4-year old classes may have from 8 to 16 students.

The new vision is to bring together a preschool program in a facility designed specifically for the developmental needs of 3 and 4-year olds. Initially current facilities would be used, and long-term new classrooms would be constructed so the preschool is ideally situated within the larger school and ancillary services are available onsite.

ENROLLMENT

1. Two to three classrooms would be dedicated for 3-year olds and the same for 4-year olds.
2. A larger enrollment will improve staffing ratios. Teachers will be supported by aides.
3. Investing in a quality preschool with the best teachers will hopefully create a demand in the community, and the children and families who come will not want to leave but stay for kindergarten and the rest of elementary school.
PROGRAM
1. Children will be engaged in an educational program that prepares them for school.
2. A clear Catholic identity will be present in teachers and staff. The Gospel of Christ will permeate the entire program.
3. Expanded services will become available such as an option for child care all day, five days a week.
4. Tuition should more than cover expenses, especially if classes are fully enrolled.

FACILITIES
1. Provide a facility that will distinguish this preschool from many of the other options in the region. Short-term, utilize the current prekindergarten located at St. Anne School. Additional rooms could be created from the hall, or rooms in the school could be used. As soon as feasible, build four or five new age-appropriate classrooms on to St. Louis School. Build larger rooms with features that make the preschool distinctly superior to other options in the community.
2. By opening up space adequate for improved programs, neither facility has adequate space to house kindergarten through 8th grade in their current configuration. If forced to fit in the St. Joseph facility, it would make that site very crowded and likely not be a good fit for prekindergarten students to share the same hallways with middle-school students. St. Louis facility does not have the right number of classrooms at this time, but can be added on to.
3. The St. Anne building will continue to be utilized for the hall and also for the gym.
4. Remove the current prekindergarten facility at St. Louis School. The condition and configuration of this building do not warrant long-term use.

G. Vision for Governance

Note: The vision for governance presented here gives only highlights of the governance model. A detailed document is being developed with specific legal and practical elements.

Catholic schools that are successful in a dynamic and competitive environment must have organizational structures that empower leaders, produce wise decisions, and perpetuate a continuous culture of innovation and strategic thinking. A governance model properly fit to the parishes of Webster must retain parish ownership for Catholic schools, ensure continuity through generations in the future, guarantee the mission of Catholic education remains clear and strong, establish clear roles for various decision-making parties, and engage the laity in a significant way.

Ownership for the school rests with the parishes in Webster. However, to function in accordance with The Code of Canon Law and in accordance with Civil Law, the school would be separately incorporated in Civil Law and would be given special status in Canon Law. The result would be the following: the pastors and Bishop retain reserved powers that are not delegated. These reserved powers would include:

- Approval of the philosophy and mission.
- Appointment of a Board of Trustees.
- Appoint and terminate a head of school in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office.
- Approval for operating budgets.
A Board of Trustees would be established and given limited jurisdiction for governance of the school. This means powers not reserved to the pastors and Bishop are delegated to the Board. The pastors would serve on the Board of Trustees along with representatives from parishes and the community. The head of school would be accountable to the Board of Trustees for matters where the Board of Trustees has responsibility.

The role of the Board would be to supervise the operation of the school and ensure continuation of the school mission. The Board does not enter into operational decisions, but functions to ensure the school has clear direction, policy, and plans that will sustain a sound Catholic education program.

Specifically, the Board of Trustees will:

a. Prepare and annually update a vision and strategic long-range plan for the school.
b. Develop and approve administrative policy.
c. Oversee general business and financial matters. Ensure a financially viable plan is in place to sustain the school for the long term.
d. Provide leadership to cultivate donor support for the school.
e. Recruit and interview candidates for the head of school and make recommendations to the pastors and Bishop for approval.

By granting limited jurisdiction to the Board of Trustees, the Board has the authority to make decisions within areas specifically delegated to the Board. The Board is given a significant role and carries forward the mission of the parishes.

This type of Board will attract the best leadership from the community. The Board will be given professional in-service opportunities to function at a high level and contribute significant leadership along with the head of school, pastors and Bishop for the future of Catholic education. The Board will add wisdom and resources that schools may not otherwise acquire through their individual efforts. Pastors will continue to have a significant role in spiritual direction and oversight, but the administration of the school does not become a burden or distraction from the ministerial work of parishes. The school is an extension of the parishes and asset to their ministry, and the parishes are a major asset to the school.
H. Summary of Rationale

What are the benefits and features of a change for Catholic schools with the new vision that is imagined?

1. Embrace the best of traditions in all the schools, enriching the experience for all students.
2. A strong Catholic mission of evangelization and faith formation is carried forward.
4. Improve educational opportunities and raise the level of education for students.
5. Support quality teaching with compensation and professional development.
6. Make new investment in facilities, equipment, and educational resources. Free up the resources to do this. With the savings, expand services and support for students.
7. Remove competition between schools and replace with a structure for true collaboration.
8. Enhance specials and educational supports especially for middle school students. Be competitive and better than public school districts in the area.
9. Be flexible with the number of classes as enrollment demand necessitates. Be able to grow and consolidate as demand dictates while maintaining quality and efficiencies.
10. Strengthen outreach to significant donors with a big vision. Build a more professional development/advancement initiative that combines the resources of the community and unifies them around a common mission for children.
11. Establish a professional marketing and recruitment program with staff and budget to increase market share from Webster and the wider community.
12. Engage parishes without schools in the region on how they can support the mission for Catholic school education.
IX. RISKS AND CONCERNS

The following five areas surfaced as major concerns for participants in the study. There are some risks associated with each.

1. Catechesis and Religious Education

   In concert with the Diocesan Office of Religious Education, the school will provide the highest level of religious education possible. Teachers will be state licensed and certified as catechists. As they are today, pastors will be an active part of the spiritual life of the school. In each area of content, the curriculum will reflect the Catholic values that have been the basis for the success of Catholic schools by including connections to the Gospel message and the religious education program.

2. Attrition in the year of transition

   A lack of leadership and communications could very well result in attrition. However, this does not have to be the case. A stronger vision and stronger program will attract and retain a higher number of students in the long run. The marketplace will reward quality and excellence. Future parents will have a better Catholic school to attend.

   Current parents must feel they are cared for and see the benefits for their children to stay through the transition. Attrition from the lower grade school to the upper grade school may also be a concern. If there is a strong ongoing connection between the upper and lower schools and if the upper school is far superior to other schools in the community and an improvement on what current Catholic schools can do, parents will seek to enroll there. With larger numbers of students, the school will be more competitive in athletics, scholastics, technology, and a more rounded curriculum. The school will have new resources and vision to push the advanced student and assist the student who needs additional help.

3. Connection between parishes and Catholic schools

   The connection is fundamentally grounded by relationships. The proposed organizational structure cements this relationship between parishes and the school. The schools are clearly the responsibility of the parishes and the mission of the parishes. Working together yields far more than pulling alone.

4. Welcoming and continuity to attract/serve ethnic populations

   All the parishes have a history of serving particular ethnic groups. St. Joseph in particular has a younger and more recent identity with the Polish community. The traditions and Polish identity of St. Joseph will be a blessing to the school, just as the identity and traditions of Sacred Heart and St. Louis will be. The children will easily come together, but the parents may need time to get to know one another and trust the new leadership. A welcoming and trusting spirit is essential for a successful transition with current parents.
5. **Future for St. Anne School building/repurposing of parish hall/gym**

Since the St. Anne School building is not the building of choice, it leaves Sacred Heart Parish with an important question around future use of the building and operating cost. Keeping this building necessitates a purpose be found that justifies keeping it in the parish. Is there a purpose that fits nicely with the parish mission, or should the building be relegated to secular purposes? The question was not within the realm of the Study Committee, but it needs a thoughtful answer, and an answer that is sensitive to the long memories of many people whose lives were shaped by St. Anne School.