

# DIocese OF SUPERIOR

## Catholic Schools

### Strategic Management and Development Program Progress Report

February 2018

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Superior are a mission of the Church entrusted by Jesus Christ to instill Catholic faith and morals in our students. Within community, our schools prepare students spiritually, academically, and physically to proclaim and live out the Good News in preparation for eternal life.

## WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM?

The Strategic Management and Development Program (SMDP) is a four year program through Catholic School Management. A four-year partnership grant was received from Catholic Extension in July 2015 shared by the fourteen parishes with schools. The goal of this initiative is to help the schools become well managed institutions especially when leadership changes. Parishes with schools will work toward establishing sound management and strategic planning so that transitions do not slow the progress of enrollment retention, marketing, development and communication.

This program is a Catholic school sustainability initiative designed to provide parish and school leadership, committee members and volunteers with the understanding and tools needed to ensure the long-term viability and vitality of the school.

At the end of four years, each school will be actively engaged in carrying out their strategic plan, communication plan, enrollment management plan and development plan.



Students from St. Patrick School in Hudson, established in 1868, the oldest school still open in our diocese

## A BIT OF SCHOOL HISTORY

The first missionaries arrived in northern Wisconsin in 1661 to live among the Ojibway Tribes. It was in 1868 that St. Patrick Catholic Schools in Hudson was opened. Sixteen more schools would open before Pope Pius X established the Diocese of Superior in 1905. Of the fourteen current Catholic schools, nine of them were started during this time.

Elementary schools in the Diocese of Superior have always been parish-based schools. Since 1868, at one time or other, there have been 39 elementary schools, 5 high schools and one college. The mission of these schools has always been to provide a choice in education for families and children in northern Wisconsin.

## FOUR YEAR GOALS

### Year 1 (2015-2016)

- Update and Clarify Foundational Documents
- Prepare and Implement a Strategic Plan
- Initiate Marketing and Enrollment Analysis Strategies

### Year 2 (2016-2017)

- Prepare and Implement a Comprehensive Communication Program

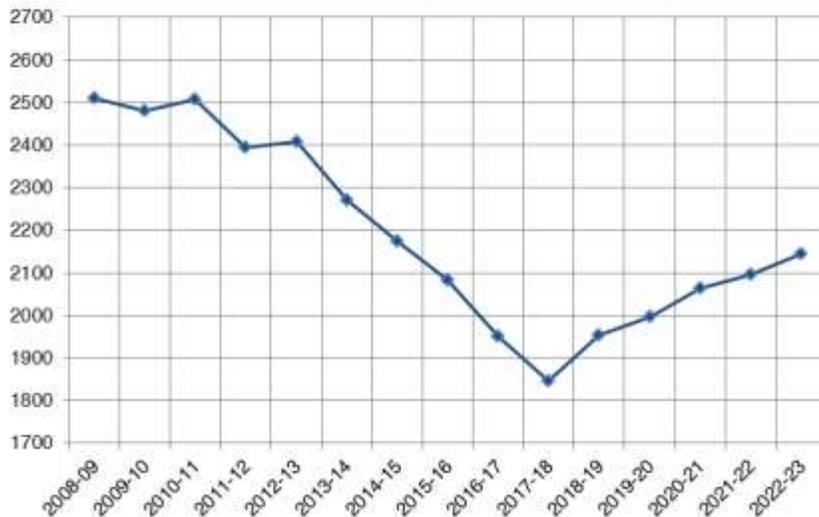
### Year 3 (2017-2018)

- Establish or Enhance Programs of Annual Giving
- Document Enrollment & Marketing Programs in an Enrollment Management Plan

### Year 4 (2018-2019)

- Establish or Enhance Programs of Planned Giving to Build Endowment

Ten Year Enrollment History and Five Year Projection



## UTILIZING ENROLLMENT DATA

As shown in the chart, enrollment in the Catholic schools has declined over the past ten years. In two of the years, schools closed, resulting in a decline of 53 in 2011 and 73 in 2016.

In using the Strategic Management enrollment spreadsheets, the schools have been able to track the reasons for families leaving our schools. Within the past 2.5 years the schools have tracked these reasons for leaving:

Personal, 47 students	Moving, 42 students
Other, 21 students	Not Happy, 20 students
Academics 18 students	Finances, 13 students

With this data, schools now evaluate the specific reasons for students leaving and determine if there is anything that the school might be able to improve on. These possible improvements are made part of the school's strategic planning goals to increase enrollment.

On the flip side, schools also track why parents send their children to the schools. This is usually done by personal contact and parent survey. Reasons for sending children to the schools, based on data accumulated from parent surveys are:

- Academic programs meet the parents' expectations (93% of parents agree)
- Appropriate Christian values are taught (98% of parents agree)
- Students feel safe and appropriate safety measures are in place (98% of parents agree)
- Family atmosphere builds lasting friendships (96% of parents agree)
- Students are given leadership opportunities (93% of parents agree)
- Tuition paid is appropriate for the benefits received (95% of parents agree)



Students from St. Bridget Parish School, River Falls

**93%**

*of parents would recommend their Catholic school to someone else*

**57%**

*of the schools have seen enrollment increase since beginning this program*

**93%**

*of schools, if continue to implement this program, will realize an increase in enrollment over the next five years*

**43%**

*of schools have a calendar or written plan for recruitment and retention of students*

**64%**

*of schools have a communication and marketing calendar or written plan*

**71%**

*of schools are working to fulfill their strategic plans*

## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ENHANCED

*"Having directed a lot of attention to our social media presence has grown our enrollment and visibility in the community. Branding our school was a huge endeavor but is paying off in the long run because our logo is now recognizable within the community."*

Laura Jo Jarchow, principal,  
St. Mary, New Richmond



*"OLL in Ashland and 8 other schools have updated and increased the circulation of their school brochure."*

Betty Swiston, principal,  
Our Lady of the Lake, Ashland



*"SMDP has prompted us to intensify our marketing efforts. We have had an active website and FB page for some time, but SMDP encouraged us to take a serious look at producing a newsletter—something we had never attempted before. We resisted at first as we knew it would be a major project. And while it involved considerable time on the part of school personnel who write the articles and a volunteer who actually learned Publisher on her own time and put it all together with photos, "Volume 1, Issue 1" of a Fall newsletter turned out great and the distribution to over 1,200 addresses connected to our school community was well received!"*

Randall Stanke, principal,  
St. Anne, Somerset



*"The biggest impact SMDP has had for our school is in the area of marketing and branding. We are doing a much better job of getting St. Mary's name out in the public. As a result, we are seeing more new families show interest in our school over the last 18 months."*

Rita Lee, principal,  
St. Mary, Tomahawk



*"Being new to this program, the one item that I am excited about developing is the parish and school activities and fundraising charts. It is exciting to see all of the activities that both our school and parish groups work on throughout the year. I see the business benefits of having a quality master schedule/ plan. We want to enhance our programs not compete against our programs. As we continue to add activities to the master plan, we are already discussing the best options as when to run each event."*

Melanie Nycz, principal  
Nativity of Our Lord, Rhinelander

For the past two and a half years, the schools have been focusing on with their strategic planning and enhancing their marketing and communication efforts so that people throughout the surrounding communities identify the presence of a Catholic school choice and the wonderful opportunity this education is for children. This improvement in marketing and communication is a key aspect of enrollment and viability in the schools. Many of the schools are seeing the fruits of this work.

OLL in Ashland and 8 other schools have updated and increased the circulation of their school brochure.



St. Francis Xavier in Merrill and 6 other schools have taken the time to develop a new logo.



St. Mary in New Richmond and 10 other schools have increased their social media exposure.



St. Francis Solanus in Reserve and 3 other schools participated in postcard campaigns.



St Joseph in Rice Lake and 12 other schools updated their websites.



Cathedral in Superior and 5 other schools have produced promotional videos.



St. Anne in Somerset and 2 other schools developed posters for in the community.



St. Mary in Tomahawk and 7 other schools have published annual reports.

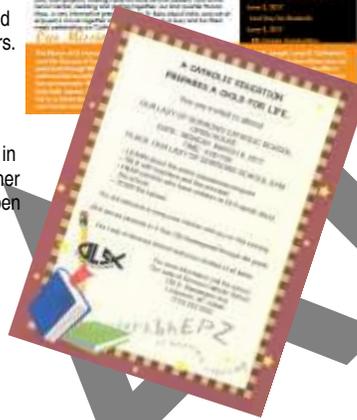


St. Francis de Sales in Spooner and 9 other schools published and mailed out newsletters.



Our Lady of Sorrows in Ladysmith and 13 other schools have held open houses.

Nativity in Rhinelander and 12 other schools have utilized Facebook ads for their events.



*"Does anyone remember Windows Vista? Even Microsoft has had challenging years. With SMDP it was encouraging for Holy Rosary to come back from a "Vista" year, work on a Strategic Plan, re-evaluate our mission statement, and move forward into a new phase in a positive way."*

Debbie Johnston, principal, Holy Rosary, Medford



*"Our greatest success.... SMDP has put the SFX team seeing the same vision and speaking the same verbiage. Most beneficial....SMPD has assisted with the creation of enhanced communications with our constituents. SMPD made us understand the importance of Mission, Vision, Newsletters, Marketing, spread sheets, Facebook, etc. the list goes on and on. Our SFX staff has SMPD at the front of decision making every day. We are working well as team and moving forward together. At times the process has been overwhelming, however, it has been a true benefit. Thank you for bringing the SMPD process to the Diocese of Superior!"*

Sonja Doughty, principal, St. Francis Xavier, Merrill



*"SMDP has help our school more deeply consider who we are and why we are here. It has helped us formalize our planning for the future to best serve our community."*

Jerry Van Dyke, principal, St. Joseph, Rice Lake



St. Francis de Sales Marching Band, Spooner

## TRAINING IN FINANCIAL PLANNING

Through this strategic management and development process, the school leadership is being trained in the appropriate financial planning. This past year, the schools have been introduced to effect annual appeal funding. Many of the schools have been doing annual appeals in the past, but this training provided an opportunity to learn the best models of organizing and planning for this very important source of funding for our schools.

In the next year and a half of the strategic management and development grant training, the school leadership will learn how to enhance their endowment programs as well as establish financial plans for sustainability of their school programs.



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