

West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools



Cardinal Ritter High School



St. Michael – St. Gabriel Archangels
Catholic Elementary School

Strategic Plan
2016 – 2019

Table of Contents

Strategic Plan

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St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School

Cardinal Ritter High School

Effective Date: July 2016 – June 2019

Introduction - The Planning Process.....3

Foundation Statements

Philosophy Statement.....4

Vision Statement.....4

Mission Statement – Elementary School4

Mission Statement – High School4

Profile of the Graduate – Elementary School.....5

Profile of the Graduate – High School.....6

Strategic Plan.....7

Appendices

i. Institutional Advancement Master Plan

ii. Summary - Seven Year Business Model

iii. Facility Master Plan

iv. Equipment Master Plan

v. Technology Master Plan

Introduction

Over a two year period, a national task force of educators and supporters drafted The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools¹. Within these National Standards and Benchmarks, there lie four domains: Mission and Catholic Identity, Governance and Leadership, Academic Excellence, and Operational Vitality. The Mission and Catholic Identity domain ensures that the school is committed to faith, formation, and service, rooted in Gospel values. The Governance and Leadership domain ensures direction and leadership and protects the rights of the school. The Academic Excellence domain ensures an academically rigorous curriculum along with co-curricular programs. Lastly, the Operational Vitality domain ensures focus on finances, human resources, personnel, facilities, and institutional advancement. Among these four domains exist thirteen standards and benchmarks which measure the efficacy of Catholic school education.

In the fall of 2014, the administration of Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School conferred with the board committee to use the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools for strategic planning. Since the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, as well as all dioceses in the state of Indiana, was using these Standards and Benchmarks for school accreditation, several presidents and principals of Indianapolis Catholic schools strongly recommend that we use these standards and their assessment tools as a guide for the development of our Strategic Plan.

Having completed student and parent surveys through the new school accreditation AdvancED ASSIST platform in the fall of 2014, additional data were also made available to the administrators and subcommittees of both schools to guide the strategic plan. Team leads were selected from the Policy & Planning committee, which is a subcommittee of the Board, for the Governance and Leadership domain and the Operational Vitality domain with each subcommittee comprised of six Policy and Planning members. Liaisons were also selected for the Mission and Catholic Identity domain and the Academic Excellence domain. The charge of the subcommittees was to review the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools for each of the given domains and agree upon a rating² for each Benchmark noted under each domain.

Utilizing the provided rubric key, the subcommittees measured each Standard and Benchmark. Focus was then placed on any Benchmark that received a rating below a 3 in an effort to create specific goals and strategies for each of the four domains needed for improvement for the West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools. Continued work on those areas that received a 3 or 4 was also noted as areas to maintain. Additional review of the mission statements for both schools, as well as the vision statement, occurred as well. The following plan will allow us to address areas of concern in order to achieve a highly effective West Deanery Unified Catholic School system.

¹The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools standards were developed in 2012 by the Center for Catholic School Effectiveness, School of Education, Loyola University Chicago, in partnership with Roche Center for Catholic Education, School of Education, Boston College. A complete list of may be found at www.catholicschoolstandards.com.

² Level ratings: 1- Does Not Meet Benchmark, 2- Partially Meets Benchmark, 3- Fully Meets Benchmark, 4- Exceeds Benchmark, based on the norm rubric provided by the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools.

Foundation Statements - West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools

Philosophy Statement

At Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School, we believe in the education and development of the whole child intellectually, spiritually, morally, emotionally and physically. Our comprehensive academic approach, in partnership with parents and community, assimilates an understanding of the Gospel values through service and worship.

Vision Statement

Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels School will achieve our mission by delivering the highest quality Catholic education, rooted in the Franciscan values, to our diverse student population.

Mission Statement: St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School (Pre-K – 8)

St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels is a Catholic elementary school entrusted by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the parish communities of St. Michael the Archangel and St. Gabriel the Archangel to provide differentiated instruction to achieve the highest standards of academic excellence to students of diverse socioeconomic, racial and religious backgrounds. The school's community values and fosters the unique spiritual, intellectual, cultural, social and physical gifts of each student. As followers of Christ, we encourage our students to share their gifts and talents in service to others.

Mission Statement - Cardinal Ritter High School (7 – 12)

Cardinal Ritter is a Catholic high school entrusted by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the parishes of the West Deanery to provide, within a college preparatory curriculum, the highest standards of academic excellence to students of diverse socioeconomic, racial and religious backgrounds. Cardinal Ritter challenges its students to grow spiritually, intellectually, athletically, and artistically. The Cardinal Ritter community values and fosters the unique intellectual, cultural, social, and physical gifts of each student. As followers of Christ, we encourage our students to share their gifts and talents in service to others.

Profile of a Graduate—St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School

St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School prepares its students for the rigor and expectations of high school by creating a strong academic foundation, rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church. The profile of a St. Michael - St. Gabriel graduate represents the qualities we believe every St. Michael - St. Gabriel student should strive to achieve.

Academically

St. Michael - St. Gabriel graduates are individuals who are prepared to succeed in a high school environment because they:

- 1) Understand the importance of teamwork by using their critical thinking skills to solve problems.
- 2) Are able to communicate ideas clearly and completely both in verbal and written form.
- 3) Have met the academic standards as prescribed by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, as well as the state of Indiana, for grade eight.

Socially

St. Michael - St. Gabriel graduates are individuals who have respect for themselves and others because they:

- 1) Accept and celebrate the diversity around them.
- 2) Are polite and willing to help others in need.

Physically

St. Michael - St. Gabriel graduates are individuals who actively make appropriate wellness choices because they:

- 1) Understand the importance of being physically active.
- 2) Make healthy meal selections.
- 3) Avoid those things that would have negative effects on the body.

Spiritually

St. Michael - St. Gabriel graduates are individuals who illustrate their love for God because they:

- 1) Are active members of their church or parish community.
- 2) Understand the teachings of the Catholic Church, as well as the sacraments.
- 3) Understand the importance of giving back to their community.

Profile of a Graduate - Cardinal Ritter High School

Cardinal Ritter High School educates our students with a strong foundation for life and has high expectations for their success. The profile of a Cardinal Ritter graduate represents the qualities we believe every Cardinal Ritter student should strive to achieve.

Academically

Cardinal Ritter graduates are persons who are prepared to succeed in a global environment because they:

- 1) Utilize critical thinking and can work in teams to solve problems.
- 2) Are proficient in using technology as a tool to communicate, process, and report information.
- 3) Are engaged as life-long learners, and through their study of social sciences, world languages, and fine arts, have gained an appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity found in art, theatre, and music.

Socially

Cardinal Ritter graduates are persons who have respect for themselves and others because they:

- 1) Demonstrate an acceptance of others in their variances of culture and beliefs.
- 2) Are self-confident, polite, and appropriate in social settings.
- 3) Are eager to contribute to society.

Physically

Cardinal Ritter graduates are persons who actively make appropriate wellness choices because they:

- 1) Understand their emotional and physical fitness as well as the financial benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- 2) Are appropriately groomed to reflect their dignity as human beings.

Spiritually

Cardinal Ritter graduates are persons who practice their faith openly, enthusiastically, and proudly because they:

- 1) Have developed an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- 2) Have developed a prayerful life and participate in their parish or church.
- 3) Are inspired to live a life of service modeled on the life of Christ.

Domain I: Mission and Catholic Identity
(West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools)

Standard 4: An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities for adult formation and action in service of social justice.

Goal I:

Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School will assist parents (primary educators for their children) by providing resources and opportunities to enhance the faith education of their children.

Strategies:

- A. Create a calendar outlining the opportunities as well as inviting parents and guardians to join and participate.
- B. Communicate students' witness of faith to parents.

Domain II: Governance and Leadership **(West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools)**

Standard 5: An excellent Catholic school has a governing body (person or persons) which recognizes and respects the role(s) of the appropriate and legitimate authorities, and exercises responsible decision making (authoritative, consultative, advisory) in collaboration with the leadership team for development and oversight of the school's fidelity to mission, academic excellence, and operational vitality.

Goal I:

The governing body of the West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools, representing the diversity of stakeholders, functions according to its approved constitution and by-laws.

Strategies:

- A. Develop adequate recruitment of board members and subcommittee members who represent diverse groups (gender, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, parish representation, and religious affiliation).
- B. Ensure all board members are well-versed in the by-laws by conducting annual training.
- C. Actively monitor board succession to ensure that terms of board members are staggered into thirds to ensure sustainability and continuity.
- D. Develop and implement a record management system for maintaining all paper and electronic copies of policies and other documents.

Goal II:

In conjunction with the Advancement Office, an effective communication plan will be developed which disseminates board decisions and summaries.

Strategies:

- A. Ensure trainings include review of by-laws, Franciscan Values, mission, and vision.
- B. Ensure that the Director of Communications informs the school community of topics to be addressed and disseminate summaries and board decisions, as approved by the President and Executive Committee, to West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools.
- C. Determine the appropriate means of disseminating the above information (newsletters, website, parent club, PTA meetings, etc.).
- D. Provide a board satisfaction survey every other year to stakeholders.
- E. Ensure the Executive Committee sets calendar dates to reflect annual training of the board members, as well as evaluation dates.

Domain III: Academic Excellence
(West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools)

Standard 7: An excellent Catholic school has a clearly articulated rigorous curriculum aligned with relevant standards, 21st century skills, and Gospel values, implemented through effective instruction.

Goal I:

Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School will ensure that all students receive individual instruction to support their diverse learning needs.

Strategy:

- A. Adequate financial support is made available to fund the “support” positions (i.e. English New Language, Literacy Coaches, and Response to Interventions) to maintain smaller core class size.

Standard 8: An excellent Catholic school uses school-wide assessment methods and practices to document student learning and program effectiveness, to make student performances transparent, and to inform the continuous review of curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices.

Goal I:

Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School will continue high quality academic instruction measured by continuous growth on all standardized testing.

Strategies:

- A. Develop relationships with higher learning institutions to ensure that students are adequately prepared at the next level.
- B. Collect, analyze, and utilize data to drive annual growth goals.

**Domain IV: Operational Vitality
(West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools)**

Standard 10: An excellent Catholic school provides a feasible three to five year financial plan that includes both current and projected budgets and is the result of a collaborative process, emphasizing faithful stewardship.

Goal I:

The governing body and leadership teams will develop financial plans in collaboration with vested partners to ensure affordability of Catholic education for all families wishing to attend West Deanery Unified Catholic Schools.

Strategies:

- A. Develop and implement adequate Advancement efforts to benefit Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School.
- B. Establish a per pupil cost.
- C. Ensure financial plans include all financial partners (i.e. may include but not limited to federal and state funds, parishes, diocese, educational foundations, and larger Catholic community).
- D. Review the Financial plan annually and amend if necessary to ensure we have a feasible 3-5 year financial plan.

Standard 11: An excellent Catholic school operates in accord with published human resource/personnel policies, developed in compliance with (arch)diocesan policies and/or religious congregation sponsorship policies, which affect all staff (clergy, religious women and men, laity and volunteers) and provide clarity for responsibilities, expectations and accountability.

Goal I:

Human resource programs are professionally staffed at the school office, and ensure full compliance with human resource policies.

Strategies:

- A. Ensure proper communication between central business office and school business office.
- B. Ensure collaboration and cooperation between business office and school personnel.
- C. Include internal and external Human Resource personnel contact information in staff handbooks.
- D. The payroll specialist reviews compliance in accordance with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Goal II:

Human resource policies delineate standards for position descriptions including staff responsibilities and qualifications, hiring, compensation, and benefits, as well as standards for professional development, accountability, succession planning and retirement.

Strategies:

- A. Have available and readily accessible, complete job descriptions for all positions which include full description of duties, position and role clarity, necessary certifications, educative and/or experience requirements.
- B. Review archdiocesan employee manual and ensure that clear policies and procedures are in place for all West Deanery Unified Catholic School employees.
- C. President updates organizational chart annually.

Standard 12: An excellent Catholic school develops and maintains a facilities, equipment and technology management plan designed to continuously support the implementation of the educational mission of the school.

Goal I:

Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School will provide the necessary resources to support and meet the objectives for Mission and Catholic Identity, Governance and Leadership, Academics, and Operational Vitality utilizing the Master Facility, Master Technology, and Master Equipment plans.

Strategies:

- A. Review and revise the current St. Michael – St. Gabriel Technology plan for implementation beginning July 2016.
- B. Review and amend the current Master Facility plan, maintaining the facility partnership with St. Michael Parish.
- C. Continue to develop the K – 12 model.
 1. Review the Entheos Capacity study (September 2013) to assess appropriateness and determine if revisions are recommended.
 2. Use the revisions to formulate next steps regarding capacity and facilities.
- D. Develop Master Equipment plan to address repairs/replacement for costly operating equipment (i.e. buses, kitchen equipment).
 1. Allocate funds for Capital improvement in the budget.
 2. Develop a contingency plan with an outside entity for additional funding in emergency situations.

Goal II:

Align all purchasing outlined in the Master Facility, Technology, and Equipment plans, and ensure environmental stewardship.

Strategy:

- A. Annually review and amend if necessary, the Master Facility, Technology, and Equipment plans.

Standard 13: An excellent Catholic school enacts a comprehensive plan for institutional advancement based on a compelling mission through communications, marketing, enrollment management, and development.

Goal I:

A robust development plan exists and is implemented for Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School which includes strategies for identifying, growing, and maintaining funding prospects.

Strategies:

- A. Assess current state of institutional advancement at Cardinal Ritter High School and St. Michael - St. Gabriel Archangels Catholic Elementary School.
- B. Identify, create, and track key metrics to ensure desired outcomes.
- C. Annually update development plan with input from leadership team (President, Principals, Director of Finance, and Executive Committee of the Board).
- D. Cultivate a strong, successful Advancement Committee of the Board.