

St. John the Apostle Catholic School

Five Year Strategic Plan

Revised October 2015



Our Mission:

St. John the Apostle Catholic School follows the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, providing students a challenging education that encourages the success of each student.



St. John the Apostle Catholic School is a
Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School
by the U.S. Department of Education.

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Five Year Strategic Plan

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1. School Mission, Vision, Philosophy, and Motto

1.1 Mission Statement

St. John the Apostle Catholic School (“SJS”) follows the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, providing students a challenging education that encourages the success of each student.

1.2 Vision Statement

Our school’s mission statement integrates Catholic faith and Gospel values by practicing the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church in our everyday activities within the family, school community and church. Our teachers use their talents to teach as Jesus taught and challenge students to be the best they can be academically and spiritually.

1.3 School Philosophy

St. John the Apostle Catholic School offers a supportive Catholic environment that reinforces belief in each individual as a child of God. We believe that all children are unique creations of God and possess a special potential for reflecting His glory. The parish priest, administration, faculty, and staff, along with the family, create a learning environment of Catholic values, realistic goals, and a challenging curriculum that promotes the development of the whole child.

1.4 School Motto

St. John the Apostle Catholic School provides a “Catholic Education in the Classical Tradition”.

2. SJS Strategic Plan Objectives

Eight critical areas will be represented and strategies will be developed and modified as needed for each critical decision area. The Strategic Plan (“Plan”) will identify and define the critical areas, as well as develop goals to address the needs of the school. Additionally, the Plan will provide guidelines for shaping the future of St. John the Apostle Catholic School which is a mission of St. John the Apostle Catholic Church.

2.1 Catholicity

This area affirms the essential Catholic nature of SJS. By encouraging the SJS community to live and practice its faith, SJS will be visibly Catholic in practice and not just Catholic in name.

2.2 Leadership

Canonically, the pastor of St. John the Apostle Church is the leader of the school. The school has implemented the President/Principal Model. The president will lead and direct the SJS advancement program, budget and public relations, while the principal will handle the traditional duties associated with the principal's office. The president and principal work closely with the pastor to ensure that an effective Catholic leadership model is utilized in all decisions affecting the school.

2.3 Curriculum and Programs

The curriculum of SJS is the foundation of the educational process. We maintain high student expectations and academic standards. The focus is on a Catholic Education in the Classical Tradition with a cross curricular approach which deepens our students' understanding of the world in which they live and makes them better evangelists of the Catholic faith.

2.4 Facilities

The appearance and maintenance of school facilities are essential in creating a safe, aesthetically pleasing, and sustainable learning environment.

2.5 Technology

Technology will be integrated in the curriculum and school operations. Faculty, staff and administrative staff will enhance communication and public relations with technology.

2.6 Finance

The financial budget and goals are defined and reviewed annually for cost control efforts and opportunities that benefit the school.

2.7 School Advancement

The school advancement program's focus will be marketing, public relations, fundraising, enrollment/retention and building relationships with donors, the local community and with St. John Parish.

2.8 Implementation

The president is accountable for maintaining and implementing the Plan. The president will also maintain the guidelines and procedures for committees supporting SJS.

3. Focus and Strategies for Critical Decision Areas.

3.1 Catholicity

This area affirms the essential Catholic nature of SJS by providing and supporting the growth and development of the spiritual life of all members of the school community.

3.1.1 Strategic Focus: Affirming Catholicity in SJS

SJS will affirm, incorporate, and follow the guidelines set forth in the Diocese of Fort Worth handbook. The Diocesan handbook encourages that curricula and programs of the schools will include an element of service to the community and to the parish. Prayer will be a regular and consistent component of the school day in the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

3.1.1.1 Strategy for Affirmation of Catholicity in SJS

SJS believes our Catholic foundation should be formed in each member of the community. SJS will encourage students, their families, and the faculty members to actively participate in building and supporting our Catholic foundation and beliefs.

3.1.1.2 Strategy for Affirmation of Catholicity in SJS

Prayer is an integral part of the day at SJS. Each day begins and ends with prayer. As a community, each class incorporates prayer throughout the day by praying at mealtime, attending adoration and praying together for needs of the class/ community.

3.1.1.3 Strategy for Affirmation of Catholicity in SJS

Throughout the school year, the SJS community seeks opportunities to promote and instill Catholic traditions appropriate to the liturgical seasons.

3.1.1.4 Strategy for Affirmation of Catholicity in SJS

The entire school community will be directly involved with church sponsored ministries.

3.2 Leadership

Different levels of leadership are required to ensure the success of SJS. The school has implemented the President/Principal Model, as described in Section 2.2, above. Leadership comes in the form of pastor, school administration, the School Advisory Council (“SAC”), school faculty and the many volunteers that serve to help meet the needs and fulfill the potential of SJS.

3.2.1 Strategic Focus: Leadership

As governed by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, the leadership team related to the strategic direction of SJS, is the SAC. The SAC’s primary objective is to help SJS achieve it’s full potential. This potential will provide the greatest possible benefits to the students, parents, diocese, and communities in which they live. SJS will have in place a SAC whose leadership will help define, shape, and create the future of SJS. Through this leadership, the mission of SJS will be carried out and its vision realized. To establish better communication and information flow between SJS, the parish and alumni; the president in conjunction with SAC will explore new initiatives for better communication between SJS, the parish, and alumni.

3.2.1.1 Strategy for Leadership

The President will develop and implement policies and initiatives that reflect the mission and philosophy of SJS.

3.2.1.2 Strategy for Leadership

The president, principal and SAC will communicate the mission and philosophy in a manner befitting their respective roles to the school community. This will facilitate the support and assistance from the school community in achieving the goals of SJS.

3.2.2 Strategic Focus: SAC Membership

A diverse SAC membership is critical to the continued growth of SJS. Membership will consist of nine members representing the eight critical decision

areas and a president presiding over the SAC. SAC members are to be contributing members to the school to the best of their abilities.

3.2.2.1 Strategy for SAC Membership

To involve the entire community, the president and the SAC will strive to include St. John the Apostle parishioners who are not SJS parents. SAC may also seek the opportunity to include representatives from the community not directly associated with SJS. This will help broaden the overall experience, scope, coverage and knowledge of the SAC to include a wider parish and community vision.

3.2.2.2 Strategy for SAC Membership

SAC will meet with the president and principal on a monthly basis to review the reports submitted by all committees. SAC will discuss the progress of the committees, and collaborate as a whole to advise on necessary improvements and adjustments.

3.3 Curriculum and Programs

In keeping with its tradition of academic excellence, SJS will strive to provide opportunities to enhance the Diocesan curriculum by addressing the following strategic areas of focus.

3.3.1 Strategic Focus: Core Curriculum

SJS will strengthen and enhance the core curriculum through collaboration, exploration and implementation of technology and resources in accordance with the Archdiocese of Hartford standards; and by instilling in students devotion to the Catholic faith.

3.3.1.1 Strategy for Core Curriculum

SJS will teach the Catholic faith and traditions as a way of life and as the necessary ingredient to living a faith-filled and complete life.

3.3.1.2 Strategy for Core Curriculum

SJS will work as a school and with other schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth to develop units and lessons to help implement the standards-based curriculum.

3.3.1.3 Strategy for Core Curriculum

SJS will explore ways of strengthening and enhancing the core curriculum using technology and expanded programs and resources.

3.3.1.4 Strategy for Core Curriculum

SJS will follow the textbook adoption cycle recommended by the Diocese of Fort Worth.

3.3.2 Strategic Focus: Foreign Language and Fine Arts

In a global society, a liberal arts education, which includes foreign language and fine arts, is essential for achieving success.

3.3.2.1 Strategy for Foreign Language and Fine Arts

SJS has a Spanish language program starting from pre-kindergarten class through eighth grade.

3.3.2.2 Strategy for Foreign Language and Fine Arts

SJS will display student work in the visual arts in prominent community settings.

3.3.2.3 Strategy for Foreign Language and Fine Arts

SJS will offer opportunities in the performing arts, such as choir and band, and will explore the addition of other areas of performing arts.

3.3.2.4 Strategy for Foreign Language and Fine Arts

SJS will participate in Fine Arts competitions and interactions among students at the local, state, and national levels.

3.3.3 Strategic Focus: Personal, Social, and Physical Development

Our curriculum guides students toward Christian values, responsible decision-making and character development.

3.3.3.1 Strategy for Personal, Social, and Physical Development

SJS will continue implementing a values-based guidance program from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade that permeates the entire curriculum.

3.3.3.2 Strategy for Personal, Social, and Physical Development

SJS will respond to local, national and international needs with appropriate service projects, prayers, and outreach.

3.3.3.3 Strategy for Personal, Social, and Physical Development

SJS will offer additional programs, such as Lego-Robotics, Destination Imagination, Toastmasters International, mentoring, and special presentations, throughout the course of the year.

3.3.3.4 Strategy for Personal, Social, and Physical Development

SJS will conduct elections for Student Council officers and representatives and formally induct members to the SJS chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. With regularly planned meetings run by the students themselves, these two programs allow upper school students to develop their leadership and service and to put democratic ideals into practice.

3.3.3.5 Strategy for Personal, Social, and Physical Development

Following the Play Like a Champion Today program, SJS will participate in sports and physical development competitions and interactions among students at the local, state and national levels. SJS will continue to offer an extra-curricular sports program beginning in sixth grade and will encourage participation in local sports programs for the younger ages. Participation in sports programs and other physical development opportunities, will develop an attitude of sportsmanship, fair competition, and life-long fitness.

3.3.4 Strategic Focus: Academic Enhancement Programs

Research has shown that participation in additional educational opportunities is related to the overall academic success of the child.

3.3.4.1 Strategy for Academic Enhancement Programs

SJS will continue participation in academic competitions; and interactions among students at the local, state, and national levels. New avenues are also being researched.

3.3.4.2 Strategy for Academic Enhancement Programs

SJS will expand reading programs, such as Accelerated Reader and Junior Great Books, to encourage life-long learning and to increase student achievement and motivation.

3.3.4.3 Strategy for Academic Enhancement Programs

SJS will offer tutorials after school to upper school students to provide extra support for all learners.

3.3.5 Strategic Focus: Assessment

Ongoing evaluation of curricular programs and instruction is necessary for a high quality education.

3.3.5.1 Strategy for Assessment

SJS will use standardized achievement tests and (Standardized Testing and Reporting) Renaissance Learning STAR Testing to evaluate program strengths and weaknesses as well as to address individual student needs.

3.3.5.2 Strategy for Assessment

SJS will offer diverse assessment opportunities, including the following: criterion referenced assessments involving paper/pencil tests and quizzes; performance assessments, such as projects, portfolios, and presentations that use rubrics, checklists, and rating scales for evaluation; and also independent assessments, such as oral exams, learning logs, teacher observations, self-corrections, and online programs that allow students to self-assess.

3.3.5.3 Strategy for Assessment

SJS will attempt track the achievements of its graduates. This information will be used to assess the overall experience at SJS.

3.3.6 Strategic Focus: Parent Communication

Communication among parents, students, faculty, and administration is necessary for optimal student success.

3.3.6.1 Strategy for Parent Communication

SJS will utilize a variety of communication means in order to keep parents informed of student happenings at school, curriculum offerings, SJS expectations, and student progress. These forms of communication include the following: electronic communication, such as e-mail, school website, RenWeb postings, telephone, and voice mail; digital weekly newsletter, and face to face meetings, including conferences, SAC and Home and School meetings, Open Houses and Teachers and Parents (TAP) nights.

3.4 Facilities

The campus facilities are a key aspect of SJS's presence. As such, the school facilities must reflect a safe, engaging, and sustainable learning environment.

3.4.1 Strategic Focus

Providing school and property maintenance, an analysis of existing and planned facilities, and developing strategies for usage in regards to student education, safety, and operational cost is important.

3.4.1.1 Strategy

Develop and implement a Facility Assessment Plan, and Facility Upgrade Plan and Schedule in conjunction with the Parish Master Planning Committee.

3.4.1.2 Strategy

The Facility Committee will create and oversee the volunteer maintenance programs.

3.4.1.3 Strategy

The Facility Committee will engage outside professionals for specific projects and programs outside the scope or abilities of the Facilities Committee.

3.5 Technology

The Multimedia Center, consisting of a computer lab and computerized library, equips SJS students with the tools needed for their future success. The annual technology plan helps maintain the quality of the technology, and ensures potential updates as well as the future of this program.

3.5.1 Strategic Focus

Providing faculty, staff, and students the tools and opportunities to learn current and new technologies to help improve teaching, learning, and student preparation for high school and future job opportunities.

3.5.1.1 Strategy

For the students, SJS provides a computer lab and in class technical equipment that will help them learn to use current required technologies, as well as help students learn how to use these technologies to augment their learning experience. For the faculty and staff, SJS will use a combination of three training approaches: the shotgun workshop; individualized instruction; and targeted clusters. The SJS Technology Committee will maintain a technology plan, which will contain defined and published goals as well as the proposed budget to accomplish those goals.

3.5.1.2 Strategy

Faculty and Staff must have both the access and the knowledge to use a wide variety of current technologies, such as iPads, dot cameras, and mimeo boards to prepare SJS students better for future learning.

3.6 Finance

The president reports to the Finance Committee. With input from the principal, the Finance Committee will review and propose to SAC the cost control efforts and financial needs of SJS.

3.6.1 Strategic Focus

Providing and proposing the SJS budget and cost control efforts, while meeting the financial needs of SJS and the SAC.

3.6.1.1 Strategy

The Finance Committee will advise the president on plans to strengthen and improve the well-being of SJS's financial resources. This will be accomplished through review of: the school budget and tuition; parish support and community involvement; employee salaries; and advancement and funding for SJS.

3.6.1.2 Strategy

The SJS expense budget will be forecast each year. Tuition will be set at a rate to adequately cover all expenses.

3.6.1.3 Strategy

The SAC in conjunction with the Finance and Development committee will continue to evaluate ways to generate additional revenue for the SJS budget and the goal of minimal tuition increase.

3.6.2 Strategic Focus: Finance Communication

Communicating the SJS budget and school finance needs to the SJS community.

3.6.2.1 Strategy for Finance Communication

The president will communicate to the SAC the results of the Finance Committee meeting(s).

3.6.2.2 Strategy for Finance Communication

The president, after communicating to the SAC, will communicate with the Church Finance committee.

3.6.2.3 Strategy for Finance Communication

The president will present to the Parish Finance Council, then to the diocese an approved, balanced budget with the recommended tuition schedule, salary scale, and projected enrollment no later than December 15th of the preceding fiscal year. The revised, approved, balanced school budget will be presented by May 1st.

3.6.2.4 Strategy for Finance Communication

The Finance Committee will work with Saint John the Apostle Catholic Church and the SJS president to review the amount of revenue generated from fundraising within the current year and allocate the appropriate funds to the general operating fund.

3.7 School Advancement

SJS realizes the need to have a living viable school. The SJS advancement program is the vehicle to achieve this outcome. SJS's advancement program promotes and supports the financial stability and viability of this school.

3.7.1 Strategic Focus: Leadership

The president of the school directs the advancement program with the support of the principal and the advancement committee.

3.7.1.1 Strategy for Leadership

The advancement committee (part of the SAC), is responsible for the support and implementation of the Advancement Program.

3.7.1.2 Strategy for Leadership

The president creates a budget to enable the effective execution of the Advancement Program. This budget should cover the marketing/advertising expenses, special events funding, and ongoing advancement staff education.

3.7.2 Strategic Focus: Student Recruitment and Retention

The president will work to maintain and grow enrollment by identifying and deploying methods to increase school enrollment with new families and students in the surrounding community. The president will foster a strong relationship between the administration and parents that keeps families engaged and enrolled in school.

3.7.2.1 Strategy for Student Recruitment and Retention

The faculty and staff, along with the priest, president, and principal work towards the goal of student retention and new enrollment.

3.7.3 Strategic Focus: Parish and School Relations

Building a better relationship between the church and school communities.

3.7.3.1 Strategy for Parish and School Relations

The president will maintain a strong presence in the parish community and in its various ministries.

3.7.3.2 Strategy for Parish and School Relations

The president will establish working relationships with the heads of parish ministries to enhance the involvement between school and parish.

3.7.3.3 Strategy for Parish and School Relations

The school office will communicate school activities to parishioners through the use of Constant Contact, the SJS and parish websites, the parish bulletin and Facebook.

3.7.4 Strategic Focus: Alumni Relations

Develop engagement strategy to connect with alumni to enhance school life through their time, talent and treasure.

3.7.4.1 Strategy for Alumni Relations

Leverage our 50th anniversary to recruit new students, enhance alumni relations, increase fundraising, and promote the value of St. John the Apostle Catholic School to internal and external audiences.

3.7.5 Strategic Focus: Fundraising

Raise funds to support the current and potential financial and in-kind needs of the school.

3.7.5.1 Strategy for Fundraising

The president will direct the fundraising activities.

3.7.5.2 Strategy for Fundraising

Home and School will assist with fundraising and community building activities.

3.8 Implementation

Implementing a well constructed long-range Strategic Plan will have a positive impact at SJS by creating a framework that will provide the direction needed for SJS to achieve its goals.

3.8.1 Strategic Focus: Development of the Strategic Plan

The development of a dynamic Strategic Plan will allow SJS to achieve its goals and to adapt to changes in our community demographics and, educational, financial, and technological environments. The Strategic Plan will align the mission of SJS with the community it serves.

3.8.1.1 Strategy for Development of Strategic Plan

The president, principal and SAC will review the strategic plan annually to ensure that it addresses the present needs and future plans of SJS.

3.8.1.2 Strategy for Development of Strategic Plan

On an annual basis, SJS and the SAC will set Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-based (“SMART”) Objectives for each strategy against which to measure performance. Based on performance to those metrics, SJS and the SAC will evaluate the effect of specific actions on long-term results, as outlined in the five-year Strategic Plan. SJS will consider any changes or events that may have influenced the desired course of actions.

3.8.1.3 Strategy for Development of Strategic Plan

After assessing the progress of the plan, SJS will make necessary changes and adjustments of the Strategic Plan based on these evaluations. The revised plan will reflect changes that continuously offer a five-year vision with projected strategies and tactics to achieve SJS’s goals.