

APPENDIX C: CRITERIA FOR LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF SCHOOLS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE

Viable Catholic schools are an essential element for fulfilling the mission of the Church in this Archdiocese. Catholic schools assist parents, as primary educators, in handing on the faith to the next generation. Identification of the criteria of long-term viability in the areas of Catholic identity, academic programming, financial management, and community outreach help us in discerning how to best live out the mission of the Church in Catholic schools within the Archdiocese. In some circumstances at certain schools, where the Archdiocese has a direct financial investment, higher standards of accountability and transparency may apply. Ongoing reporting concerning school viability along with site visits conducted by the Office of Catholic Schools maintain accountability standards set forth in the Strategic Plan. A schedule for submitting documentation, as well as for school viability visits, will be communicated annually to all schools in the Archdiocese. Under the Strategic Plan, all schools are called into greater collaboration.

Catholic Identity – A viable Catholic school has as its foundation a solid Catholic identity. The Catholic school operates in conformance with the laws, teaching, and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. It is committed to teaching the fullness of the Catholic faith, values, and practices and to integrating these core values into all academic subject areas. This integration of Catholic faith and values with life distinguishes the Catholic school from other schools.

- Appropriate mission statement reflects the Catholicity of all school programs and activities
- Teachings of the Catholic Church integrated across the curriculum
- Religion program fully developed and aligned with the Archdiocesan Religion Standards is in place with qualified teachers teaching it
- Faculty and students observe the truths of the Catholic faith through regular participation in Mass and the sacraments, daily prayer, service projects, and retreat opportunities
- School files an annual “Catholic Identity Progress Report” with the Office of Catholic Schools
- The Office of Catholic Schools conducts an annual review of documentation and progress of the above requirements, possibly including an onsite visit
- School uses NCEA-ACRE for religion assessment in grades 5 and 8 with results made available to parents and the Office of Catholic Schools
- School uses Information for Growth (IFG), a self-assessment tool for adult (staff) faith formation developed by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)

Academic Programming – A viable Catholic school has a quality, comprehensive program as affirmed by an approved accrediting agency, utilizes technology to develop 21st century skills, and provides for ongoing professional development and formation for staff.

- School is fully accredited by an accrediting agency approved by the State of Minnesota
- Professional and spiritual development programs are in place and full participation of staff is required with appropriate budget
- Academic program is comprehensive in scope to include art, music, technology, languages, and physical education programs
- Technology is current and integrated across content areas and is supported with an annual budget allotment that includes an annual staff development plan
- Curriculum aligns with national and/or state standards
- School participates annually in a standardized testing program authorized by the Archdiocese

Financial Management – A viable Catholic school has a long range financial plan, a balanced annual budget, monitors its finances, and reports annually to stakeholders.

- School monitors and publishes total revenues and costs using properly formatted financial statements to the school and parish community, as well as to the Archdiocese
- Cost per student reported annually to the Archdiocese and parish/school community according to criteria provided by the Archdiocese
- Balanced parish/school annual budget, with the school budget reviewed at the end of September and adjustments made to reflect actual enrollment numbers
- School provides adequate and increasing financial aid to families unable to pay full tuition
- Classroom student/ teacher ratio for Grades 1 to 8 ranges from 1/20 to 1/25 (exclusive of specialists)
- Parish/school archdiocesan assessments and other required payments (medical, pension, insurance) are current and up-to-date

Community Outreach – A viable Catholic school has effective development and marketing efforts to defray the costs of a quality, Catholic Education and to recruit aggressively new students.