

Oakland Diocesan School Board Strategic Plan for 2007 - 2009

Background

MISSION

Schools in the Diocese of Oakland
provide students with a quality
education rooted in the
GOSPEL of Jesus Christ,
Catholic TRADITION,
and SERVICE to the
COMMUNITY of Faith.

The Diocese of Oakland School Board is a consultative board. The role of the Board is to work with the Superintendent of Schools to provide advice, guidance, and leadership in executing the Department of Catholic School's Mission. The Board serves 47 elementary and 9 high schools. The Board's work is to influence, teach, support, and aid schools in effectively executing the Mission at each school site.

Overview

The Strategic Plan is a roadmap for the Board's three-year actions – and serves as a basis for how the Board's effectiveness will be measured.

Process

The Board employed a three-step strategic planning process: information gathering, brainstorming, and prioritization.

Information gathering focused on understanding the needs of the Diocese of Oakland Schools. The primary information source was analyses (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the nine areas most important to Catholic Schools: Catholic Identity, Ownership/Governance, Curriculum, Staffing, Facilities, Enrollment, Development, Finances, and School-in-the-Community. The analyses were developed by the Elementary Principals at the March 2006 Principals Meeting. Additionally, information regarding needs was collected from the Diocesan High School Principals in a separate meeting. An informal discussion about school needs was held with Bishop Vigneron in August 2006.

The Diocesan School Board discussed the findings over the course of several Board meetings and in-depth at the Strategic Planning session in August 2006. A comprehensive list of actions, ideas, and wishes for Diocesan schools was created.

Every item on the comprehensive list was discussed, evaluated, and prioritized using the following criteria:

- Consistency with Bishop's Vision and the Department's Mission
- Board responsibility (vs. Schools Department responsibility, etc.)
- Board consensus and support
- Superintendent/ Department support
- Need-based, with the most important needs prioritized first
- Student focus

The result of this process is the 2007 – 2009 Oakland Diocesan School Board Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan

Catholic Identity is the heart of the Plan. The goal is to develop and implement strategies to ensure Catholic Identity in all levels of Catholic Schools and to identify ways to evaluate Mission Effectiveness. The objectives focus on ensuring that actions begin and end with Catholic Identity – that it is central in decision-making; fully supported in the schools, parishes, and faith-formation programs; and evident in all in-service programs.

If Catholic Identity is the heart of the Plan, the faculty and staff members in the schools are its arms and legs. The **Human Resource** goal is to assist in the development of programs for the recruitment and retention of qualified administrators, teachers, and staff in all schools and to ensure that the needs of teachers are reflected in Diocesan policies. The objectives include developing an administrator succession plan, identifying and addressing Diocesan policies that affect teachers, and recommending ways to address administrator, teacher, and staff salary parity.

Financial stability is necessary to ensure that all schools can recruit and retain qualified faculty and staff. Over 90% of school tuition goes towards salaries. The **Finance** objective is to provide financial guidance to all schools, including the development of responsible financial policies and procedures and customized advice for attaining/maintaining financial health.

- An **Advancement Task Force** has been created for this Strategic Planning period to focus on designing a plan to ensure the financial viability of all schools. It will focus first on developing marketing and public relations tools for schools to utilize in their Enrollment and Development efforts.
- Special attention must be given to some schools that are facing enrollment and financial difficulties. The **Urban Schools Task Force** will evaluate options to improve the situations in these schools – and to ensure that quality Catholic education is available to all children in our Diocese.

Every local school is supported, in turn, by its own local school board. The Diocesan Board provides **Board Support** to assist these boards to operate effectively and efficiently – including providing training, tools, resources, opportunities for interaction, and, importantly, recognition and thanks for all that they do.

A fundamental tenet of the Strategic Plan is that modeling is one of the strongest tools for teaching and guiding. The **Nominating** goal is to ensure that we recruit and recommend to the Bishop members who are qualified and committed to modeling exceptional board behavior – and who are thereby willing to strengthen the volunteer support system.

One of the many strengths of the Diocese of Oakland is its large size – in addition to its shared values. The **Public Policy** goal is to leverage the size and shared values for the good of Catholic Schools via advocacy of policies and issues that affect students.

Diocese of Oakland, Diocesan School Board Strategic Planning Goal and Objectives

Catholic Identity: *To develop and implement strategies to ensure Catholic Identity in all levels of Catholic Schools and to find ways to evaluate the Mission Effectiveness of these goals*

- Provide ways and means to ensure that Catholic Identity is central in decision-making affecting the Catholic Schools in the Oakland Diocese
- Provide support systems to ensure the development of Catholic Identity in all schools, Parishes, and Faith Formation Programs at all Catholic School sites
- Provide on-going opportunities and evaluation for In-Service Learning

Human Resources: *To assist and advise the Superintendent and Board in all matters concerning human resource policies and issues and to assist in the development of programs for recruitment and retention of qualified administrators, teachers, and staff*

- Develop administrator Succession Plan by December 2007
- Identify Diocesan issues/policies that affect teachers/staff by January 2007
- Develop, implement plan for better resolution of above issues/policies with the Diocese and the teachers by April 2008
- Review current teacher salary parity and recommend future direction by June 2007
- Refine/review objectives annually, based on principal input

Finance: *Provide financial guidance and support to the Superintendent, Board and the CSDO constituent schools in all matters pertaining to allocation of resources*

- Assist with the development, oversight, review and evaluation of financial policies and procedures approved by the Board.
- Review all Diocesan school budgets, reports, monitor ongoing revenues and expenditures and recommend actions to ensure the financial health of the schools
- Work with Human Resources Committee to recommend future direction on teacher salaries by June 2007
- Encourage active and regular communications between Diocesan School Board Finance Committee and Diocese Finance Committee to promote transparency and mutual support

Advancement Task Force: *To design a plan to ensure the financial viability of all schools*

- Create and staff an Advancement Committee with qualified board members and volunteers by February 2007
- Develop and implement an advancement plan initially focusing on marketing and public relations that will benefit all Diocesan schools by June 2007

Urban Schools Task Force: *To evaluate opportunities to improve Urban Schools*

- Identify options to improve the financial situation in our schools struggling with enrollment and finances
- Make recommendations to the Board, Superintendent and Bishop

Board Support: *To assist local school boards to operate effectively and efficiently*

- Provide annual training for local school board members, increasing attendance by 10% every year
- Provide recognition and thanks to all School Board Chairs every year
- Provide tips, tools, resources to local School Board members at least twice a year
- Encourage interaction and sharing with and between local school boards via a mentor program

Nominating: *To ensure that newly recruited and appointed Board members are qualified, committed and orientated to the structures and processes of the Board.*

- Identify and recruit new Board members annually
- Implement *Board Recruitment and Training Processes* beginning November 2006

Public Policy: *To assist and advise the Superintendent and Board in matters of advocacy, policies, and issues affecting Catholic schools*

- To recruit a Board member with the appropriate skills and expertise to staff the Public Policy Committee by June 2007
- To develop a process for meeting the goals and expectations of the committee as charged by the by-laws of the Board by December 2007