



***Nativity of the Blessed Virgin
Mary School
Strategic Plan 2016-2018***

DRAFT FOR PARISH COUNCIL REVIEW

February 17, 2016

Introduction

The strategic plan of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (NBVM) School is tied both directly and indirectly to the overall NBVM Parish strategic plan. Education is one of the four Parish strategic plan priorities. Goal 6 in the Parish strategic plan reads, “Work with the Educational Advisory Council and the Board of Limited Jurisdiction as they develop a strategic plan for the future of the Nativity of Mary School.” Representatives of the Parish Council have been directly involved in developing the NBVM School plan, in the belief that the School is an essential part of the life of the Parish community.

Part One: STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School educates children from Pre-K through 8th grade in the Catholic tradition. We emphasize an active faith, excellence in academics, personal development, and service to others.



VISION STATEMENT

There is an open and welcoming educational home for those who seek to actively live their faith. NBVM Parish and the NBVM School are together serving their community, to ensure that all of our families are connected to the necessary supports, and to ensure healthy and optimal foundations in spiritual, academic, and life skills.



OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY

We believe that Christ is the first teacher in every classroom. Nativity instills and nurtures the following qualities in our students as they mature to Catholic adulthood:

- A strong sense of personal faith and prayer
- Religious knowledge
- An understanding of Catholic morality
- Community membership

- Christian leadership
- Commitment to the Eucharist as central to life as a Catholic
- Dedication to service and ministry to others
- Living out one's faith in the world
- A Catholic faith that flourishes every day



VALUES

We believe in:

- **Community service.** It is a part of the learning process and prepares children for citizenship.
- **Personal responsibility.** Children must **embrace** responsibility to be successful.
- **Respect and dignity.** We treat everyone, no matter their life situation, with respect, and work to ensure the dignity of our fellow human beings.
- **Academic excellence.** It is built on a foundation of excellent teaching and strong character development. It is a culture that includes all levels of extra-curricular activities and exposure to the broader and ever-changing world.
- **Parents as partners.** Our parents play the most critical role in the education of their children.
- **Collaboration.** Working together offers great benefit in the learning process and in the success of NBVM School.
- **Children as the center of our future.** They are the future enablers of success as a parish, Church, and society.
- **Diversity.** Ethnic, racial, and economic diversity enriches the educational process. We are **welcoming** of families of all faiths and backgrounds.



STRATEGIC INTENT

NBVM School will be the preferred educational path for families in the NBVM Parish, other parishes, and Clarence, who seek a safe place for learning with character-building and faith as the foundation that supports quality academic offerings. NBVM alumni personify our values and are ready to live well in our world, give back, and achieve success in education and life.



POSITIONING

The Three R's: **R**espect, **R**esponsibility, **R**everence. A Catholic school that is welcoming to all.



GOALS

1. NBVM School will have sufficient operational capacity to sustain the mission and pursue its strategic intent.
2. NBVM School will be recognized for its character-building and values-based education that prepares children for success in high school and life.
3. NBVM School will be an attractive high value option for parish members as well as a continuously more diverse community.
4. NBVM School enrollment will increase in every year of the Plan.
5. NBVM School's environment and facilities will portray excellence in the context of 21st century learning approaches.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Outreach, Linkages, Relationships:

1. Increase marketing efforts and programming options to attract families and students seeking a values-based education. Actively recruit qualified and interested students from neighboring parishes and the Clarence community.
2. Pursue cross-parish collaborations, especially with our sister parishes St. Lawrence and St. Martin de Porres.
3. Position around character building and faith as the foundation supporting the quality academic offerings.
4. Add to the diversity of the student population, especially across ethnic and racial lines.

Programmatic and Capacity Development:

1. Provide additional (non-course) learning opportunities that build on, or build new, academic interests for middle schoolers – perhaps in collaboration with other Catholic schools.
2. Collaborate with other Catholic schools from a position of strength, financially and academically. Help to find a common vision and move the schools toward that vision.
3. Adopt STREAM¹ as the academic core and make strategic incremental investments around strengthening the program and supporting facilities.

¹ Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, Music – a core diocesan program that builds on the national STEM initiative.

4. Grow demand at the kindergarten level primarily with outstanding, and coordinated, Pre-K and Kindergarten programs. Build early relationships with parish families that lead them to these programs and therefore a relationship with NBVM School.
5. Enhance the working environment and compensation for teachers to improve retention and morale. Provide on-going teacher training and professional development opportunities for all teachers.
6. Enhance the first impression-appeal of NBVM School. Prioritize grounds, signage, entry-ways, and communal areas.
7. Enhance governance by developing an Operating Board with sufficient accountability.
8. Achieve accreditation through AdvanceED, the accrediting organization chosen by the Diocese.



3-YEAR STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES (not in priority order)

1. Academic program capacity and enhancement
2. Enrollment management, communications and outreach
3. Non-enrollment revenue development
4. Operational/governance capacity
5. Facilities enhancement



DASHBOARD- SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Enrollment growth and projections (target is 74% capacity or at least 167 students)
- Tuition and fees percent of NBVM School revenues (target 60%)
- Subsidy (parish and other) percent of NBVM School revenues (target 25%)
- Fundraising & other percent of NBVM School revenues (target 15%)
- Top quartile *Business First* ranking for both elementary and middle schools
- Subsidy as a percent of parish expenditures (target 25%)
- Kindergarten is at 100% capacity in each year.
- Alumni success in high school as measured by a survey of high schools for freshmen (alumni) students and parents.
- Values-based/mission-oriented educational components are having an impact on student moral and spiritual formation and behaviors/preparation for high school as measured by a survey of high schools for freshmen students.

Part Two: STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE WORK PLANS

Imperative 1. Academic Program Capacity and Enhancement

Objectives:

- A. By the end of 2017 the academic program will show evidence of continued growth in terms of its rigor and breadth as measured by a top quartile Business First rating and annual improvement in NYS standardized test scores.
- B. By the end of 2017 the NBVM School will be fully accredited by the AdvanceEd accrediting organization.
- C. By the end of 2017 all NBVM teachers will be fully certified.

Strategies:

- 1.1 Introduce STREAM into the elementary school curriculum. Add a part-time STREAM Coordinator position.
- 1.2 Add at least 20 minutes to the school day, preferably by starting 20 minutes earlier.
- 1.3 Add accelerated courses for the older grades such as English (7-8 grade) and Advanced Mathematics (5-6 grade).
- 1.4 Make foreign language a core offering for grades 6-8 with increased class time.
- 1.5 Embrace technology fully. Introduce I-Pads into the 6-8 classrooms, moving toward paperless classrooms.
- 1.6 Provide entrepreneurship-oriented opportunities in the middle school. Provide career-focused experiential learning, with many being outside of the school setting.
- 1.7 Hire a reading specialist who can also develop a gifted and talented program for grades 1-5.
- 1.8 Enhance professional development for teachers in at least the following areas:
 - a. classroom engagement
 - b. cooperative learning
 - c. alternate assessment strategies
- 1.9 Provide additional counseling resources with a priority being social skills awareness building.
- 1.10 Enhance teaching effectiveness by adopting the “thoughtful classroom” teacher evaluation approach.

1.11 Use the academic program, service projects and other means to enhance our students' exposure to other cultures, ethnic and racial groups. Work to overcome our lack of diversity within the Parish and within Clarence overall.



Imperative 2. Enrollment management, communications and outreach

Objectives:

- A. By the beginning of the 2017-18 school year there will be a 9% (9 student) increase in kindergarten through 5th (elementary) grades when compared to 2015-16 and maximum enrollment in kindergarten.
- B. By the beginning of the 2018-19 school year the entire school will be serving 251 students, up 15% from 2015-16.
- C. By the beginning of the 2017-18 school year the number of inquiries by new families will be twice that experienced in the previous school year.

Strategies:

2.1 Build relationships with the other parishes of the Clarence-Newstead Cluster -- Saint Teresa of Avila (Akron), Our Lady of Peace (Clarence), and St. Augustine (Clarence Center/Pendleton) – and other nearby parishes without schools. Working with their pastors, find ways to speak to those parishioners in a manner that encourages them to strongly consider Nativity for their children while remaining loyal to their home parishes.

2.2 Enhance our social media presence by enhancing the visuals available on the website and posting regular pictures of our students' daily activities on Twitter and Facebook. Obtain the necessary graphics tools (e.g. Photoshop) to build up the website and produce other promotional materials in-house.

2.3 Provide a financial incentive package for pre-K families to move up into the NBVM kindergarten. Provide financial incentives to existing families that recommend NBVM to friends and family who eventually attend NBVM.

2.4 Create a core group of parents and alums that are willing to serve as ambassadors/spokespeople for NBVM School and outreach within the Clarence community and in other parishes.

2.5 Develop relationships with potential feeder daycare programs in Clarence. Reach out to parents in those programs.

2.6 Further develop our tuition packages by looking at various tuition incentives such as guaranteed tuition rates through 8th grade, tuition incentives for students transferring in at the Middle School level, and student referral incentives for existing families.

2.7 Develop a waiting list for kindergarten with the following preferences for entry: (1) Children of families with siblings in the school, (2) NBVM parish families, (3) Other parish families, (4) Other Catholic non-affiliated families, (5) students from Clarence, and (6) students from outside of Clarence.

2.8 Implement *Office 365* to improve internal communications among students, families, teachers and administrators.

2.9 Develop a series of Open House events that only showcase our younger grades (Pre-K 3 through K).

2.10 Establish relationships with parishioners by tracking baptisms at Nativity of Mary Church. Maintain contact with the new parents within their baby's first year and beyond.

2.11 Change the enrollment/registration process to a three-period approach. The first enrollment period will be open to existing school families, the next for parishioners, and then enrollment will be opened up those from other parishes and the general public.

2.12 Build relationships with two sister parishes of St. Lawrence and St. Martin de Porres. Specifically work toward becoming better known in those parishes, perhaps using at least one service project within each parish.



Imperative 3. Revenue development

Objectives:

- A. In each year NBVM School will be at or less than the budgeted parish subsidy for the year.
- B. In each year tuition and fees will account for at least 60% of the financial sources for the school.

Strategies:

PROGRAM

3.1 Add one Pre-K 4 classroom (20 students).

3.2 Bring back Kids Club and include a fee-for-service drop in service. Enhance the Kids Club with a homework club (in a separate classroom) for older kids.

3.3 Build-up the Pre-K 3 class and make it a full-day/5 day a week program.

3.4 Add program fees to cover activities in the Science Lab, tech lab etc. Suggested fees could be \$50.00 for grades K-5 and \$100.00 for grades 6-8.

FUNDRAISING

3.5 Continue to build up the *Values for Life* fund which allows for scholarships to Nativity.

GRANTS

3.6 Seek out grants that will support and enhance accessibility and diversity.



Imperative 4. Operational/governance capacity

Objectives:

A. By the beginning of the 2016-17 school year the school will have a fully-functional operating board.

Strategies:

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Develop an operating board that is broadly representative (parish and non-parish), market and growth-oriented, and that is committed to implementing the NBVM School Strategic Plan. Powers will include

- Binding decisions capability
- Self-promulgating
- High accountability

OPERATIONS

4.2 Identify and pursue a shared purchasing arrangement, either with regional schools or at the Diocesan level.

4.3 Initiate a budget process for the school that includes active involvement of the Board and the Principal.

4.4 Re-configure financial reporting for the Parish to show the full subsidy of NBVM school and track the subsidy against annual targets.

4.5 Develop a professional development plan for each faculty member. Incorporate the plan into the annual performance review.

4.6 Gradually move faculty and administrative salaries to a level that is competitive with other Catholic schools and more in line with their increased responsibilities. Provide additional benefits such as tuition breaks for teachers with children in grades 2-8.

4.7 Hire an after school coordinator (part-time) to operate the Kids Club program as a revenue center.



Imperative 5. Facilities enhancement

Objectives:

A. By the end of FY 2017-18 the NBVM School will have completed a significant renovation program.

Strategies:

5.1 Renovate key areas to be able to accommodate growth and movement toward academic and enrollment goals.

- a. Open up space in the school by moving Lifelong Family Faith Formation (LLFF) to equivalent renovated space elsewhere in the school (see c below).
- b. Divide the current LLFF space to enlarge the library media center - including incorporating the technology center - and to create a state-of-the-art kindergarten classroom.
- c. Move the after school program to the former technology center and re-open it as the *Just for Kids* program.
- d. Convert the current cafeteria space used by the after school program to new LLFF center.
- e. Convert the current kindergarten to a new Pre-K4 classroom.

5.2 Develop a plan and capital budget to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. (see grants)

5.3 Enhance seating and safety in the gym by opening up a spectator seating area in the current storage area overlooking the gym.

5.4 Upgrade all of the aesthetics of the school to create a strong and favorable first impression.

5.5 Develop a long-range capital budget and plan that addresses the following issues:

- Hot classrooms and technology center during warm months
- Replace gym floor
- Replace the sign facing Main Street with something more attractive
- Enhance the gardens and landscaping to a level of attractiveness that will add to 1st impressions
- Locker replacement for Middle School

5.6 Implement technology upgrades utilizing funding from Clarence Schools. Included will be:

- Smart boards for Pre-K4, new kindergarten room, media/library center, music/art room
- I-pads for older grade classrooms
- Technology Center – move and renovate (see 5.1)

APPENDICES

A. One Page Strategic Plan Summary

B. Situational Audit 2015

C. Lexicon of Planning Terms

D. Financial Impact