St. Patrick (Portland) Catholic School
Diocese of Grand Rapids

Spring 2016 MNSAA Site Visit Report of the
2015-16 Self-Study

Preface from the Diocese of Grand Rapids Office of Catholic Schools

Diocese of Grand Rapids expectation of accreditation

Diocese of Grand Rapids [Administrative Policy 2004](#) states:

> **2004 Accreditation (revised September 2009):**
> All schools in the Diocese are to be appropriately accredited.
>
> High schools are to be accredited by Diocesan-approved accrediting agencies.
>
> Elementary schools are to be accredited through the Michigan Non-public Schools Accrediting Agency.
>
> A school may not eliminate accreditation.
>
> A school that cannot meet accreditation standards must notify the Office of Catholic Schools, to review the situation.
>
> Continued failure to achieve accreditation may result in intervention or action by the Diocese.

The self-study

The accreditation process is designed to provoke thoughtful self-study and is an instrument of growth for each Catholic school. The school completes a very detailed self-study based on the *[National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools,](#)* which describe how the most mission-driven, program effective, well managed, and responsibly governed Catholic schools operate.

During the self-study, the school considers four domains, 13 standards, and 72 benchmarks. Each benchmark has a 4-level rubric used to determine the school's current practice in comparison to the identified effective practices. Schools provide detailed documentation, evidence, and analysis of data that support the school's self-reported score on each benchmark rubric. It is not

Benchmark Rubric Levels
4 = Exceeds the Benchmark
3 = Fully Meets the Benchmark
2 = Partially Meets the Benchmark
1 = Does Not Meet the Benchmark

uncommon for schools to have scores in benchmark rubric levels 2 and 3; it is the exceptional school that can reach a level 4. The rubric levels (1, 2, 3, 4) are categorical labels and not mathematically calculated.

It is the work of the Visiting Team to review school's self study with the objective of confirming the school's self-study score and narrative. This involves reviewing the narrative, data, and evidence, as well as making observations and performing interviews. The Visiting Team will use the same benchmark rubrics. If the Visiting Team is in agreement with the score, no additional comments are necessary and the Visiting Team will confirm the self-study score. If the Visiting Team cannot confirm a score, the Team will indicate why a different score was given by the Team.

It is not the work of the Visiting Accreditation Team to offer suggestions for improvement. Rather, as a result of the self-study and Team visit, the school will be able to identify areas to strengthen in order to increase

effectiveness, design strategies to move to the next level of excellence, and report the strategies and results in subsequent annual accreditation reports.

Upon completing the self-study, schools will be able to identify areas of strength and areas to improve, with targeted support and mentoring provided to help schools continuously improve.

Accreditation timeline - 5 year cycle

Integrated Planning Process with National Catholics Standards

Years	Accreditation Process All Domains	Board Planning Process Domains: Gov. + OV	School Improvement Process Domains: AE + MCI
MNSAA Year 5	Self-study (fall/winter) and site visit (spring)	Prioritize benchmarks Determine strategies Make progress Self-study and site visit	
MNSAA Year 1	Annual report (May)	Reprioritize benchmarks Determine strategies, make progress and report Complete Strategic Planning Map Develop 5-Year Plan Prioritize and assign strategies/tactics to committees	
MNSAA Year 2	Annual report (May)	Reprioritize benchmarks Determine strategies Make progress and report	
MNSAA Year 3	Annual report (May)	Reprioritize benchmarks Determine strategies Make progress and report	
MNSAA Year 4	Annual report (May)	Reprioritize benchmarks Determine strategies, Make progress and report	

Appreciation to the school and site visit accreditation team
Thank you to the school for your thoughtful and honest completion of the self-study. It is a challenging and time-intensive task to collect and document practice, as well as prepare school community members for observations and interviews.

Thank you to the site visit accreditation team for carefully reviewing the data and evidence as well as performing observations and interviews. The team's affirmation and confirmation of the self-study is a key component to helping the school improve its practices to better reflect the exemplary practices identified in the benchmarks.

David Faber   Cindy Kendall
Superintendent   Assistant Superintendent

May 2016

St. Patrick Portland Accreditation Site Team Report

Benchmark	Self	Team	Comments/Rationale
1.1 The governing body and the leader/leadership team ensure that the mission statement includes the commitment to Catholic identity.	2	2	
1.2 The governing body and the leader/leadership team use the mission statement as the foundation and normative reference for all planning.	3	2	1.2 No evidence to show how it is used in the planning of strategic or operational nature.
1.3 The school leader/leadership team regularly calls together the school's various constituencies (including but not limited to faculty and staff, parents, students, alumni(ae) to clarify, review and renew the school's mission statement.	2	2	
1.4 The mission statement is visible in public places and contained in official documents.	4	4	
1.5 All constituents know and understand the mission.	4	3	1.5 No evidence of a formalized program orienting them to the mission statement
2.1 Religious education curriculum and instruction meets the religious education requirements and standards of the (arch)diocese.	4	3	2.1 Currently the team did not find evidence of Vertical Alignment of religious education curriculum. Likewise the team did not see evidence of systematic review/revision using cross-curricular elements of vertical alignment, scaffolding etc.
2.2 Religion classes are an integral part of the academic program in the assignment of teachers, amount of class time and the selection of texts and other curricular materials.	3	3	
2.3 Faculty who teach religion meet (arch)diocesan requirements for academic and catechetical preparation and certification to provide effective religion curriculum and instruction.	3	3	
2.4 The school's Catholic identity requires excellence in academic and intellectual formation in all subjects including religious education.	3	2	2.4 While there was some great evidence evidence of religious interweaving on occasion there was no consistent evidence that it was a constant in all classes and it was intentionally Catholic.
2.5 Faculty use the lenses of Scripture and the Catholic intellectual tradition in all subjects to help students think critically and ethically about the world around them.	2	2	
2.6 Catholic culture and faith are expressed in the school through multiple and diverse forms of visual and performing arts, music and architecture.	4	4	
2.7 The theory and practice of the Church's social teachings are essential elements of the curriculum.	3	2	2.7 While there is some evidence, what is offered does not suggest it is consistent from class to class, teacher to teacher, grade to grade, year to year.
3.1 Every student is offered timely and regular opportunities to learn about and experience the nature and importance of prayer, the Eucharist, and liturgy.	4	4	
3.2 Every student is offered timely, regular, and age appropriate opportunities to reflect on their life experiences and faith through retreats and other spiritual experiences.	3	3	
3.3 Every student participates in Christian service programs to promote the lived reality of action in service of social justice.	4	3	3.3 While Pay it Forward involves all students K-12 the team did not find evidence that all students had opportunities to reflect on retreats and spiritual experiences
3.4 Every student experiences role models of faith and service for social justice among the administrators, faculty and staff.	3	3	
4.1 The leader/leadership team provides retreats and other spiritual experiences for the faculty and staff on a regular and timely basis.	3	3	

4.2 The leader/leadership team and faculty assist parents/ guardians in their role as the primary educators of their children in faith.	2	2	
4.3 The leader/leadership team collaborates with other institutions (for example, Catholic Charities, Catholic higher education, religious congregation-sponsored programs) to provide opportunities for parents/ guardians to grow in the knowledge and practice of the faith.	1	1	
4.4 All adults in the school community are invited to participate in Christian service programs to promote the lived reality of action in service of social justice.	2	2	
4.5 Every administrator, faculty, and staff member visibly supports the faith life of the school community.	3	3	
5.1 The governing body, representing the diversity of stakeholders, functions according to its approved constitution and by-laws.	3	2	5.1 Board representation consists of more than 40% parents.
5.2 The governing body systematizes the policies of the school's operations to ensure fidelity to mission, and continuity and sustainability through leadership successions.	3	2	5.2 There is not a leadership succession plan.
5.3 The governing body, in collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, maintains a relationship with the Bishop marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, continuing dialogue, and respect for the Bishop's legitimate authority.	3	3	
5.4 The governing body, in collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, maintains a constructive and beneficial relationship with the (arch) diocesan Education Office consistent with (arch)diocesan policy pertaining to the recognition of Catholic schools by the Bishop.	3	3	
5.5 In the case of a parish school, the governing body, in collaboration with the leader/leadership team, maintains a relationship with the canonical administrator (pastor or designee of Bishop) marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue.	4	3	5.5 Lack of evidence beyond interview.
5.6 The governing body engages in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation for itself and the leadership team to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.	2	2	
6.1 The leader/leadership team meets national, state and/or (arch)diocesan requirements for school leadership preparation and licensing to serve as the faith and instructional leader(s) of the school.	4	3	6.1 There is a lack of evidence to demonstrate the leadership team participates in professional development beyond the requirements in order to enrich and continuously improve their expertise in facilitating learning according to current best practices for their students.
6.2 The leader/leadership team articulates a clear mission and vision for the school, and engages the school community to ensure a school culture that embodies the mission and vision.	3	2	6.2 While the mission statement is clear, there is a lack of evidence of the mission and vision being engaged by the larger school community.
6.3 The leader/leadership team takes responsibility for the development and oversight of personnel, including recruitment, professional growth, faith formation, and formal assessment of faculty and staff in compliance with (arch)diocesan policies and/or religious congregation sponsorship policies.	3	2	6.3 Lack of evidence of teacher evaluations in 2016; lack of evidence of evaluation of support staff
6.4 The leader/leadership team establishes and supports networks of collaboration at all levels	2	2	6.4 Schedules provided to the site visit team in paper format (schedules not submitted in evidence)

within the school community to advance excellence.			
6.5 The leader/leadership team directs the development and continuous improvement of curriculum and instruction, and utilizes school-wide data to plan for continued and sustained academic excellence and growth.	2	2	
6.6 The leader/leadership team works in collaboration with the governing body to provide an infrastructure of programs and services that ensures the operational vitality of the school.	3	3	
6.7 The leader/leadership team assumes responsibility for communicating new initiatives and/or changes to school programs to all constituents.	4	3	6.7 The school is commended on its communication strategies. Lack of evidence of change/initiative communication, coupled with routinely measured and communicated outcomes.
7.1 The curriculum adheres to appropriate, delineated standards, and is vertically aligned to ensure that every student successfully completes a rigorous and coherent sequence of academic courses based on the standards and rooted in Catholic values.	2	2	
7.2 Standards are adopted across the curriculum, and include integration of the religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions of learning in all subjects.	2	2	
7.3 Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to become creative, reflective, literate, critical, and moral evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers, and socially responsible global citizens.	3	2	7.3 Unfortunately at this time there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the curriculum intentionally and explicitly addresses these pieces.
7.4 Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning prepares students to become expert users of technology, able to create, publish, and critique digital products that reflect their understanding of the content and their technological skills.	3	3	
7.5 Classroom instruction is designed to intentionally address the affective dimensions of learning, such as intellectual and social dispositions, relationship building, and habits of mind.	2	2	
7.6 Classroom instruction is designed to engage and motivate all students, addressing the diverse needs and capabilities of each student, and accommodating students with special needs as fully as possible.	3	3	
7.7 Faculty collaborate in professional learning communities to develop, implement and continuously improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction to result in high levels of student achievement.	2	2	
7.8 The faculty and professional support staff meet (arch) diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for academic preparation and licensing to ensure their capacity to provide effective curriculum and instruction.	2	2	
7.9 Faculty and professional support staff demonstrate and continuously improve knowledge and skills necessary for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values.	3	3	
7.10 Faculty and staff engage in high quality professional development, including religious formation, and are accountable for implementation that supports student learning.	3	3	

8.1 School-wide and student data generated by a variety of tools are used to monitor, review, and evaluate the curriculum and co-curricular programs; to plan for continued and sustained student growth; and to monitor and assess faculty performance.	2	2	
8.2 School-wide and aggregated student data are normed to appropriate populations and are shared with all stakeholders.	4	4	
8.3 Faculty use a variety of curriculum-based assessments aligned with learning outcomes and instructional practices to assess student learning, including formative, summative, authentic performance, and student self-assessment.	3	3	
8.4 Criteria used to evaluate student work and the reporting mechanisms are valid, consistent, transparent, and justly administered.	3	3	
8.5 Faculty collaborate in professional learning communities to monitor individual and class-wide student learning through methods such as common assessments and rubrics.	2	2	
9.1 School-wide programs for parents/guardians provide opportunities for parents/guardians to partner with school leaders, faculty, and other parents/guardians to enhance the educational experiences for the school community.	3	3	
9.2 Guidance services, wellness programs, behavior management programs, and ancillary services provide the necessary support for students to successfully complete the school program.	3	3	
9.3 Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities provide opportunities outside the classroom for students to further identify and develop their gifts and talents and to enhance their creative, aesthetic, social/emotional, physical, and spiritual capabilities.	4	3	9.3 While St. Patrick's has made some impressive advances in expanding offerings, especially in the arts, the team did not see clear evidence that there were co/extra-curricular activities offered to "all students" especially for younger children.
10.1 The governing body and leader/leadership team engage in financial planning in collaboration with experts in nonprofit management and funding.	2	2	
10.2 Financial plans include agreed-upon levels of financial investment determined by the partners involved who may include but are not limited to parishes, dioceses, religious orders, educational foundations, the larger Catholic community, and responsible boards.	2	2	
10.3 Financial plans define revenue sources that include but are not limited to tuition, tuition assistance/scholarships, endowment funds, local and regional partnerships, public funding, regional cost sharing, (arch)diocesan and/or religious communities' assistance, foundation gifts, entrepreneurial options and other sources not listed.	2	2	
10.4 Financial plans include the delineation of costs for key target areas such as instruction, tuition assistance, administration, professional development, facilities, equipment, technology, program enhancement/expansion, capital projects and other planned projects.	2	2	
10.5 Current and projected budgets include a statement of the actual and projected revenue sources, indicating an appropriate balance among revenue sources, and a statement of actual and	2	2	

projected expenditures including the actual cost per child, benchmarked compensation/salary scales, and other health benefits and retirement costs.			
10.6 Financial plans include educational materials for distribution to all members of the community explaining the total cost per child and how that cost is met by identifying the percentage of cost that is paid for by tuition and the remaining amount of cost that is supported by other sources of revenue.	2	1	10.6 Lack of evidence explaining the method and variables used to calculate the cost per child.
10.7 The governing body and leader/leadership team provide families access to information about tuition assistance and long-term planning for tuition and Catholic school expenses.	3	2	10.7 Lack of evidence of providing long-term planning for tuition and Catholic school expenses.
10.8 The governing body and leader/leadership team ensure that appropriately developed financial plans and budgets are implemented using current and effective business practices as a means of providing good stewardship of resources.	2	3	10.8 The finance committee, school board, school leadership, parish leadership, and parish council collaborate in planning and implementation, demonstrating good stewardship of resources once auditing correction was made (re maintenance). The school is commended on its movement to comply with Diocesan policy of 35% parish support.
11.1 Human resource programs are professionally staffed at the appropriate level (i.e central office, school office) and ensure full compliance with human resource policies.	3	3	
11.2 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.	3	2	11.2 Lack of evidence of succession planning.
11.3 Human resource policies ensure that competitive and just salaries, benefits, and professional growth opportunities are provided for all staff.	3	1	11.3 Lack of evidence of how compensation rates were determined to be competitive and just (no evidence of comparison or bookmarking)
11.4 Human resource policies ensure that institutional planning includes investment in personnel growth, health care and retirement.	3	3	
12.1 The school's facilities, equipment, and technology management plan includes objectives to support the delivery of the educational program of the school and accessibility for all students.	2	2	
12.2 The school's budget supports facilities, equipment, and technology management with specific funds for capital improvements, depreciation, and replacement.	3	2	12.2 Lack of evidence of depreciation, lack of capital outlay
12.3 The school's purchasing, and physical and technological improvements are, by design, done in alignment with the mission and the school's planning and curricular goals, and consistent with environmental stewardship.	3	1	12.3 Lack of evidence and details regarding purchasing decisions.
13.1 The communications/marketing plan requires school leader/leadership team and staff person(s) to insure the implementation of contemporary, multiple information technologies to reach targeted audiences, and to establish reliable and secure databases and accountability to stakeholders.	4	2	13.1 Lack of evidence of how marketing efforts are assessed and evaluated in terms of effectiveness and cost-benefit, resulting in future actions based on that analysis.
13.2 The enrollment management plan requires the governing body to review and the school leader/leadership team to supervise annual and continuous measurement and analysis of both	3	2	13.2 Measure and analysis appears to be ad-hoc and informal trending as compared to a formal plan of management.

enrollment and retention patterns for all student groups.			
13.3 The development plan requires school leader/leadership team, in collaboration with the governing body, to insure that key strategies are in place to identify, grow and maintain significant funding prospects, including alumni(ae), over time and when appropriate.	3	1	13.3 Lack of evidence of a development plan

Overall Comments:

- Father Larry has a clear joy for being the pastor of a church with a school. During our interview with Father, he was asked, "What is the school's greatest strength?"   Father replied, "Besides the kids and Christ?" and then shared a long list including parental involvement, PTO, faith, regular access for the Eucharist, the staff and administration, staff cohesiveness and bringing faith into all aspects of academics.
- The school administration, school board, parish staff, and canonical administrator have a positive working relationship.
- Students have a variety of ways to learn about and experience the nature and importance of prayer, the Eucharist, and liturgy.
- Excellent step forward to offer increased staff collaboration by having a morning recess and rotating the teacher monitor.
- Parents are engaged and supportive of the school.
- Parents appreciate the communication, expertise and experience of the staff.
- Several parents went out of their way to state that the school's greatest resource was its staff.
- The school is commended on its varied strategies and venues used to market the school.
- The team was impressed with the efforts in place to give St. Pat's a close-knit, family feel given the wide grade span, DK-12th grade, of the school.

Submitted by:

Gregg Bruno, Accreditation Team Chair, St. John Vianney

Elizabeth Allard, Ludington Area Catholic

Kerri Hafner, St. Joseph

Cindy Kendall, DOGR Office of Catholic Schools

Jennifer Leik, Saints Peter and Paul

Pat O'Mara, St. Joseph

Collin Thompson, Ludington Area Catholic

Connie Warczinsky, St. Joseph