

St. Joseph's School (C145) 3 Year School Improvement Plan for 2011-2012.

(1) INTRODUCTION_

• **_Narrative description of the school, the community, and the educational programs:**

Saint Joseph Catholic School has been in existence since 1859. The first building was poorly furnished and in use until 1863 when another building was erected on the present sight. This building, completed in 1911, consisted of four classrooms on the second floor and an assembly hall on the lower level. Due to increased enrollment, ground was broken for another building in 1953. This structure, completed in 1954, had six classrooms on the main floor, two on the lower level, a cafeteria, and a gym. Until 2007 our facility housed one office, ten classrooms, one computer lab, a library, gym, and cafeteria. Three rooms off the cafeteria were used for speech, remedial reading, and after school care.

In the Fall of 2007, the original office became a work area for teachers and staff. One classroom was converted into four offices for the Principal, Office Manager, Nurse, and Religious Education Director. An additional room functions as a Learning Center.

The first Religious to teach at Saint Joseph School were the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood who came in 1896. Some years later, the Sisters of Saint Joseph replaced them. From 1930 until 2002 the school was under the administration of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Perpetual Adoration who continue to support and enrich us in the positions of librarian and classroom aid. From 2002 until present our school has been

under the administration of state licensed lay principals. Our faculty consists of 6 full time lay teachers, two full time program aides, and a librarian. Due to declining enrollment in 2008-2009, we became a K-5 program eliminating the sixth grade. PreSchool is being integrated into the program.

Our students feed into Boston and Kesling Middle Schools. A small number of students in LaPorte County are home schooled. Our community offers a variety of special cultural and educational programs and activities. We avail ourselves of the opportunities presented to us by the LaPorte Hospital Foundation, LaPorte Historical Museum, the County Complex, Barker Mansion, LaPorte Library services, National Lakeshore, Luhr Park conservation tours and hands-on experiences, and the Civic Auditorium.

The LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative provides support services

such as speech/language therapy, testing for learning disabilities, and consultation for teachers of students with special needs. Through Title I Funding, the LaPorte Community School Corporation provides two teachers to help students in the primary grades who are having reading and/or math difficulty. Title IV funds are used for the professional development of the teachers. Title II funds are utilized for ELL students as determined by LM reporting.

Saint Joseph students take part in enrichment activities such as the Learning Fair, which focuses on the students' personal interests. Students may choose the topic and the means through which they present their projects. Students also participate in the District Spelling Bee, standards-based field trips, and Science Family Night. Opportunities are provided for students to attend the LaPorte Symphony Orchestra presentations and Service League play. The Scholastic Reading Counts program, and Book It are available to the students.

Starting in 2009-2010 students will have Spanish, German, Music, Art, and Creative Writing enrichment on an alternating yearly calendar during the school day along with a student centered before and after care program.

Community issues that impact our schools are numerous. Many are addressed through either a program presentation or spiritual outreach combined with a program of monthly giving. There is a school wide anti-victimization program utilized to keep students safe and all adults working with our children must be trained in Child Protection as well as submit to a Criminal Background Check. The poor economy and addition of free preschool within the public schools have had a substantial negative impact on our enrollment.

We wrote and implemented a Strategic Plan for the immediate, near, and 5yr periods of time. The results are being reviewed during the month of September followed by a determination of viability for the 2012-2013 school year.

Our school community is one that is composed of administration, faculty, staff, parents, children, and community members. This "family" of people work together to provide educational and spiritual programs for the whole child. Each child is regarded as a unique individual who has intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs. The school community strives to ensure that these needs are met in order that the children are prepared to become responsible members of our church and society.

• **Description and Location of Curriculum:**

Saint Joseph School is part of the Diocese of Gary Catholic School System. However, many decisions for our school are site-based. The faculty gives input on such

issues as textbook adoption and curriculum decisions. State and Diocesan curriculum guidelines are followed. We use the State Standards for our academic curriculum and copies are located in each classroom and teachers' workroom. An additional set is in the principal's office. The DOE Website also has copies online. Our religious curriculum is kept in each classroom.

- Titles and descriptions of assessment instruments to be used in addition to ISTEP+:

Assessment of student progress is continual and varied to assure that goals of the academic curriculum are being met.; Formal testing includes NWEA; language proficiency testing, LAS Links; Title I DRA; requested Special Education assessments, and Title I testing..

Informal and formative assessments are obtained through teachers' observations, homework, oral discussions, labs, written class work, chapter and lesson quizzes/ tests, student self-evaluations, teachers' observation, storyboards, group projects, and peer evaluations.

(2) STATEMENT OF MISSION:

- St. Joseph School supports parents in affording their children a quality Catholic education through integration of faith, knowledge, and self discipline.

- The faculty and staff accomplish this mission by providing:

- 1 Catholic religious formation through religion classes, prayer experiences, service projects, and a Catholic environment
- 2 Quality academic education through a state accredited Standards based curriculum
- 3 A Christ-like atmosphere of compassion and respect, which fosters self-esteem, leadership and personal responsibility and service.

(3) SUMMARY OF DATA is on file in the principal's office and on the State DOE website.

(4) CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING, DERIVED FROM AN ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMING, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

- Parental participation in the school—Based on the volunteer sign up sheets, membership on committees, attendance at family events, and teachers' reports there is a high level of participation by a small percentage of our parents. We need to assess and adjust the opportunities available to increase the parental involvement. We have seen more volunteers from the community and more attendance at family events. :-)

- Based on parent surveys, the challenges to our program are in the areas of technology, extra curricular activities and finances.

*Technology as a learning tool—There is a variety of traditional forms of technology used including overhead projectors, calculators, videos, and CDs. However, the use of newer technologies such as interactive white boards and mobile learning labs are now being integrated into our curriculum. Starting in 2011-2012 a majority of teachers is using the interactive white board, and teachers are waiting for the results of our grant application to put interactive boards in all rooms this coming November.

- Safe and disciplined learning environment—Based on reports of incidents/accidents, number of referrals for discipline, state legal standards compliance, requirements for supervisors and staff, safety drills, anti victimization curriculum taught in grades K-5, we are providing a safe and disciplined environment. A bullying survey given to students in grades 2-5 at the end of last year provided data to ensure we are providing a safe environment for all students.

In 2010-2011 we increased the instructional time devoted to anti-victimization.

- Professional Development—There has been a marked increase in teacher participation in professional development opportunities focusing on the CLASS model of growth and NWEA assessments. In 2010-2011 we decided to continue with CLASS and NWEA but to also take advantage of the Common Core Standards and Learning Connection PD.

(5) STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OBJECTIVES/GOALS, DERIVED FROM AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING, INCLUDING AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING:

- Attendance Rate: 97% AYP 2010/2011
- Percentage of students meeting academic standards under the ISTEP+ program:
Math: 5th=100% 4th=81.3% 3rd=89.5%
LA: 5th=94.7% 4th=93.8% 3rd=84.2%

Math

Goal 1- Students will increase proficiency in applying learned skills to new situations.

Action steps –

Students will explain solutions using intentional math vocabulary.
Students will be recognized for significant gains in applied skills

Goal 2 – Students increase proficiency in number sense.

Action steps –Students will utilize internet resources.

Students will increase practice of skills using interactive games and activities.

Language Arts

Goal 1– Students become more proficient in reading and comprehension of informational text.

Action steps –

Students will demonstrate increase in ability to explain, and describe, and interpret informational text.

Students edit peers' writings for grammar, punctuation, and other language conventions.

Students learn with C.L.A.S.S. literacy links and morning messages.

Science

Goal 1—Students will become more proficient in Scientific Thinking and Terminology

Action steps—

Students participate in hands on activities on a regular basis.

Students will be able to correctly utilize Science vocabulary.

Faith:

Goal 1-Students' actions will more closely reflect their Catholic Christian beliefs.

Action Steps—Daily prayers encouraging proper actions.

Lessons taught on anti-bullying and respect for differences.

CLASS Community circles and philosophy utilized

Being Like Jesus rewards

(6) SPECIFIC AREAS WHERE IMPROVEMENT IS NEEDED IMMEDIATELY:

- Math: Number Sense & Problem Solving Process/Applications
- LA: Reading and Comprehension of Informational Text
- Other noted areas: Measurement, Lit. Response

(7) BENCHMARKS FOR PROGRESS THAT SPECIFY HOW AND TO WHAT EXTENT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS TO MAKE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN ALL AREAS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:

How: Student NWEA results will show growth in learning.

To What Extent:

Students below grade expectations will exceed the normal growth points for their grade level.

Students at or above grade expectations will meet or exceed normal growth points.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION:

How: Parents will volunteer to work with students and staff to increase learning.

To What Extent:

There will be an increase in the number of families giving at least 20 hours of time to the school.

Parents will be sent a written report of progress every two weeks.

Parents will have two parent teacher conferences, one in Spring and one in Fall.

SAFE AND DISCIPLINED ENVIRONMENT:

How: Compliance with Diocesan and Legal Standards

To What Extent:

There will be 100% compliance with all State Legal Standards.

How: Adults working with children will be trained in an approved Anti-

Victimization program as well as have a Federal limited background check.

To What Extent:

Only trained and approved adults will work with our students.

How: Children will receive instruction in anti-victimization

To What Extent:

All children in grades K-5 will receive Yello Dyno lessons.

How: Speakers will be brought in to address current issues for teachers, students, and parents.

To What Extent:

To the extent determined beneficial by the teachers/staff.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

How: Teachers will attend conferences, workshops seminars, and in-services to increase student learning.

To What Extent:

At least one class, conference, workshop, seminar, or in-service will be attended each year by each teacher.

How: Teachers will read and discuss research-based literature to enhance student learning.

To What Extent:

Teachers will read and discuss relevant articles, writings.

TECHNOLOGY AS A LEARNING TOOL:

How: Teachers will incorporate new technologies such as power point, websites, and the use of the interactive white board into their lessons.

To What Extent:

Students will produce work generated using one or more of these

technologies at least once a semester.

How: Teachers will increase their skills in power point, website usage, and other Internet tools to increase student learning by coming into the computer lab while their students are learning these skills.

To What Extent:

Teachers will successfully guide students in use of these technologies.

(8) ACADEMIC HONORS DIPLOMA AND CORE 40-We are an elementary program for which this does not directly apply.

(9) PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS (strategies) based on student achievement objectives/goals:

Math:

Teachers will utilize music and rhyme to increase retention of vocabulary.

Teachers will utilize the D (data) Q (question) P (plan) E (expression) A (answer) technique for problem solving.

Students will complete daily problem solving.

Language Arts:

Teachers will implement differentiated techniques to implement the action steps and goals.

Science:

Teachers will consult with a resource Science teacher to model and instruct methods of teaching hands on Science as well as collaborate with each other on best practices.

(10) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

STUDENT LEARNING/PERFORMANCE:

Faculty/staff will continue as a group to select, read, discuss, and implement relevant research based texts focused on ways to increase student learning. Faculty/staff will seek out and participate in brain-based learning workshops, seminars, conferences, classes, and in-services that enhance their ability to increase student learning.

Faculty/staff will seek out experiences that increase their ability to utilize diverse forms of media as well as the Internet resources available.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY:

Faculty/staff will seek out presenters and collaborative opportunities to increase our knowledge, understanding of and integration of our multi-cultural community. Students will focus on the study of cultures as their theme for our annual Learning

Fair every other year starting with the 2008-2009 school year.

(11) STATUTES AND RULES TO BE WAIVED- WE ARE NOT REQUESTING ANY WAVIERS.

(12) THREE (3) YEAR TIME LINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW, AND REVISION:

The complete School Improvement plan will be reviewed and revised annually. Goals and Objectives will be assessed continually and revised as reflected by the students' successes.

YEAR 1:

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Goal 1- Students will increase proficiency in applying learned skills to new situations.

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YEARS II & III: Year 1 goals will be adjusted at the beginning of each year.