



Kenosha Catholic Schools Alliance

Communication #5

May 4, 2021

In previous communications, we identified emerging trends that the Kenosha Catholic Schools Alliance is working to address proactively to fulfill our charge: *Ensuring that excellent Catholic education will continue to be accessible, sustainable, and viable for all members of the Kenosha community who desire it well into a future beyond our own.*

These trends lead us to the formation of four critical questions:

1. How can we collectively foster and develop the Catholic identity and culture of our Catholic schools to form the future leaders of our Church?
2. How can we collectively strengthen the academic excellence of our Catholic schools to form the future leaders of our community?
3. What financial model can we collectively develop that maximizes the use of current resources, controls costs, ensures accessibility and affordability, and identifies and utilizes new revenues streams?
4. What governance model can we collectively develop to ensure strong Catholic identity, academic excellence, and financial stability for the present and far into the future?

We have yet to fully answer these questions. To date, KCSA has been operating in what can best be described as a “discovery phase,” in which a wealth of information and data has been identified and is being processed for analysis. Key areas of discovery follow.

KCSA Parent Survey: sent to parents at both All Saints Catholic School and St. Joseph Catholic Academy to gain a baseline understanding of our Catholic school parents’ perceptions. Key themes:

- 285 individuals completed the survey.
- Academic strength was the most influential factor cited in school selection. It also has the highest satisfaction score among respondents.
- “Caring” or “Nurturing” were the two most common words used to describe the culture at both ASCS and SJCA.
- Teachers and academics were the two highest commented strengths for both schools.
- While academics was a top strength, it was also the most commented on category for improvement followed by non-academic activities.
- 92.1% of respondents would very likely or somewhat likely recommend their Catholic school to others.

Kenosha Priest and Deacon Survey: sent to priests and deacons to glean their perspective of the Catholic identity and culture of our schools. Key themes:

- Mass attendance on Sundays and involvement at the parish is generally average to below-average by school families.
- Feedback suggests that children need more preparation for the sacraments, specifically the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Sacramental formation of students is key; we need to promote the importance of Mass and confession and stress how they provide enduring benefits.
- Social issues (abortion, trans movement, immigration) are very much a part of the culture and require us to know what Church teaches.
- Formation of teachers is vital to a school's culture; teachers can shape the Catholic culture.

A follow-up conversation with the priests helped us to dig a bit deeper to further understand their thoughts and helped us to strategize and consider ways to meet our goals.

Differentiators: what should distinguish our Catholic schools from surrounding schools.

- Academic excellence for all students.
- Spiritual and theological rigor.
- Experiences – service, community partnerships, parish involvement.
- Messaging –
 - How can Christ be in the center of all that we do?
 - How can we have academic excellence and Catholic excellence at the same time? Where do these points converge?
 - How does a Eucharistic school life feed into our mission?
 - How do we promote a culture of discernment? (i.e., What does God want for my life?)
 - How do we promote a culture of service? (i.e., How does God want me to serve the world?)

Graduate at Graduation: what skills, dispositions, and attributes our “graduate at graduation” should possess.

- Our graduates will be faith leaders in their Church communities. They will know what we believe, how we pray, how we behave, and how we worship.
- Our graduates will know what it means, and will desire, to grow in holiness and virtue.
- Our graduates will be leaders in their chosen fields, living as life-long learners, critical thinkers and problem solvers, excellent communicators, service orientated, and defenders of truth.

School Governance:

- Deep exploration of various governance structures used by Catholic schools.
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of each model?
- Identify the best mission-aligned model for the KCSA.
- *See below for a brief explanation of school governance in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.*

Finance:

- Engaged in a comprehensive process to thoroughly understand the current financial status of both ASCS and SJCA.
- Explore options for the most-efficient financial structure to meet the project goals.

These are just some of the areas we have been working on since our last outreach. As always, we are here to answer any questions. Please send those to kenoshacatholicschoolsalliance@gmail.com. Also know that we are planning additional opportunities to gather more community input in the future.

For further information on our work at the Kenosha Catholic Schools Alliance, please visit our website at www.kenoshacatholicschools.org.

We ask for your continued prayers, support, and patience as we continue our work.

We are *Better Together...United in Christ*

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School Governance in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee:

There are three primary governance structures for schools in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee:

- **Parish-sponsored Schools:** The pastor/parish director is the governing authority for the school which is not separately incorporated from the parish. The principal is the chief administrator of the school. The School Advisory Commission provides consultation to both the pastor/parish director and the principal on school governance issues.
- **Separately Incorporated Schools:** The Archbishop of Milwaukee typically is the sole corporate member of the Corporation. The Corporation may be one school, or it may be a network of schools. A board of limited jurisdiction, known as a Board of Directors, is the primary governing authority of the Corporation, with the Archbishop of Milwaukee retaining final authority. The principal (single school) or president (network of schools) is the Corporation's chief administrator.
- **Religious Order-sponsored or Independent Schools:** These schools are recognized by the Archbishop of Milwaukee as Catholic and operate as such by his permission in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Both ASCS and SJCA are Separately Incorporated Schools. Each school has a Board of Directors that has a defined scope of responsibility and authority. In general, the Board of Directors focuses on big-picture institutional issues and the chief administrator has the responsibility and authority for operations of the school.