



GREATER SASKATOON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Report to the Community 2008-2009



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Opposite page, bottom:
Premier Brad Wall visits
with students at St. Philip
School.



Mission Statement

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools adopted its new mission statement in August 2009.

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools: a welcoming community where we nurture faith, encourage excellence in learning and inspire students to serve others, making the world a better place.

We love because He first loved us.
1 JOHN 4:19

Vision

ROOTED IN FAITH

Growing in Knowledge

Reaching Out... to Transform the World



Our Communities

Saskatoon, Humboldt, Biggar and Viscount.

Our Division

14 628 students in 2008-2009.
1 864 employees in March 2009.
38 elementary schools.
8 high schools, including Humboldt Collegiate Institute, which is jointly managed with Horizon School Division.

Our History

Established:
1906 in Humboldt,
1911 in Saskatoon,
1923 in Viscount and
1927 in Biggar.

From the Board Chair

At Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, when we describe our work, we say we are:

Rooted in Faith, Growing in Knowledge and Reaching Out... to Transform the World.

This vision influenced us greatly as we worked throughout the 2008-2009 school year to craft a new mission statement for our division. We talked to our students, our staff, our partners and the wider community to learn what Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools means to them.

We were heartened by what we heard: our division is an integral part of the communities we serve. Parents and caregivers count on our schools to be places of faith where staff members not only help students do their best in school, they help young people learn about themselves and how to use their God-given gifts to their full potential. Young people discover

they have the talent and the responsibility to reach out and make a difference in the world. Our new mission statement reflects this purpose.

In looking through our 2008-2009 Report to the Community you will see work is under way on several fronts as we realize our vision. Since 2007 our Board priorities have been to:

- *Celebrate Our Catholic Identity – because we are Rooted in Faith*
- *Improve Student Learning and Achievement – because we are Growing in Knowledge*
- *Build Relationships and Partnerships and Promote Stewardship – because we are Reaching Out.*

Innovative work is under way in each of these areas so that our students are prepared to go and transform the world. Our Board of Education is proud to share our work and our successes in this year's Report to the Community.

Diane Boyko

Board of Education

2008-2009 Board of Education. **Top:** Diane Boyko, Debbie Berscheid, Ron Boechler, Jennifer Carruthers and Jim Carriere. **Bottom:** Tom Fortosky, Lisa Lambert, Alice Risling, Fred Wesolowski and Wayne Stus



From the Director of Education

In our school division, all that we do is undertaken from a distinctive Catholic faith-based perspective. This means our schools and workplaces are communities of faith, prayer, learning and service.

At the same time, we have joined all Saskatchewan school divisions in focusing on priorities the Ministry of Education has set to renew prekindergarten to Grade 12 education in Saskatchewan. The four provincial priorities are:

- *higher achievement and literacy*
- *equitable opportunities*
- *smooth transitions, and*
- *division accountability and governance.*

Our school division's vision and Board of Education goals have shaped how we have responded to these priorities. **To learn more, please see the Continuous Improvement Framework Report 2008-2009 available online at www.gscs.sk.ca. It includes our students' results in provincewide assessments in mathematics, reading and writing.**

The Report to the Community that you're reading now is a broader look at the highlights of 2008-2009 for our school division: from how we're reshaping the high school experience for our students, to news about some of our most recent partnerships.

We're proud that Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is an integral, innovative part of our communities – as it has been for nearly a century. We will celebrate our past and our future when the division's 100th anniversary occurs during the 2011-2012 school year. We look forward to providing Catholic education for another 100 years in Saskatoon, Humboldt, Biggar and Viscount.



Bev Hanson



During the 2008-2009 school year, more than 100 classrooms received SMART Boards – bringing the total number of classrooms with this tool to 300. SMART Boards are interactive whiteboards that have touch-sensitive screens. Teachers can write or draw on the boards, store lessons on them, move images around, show video or surf the Internet. By the end of the 2009-2010 school year, more than 375 SMART Boards will have been installed.



ROOTED IN FAITH

Celebrating Catholic Identity

Revealing Christ in all we teach

We ensure that Catholic faith permeates – passes through – all curricula and activities.

This means teaching science in the context of the Catholic view on stewardship, incorporating the Church's teachings on social justice into social studies or drawing out Catholic values in the study of literature.

To help teachers further connect faith and learning, our division is participating in the Revealing Christ in All We Teach project

with other Catholic school divisions in Saskatchewan. Teachers are creating common resources to help all Catholic educators in Saskatchewan.

Materials have been prepared for Grade 7 English Language Arts, Health, Social Studies and Science and are being piloted in Grade 6 English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science and Health. Development of materials is targeted in grades where the Ministry of Education is renewing the provincial curriculum.

Board Chair Diane Boyko speaks at the World Catholic Education Day celebration held in Kiwanis Park on May 21, 2009.



Growing in Knowledge

Improving Student Learning and Achievement

Making sure Math Makes Sense

We are renewing how we teach math. Our new approach focuses on hands-on learning, problem solving and helping students learn how math applies to everyday life.

Along with new books for students and teaching tools for classrooms, teachers are supported with workshops to help them enhance their math instruction so they can help all students achieve their math goals.

Parents are learning about the new math program through parent information evenings at several schools and an online learning community.

Guiding readers to greater success

Because students need a strong foundation in literacy for success in all subjects, we use a balanced teaching approach that:

- identifies the needs of each child, and
- responds with the best strategies to help that child become a strong, confident reader and writer.

Approaches include one-on-one instruction, as well as working with students in small and whole-class groups. One important approach used in group work is "guided reading." Teachers select enjoyable readings that will challenge students, then support them as they increase comprehension and vocabulary knowledge.

Classroom teachers are part of a division-wide team that focuses on enhancing literacy instruction by:

- giving teachers tools to assess each student's achievement,
- helping them work with students at different levels, and
- planning an environment that allows students to practise and develop their skills.

Embracing early learners

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools understands the critical importance of early learning. The division's work in this area focuses on childcare, prekindergarten and kindergarten. **We believe early learning should embrace curiosity and risk taking, while incorporating the knowledge and culture that comes from family and community.**

The work of our early learning consultant includes enhancing prekindergarten learning environments and programs, supporting teachers through professional development and strengthening relationships with our partners, including the Ministry of Education, the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

Keeping the future in mind

Our goal is to see every student complete high school – but before they graduate we want all students to have a clear plan for the future.

Division staff helped create The Real Game-Saskatchewan – an online career education resource that brings the real world to Grade 7 and 8 classrooms.

The game features interactive role-playing exercises to make career education relevant and fun – using information about actual Saskatchewan careers and context about our economy.

In our high schools, we're pioneering a brand-new "career practitioner" position – it's a first for Saskatchewan. This person oversees several aspects of career education at the school – helping students map their futures, access career planning tools and develop skills that will help them reach their goals.



Students and staff launched The Real Game – Saskatchewan career education tool at St. George School.

Growing in Knowledge

Improving Student Learning and Achievement



Top: High school teachers gathered at Prairieland Park to discuss doing things differently at Saskatoon's Catholic high schools.

Middle: Students from Bethlehem Catholic High School and Tommy Douglas Collegiate joined pow wow dancers at Shaw Centre to launch the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Education Conference. **Bottom:** EcoJustice, a unique Grade 8 program focusing on environmental, cultural and spiritual education, was implemented in fall 2008-2009 with 24 students.



Rethinking the high school experience

High school reculturing means we're changing how we do things in our high schools: we want to make high school more useful and relevant for young people. Why? Because employers want people who can think critically, solve problems and work well with a team.

We're participating in the "What Did You Do in School Today?" research initiative. Various students are surveyed once a month to monitor their attitudes toward school: likes and dislikes, whether school is interesting and what would make it more engaging.

As part of reculturing, each high school now has a Teacher Advisory Program that places students in a "home room" with a specific teacher who stays with that group for all four years of high school. The advisory groups meet daily and allow each student to develop a one-on-one relationship with a staff member.

Gaining perspective: First Nation and Métis education

Our division is striving to improve participation and outcomes for First Nations and Métis students and to integrate aboriginal content and perspectives throughout all curriculum areas for all students. Tools have been developed to help staff track integration of First Nations and Métis content.

Additionally, we are the only school division in Saskatchewan to employ full-time kehtaya, or elders. These men and women are involved in teaching and learning at the schools and are embraced as staff members. This investment of human resources shows our division's commitment to a faith-based education that meets the needs of all students.

Reaching Out

Building Relationships and Partnerships

Forging strong ties to home and parish

Educating children to their full potential requires strong relationships between parents, the church and the school. Catholic School Community Councils play an important role in the life of their schools by:

- *strengthening each school's capacity to improve student learning, and*
- *gathering community resources to ensure student well-being.*

This means councils are having input into learning improvement plans at their schools. **Many communities have hosted literacy or numeracy nights, where parents and students experience math and reading together.**

The councils, which have replaced parent associations, can be a blend of parents, staff, students and community members.

Working with our neighbours

Our school division continues to enrich our relationships with the broader community and all levels of government: we all share responsibility for educating our children and youth.

We are proud to work with the **Saskatoon Tribal Council and Central Urban Métis Federation Inc** to enhance First Nations and Métis Education in our division. This is happening through:

- *study of First Nations and Métis student assessment – research done in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan, St. Michael Community School and Muskoday First Nation;*
- *Métis cultural education programming;*
- *giving teachers tools to integrate First Nations, Métis and Inuit content into their lessons;*
- *offering the nêhiyawak Cree Bilingual Program at St. Frances School.*

The **Settlement Support Workers in Schools (SSWIS)** program started in 2006 with one worker. Today there are six. SSWIS is a school-based outreach program that connects newly arrived families to services and resources in the school and community. This promotes

settlement and encourages student achievement in school.

This program is a partnership between the **Saskatoon Open Door Society, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Saskatoon Public Schools.**

Together with the **Dumont Technical Institute Inc.** (DTI) we have created a program to bring people of Métis ancestry into our classrooms. DTI has launched a 10-month educational assistant program, which is being taught at E. D. Feehan Catholic High School by instructors from DTI and Feehan.

We are a partner in the **Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre**, which helps young people find a job – and build a future – in the trades and skills. It targets vulnerable youth and young adults; there are no fees or education requirements to enter the programs. Industry helps develop programs that help fill their need for workers who are looking to get a start in a specific trade or skill, including commercial construction, electronic assembly, masonry, culinary arts, welding and machining.

The **St. Mary Community School Pediatrics Clinic** is among the first of its kind in Canada. It is located in a converted classroom and is equipped much like a regular doctor's office, with an examining table and basic pediatric medical supplies. It is staffed three days a week by pediatricians from the Department of Pediatrics.

The clinic operates through a partnership between **Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, the University of Saskatchewan Department of Pediatrics, Saskatoon Tribal Council, Saskatoon Public Schools and the Saskatoon Health Region.**

A five-year-old partnership with the **University of Saskatchewan's College of Education** is improving the learning experience for students in the college. A teacher from the division is seconded for two years to work with a group of education students and their professors. The goal is to create a closer connection to division classrooms, so teacher candidates will have more opportunities to put theory into action as they study, discuss, experience and test different approaches to instruction.

The **St. Mary Community School Pediatrics Clinic** is among the first of its kind in Canada. Through the clinic, **Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools** and its partners are reaching out to our community to help our children, some of whom are among the most vulnerable in our city. The clinic brings pediatric care to children who otherwise may not receive it because of several barriers, including: distance, lack of transportation or inconvenient operating hours.



Reaching Out

Promoting Stewardship

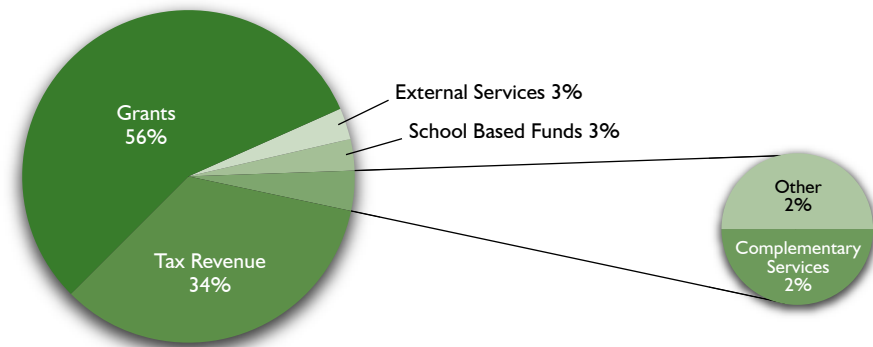
Catholic education is a calling to take care of God's abundant gifts. As stewards, trustees are entrusted with the gifts of people, finances, facilities, and the environment. We seek to receive these gifts gratefully and tend to them responsibly so that our work contributes to the greater good of the school division, our communities and our world. The Board of Education strives to govern the operations of the school division with forethought and diligence.

Board goal: Responsible allocation and use of our financial resources

FINANCIAL SUMMARY September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009

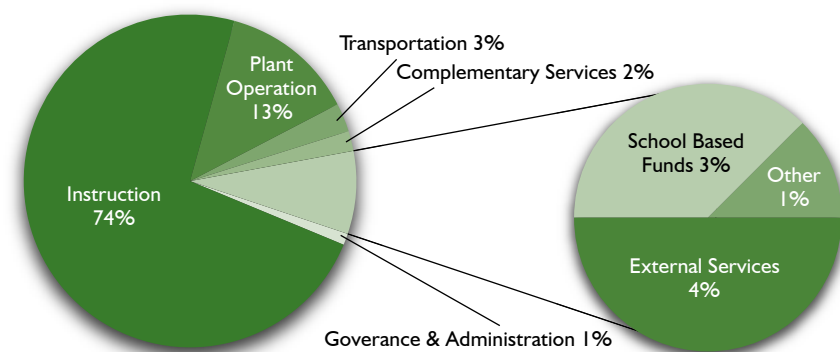
Details of Budget Revenue

Tax Revenue	\$ 46,427,317
Grants	\$ 75,825,936
External Services	\$ 4,574,027
School Based Funds	\$ 3,942,467
Complementary Services	\$ 2,837,466
Other	\$ 2,368,717
Total Budget Revenue	\$ 135,975,930



Details of Budget Expenditure

Governance and Administration	\$ 2,039,519
Instruction	\$ 100,234,343
Plant Operation	\$ 17,129,799
Transportation	\$ 3,767,511
Complementary Services	\$ 2,897,143
External Services	\$ 6,064,024
School Based Funds	\$ 4,116,635
Other	\$ 621,018
Total Budget Expenditure	\$ 136,869,992



Energy conservation = \$275,000 annual savings

More than a decade ago, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools took steps to begin conserving electricity, water and natural gas in its facilities. This included installation of energy efficient lighting in a number of facilities, along with the addition of computerized building management systems that allowed the division to better control demand for heating, water and electrical systems.

The program has resulted in the division lowering its carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 10 million pounds since 1997 and saving an estimated \$275,000 annually.

Renewal in Pleasant Hill

At a sod turning ceremony in June 2009 residents, students and dignitaries celebrated the start of construction leading to the revitalization in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The project includes the remediation of an entire block to produce clean, fully-serviced land for redevelopment; the building of a new **St. Mary Community School** and community space; renewed park space; and two housing developments with a total of 36 units.

Above: Board Chair Diane Boyko (fifth from left) and project partners turned sod on the new Pleasant Hill Revitalization Project.



Reaching Out

Promoting Stewardship

Education Minister Ken Krawetz (left) and HCI Principal Cory Popoff at the September 2008 HCI funding announcement.



A new high school for Humboldt

The community of Humboldt welcomed Education Minister Ken Krawetz's announcement of \$15 million in government funding for a new Humboldt Collegiate Institute. HCI is jointly operated by the Horizon School Division and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. The modern new school, scheduled to open in September 2011, is linked to the Humboldt Uniplex and Carlton Trail Regional College.

Industry recognizes outstanding work at Bethlehem

Bethlehem Catholic High School was chosen from more than 80 projects as the winner of the 2008 Presidential Award from the Saskatchewan Masonry Institute for outstanding use of masonry-brick, block or stone. Our division is indebted to AODBT Architects, Robb Kullman Engineering, Graham Construction and Engineering and Koby Masonry Construction.

PotashCorp donates \$500,000 to new St. Mary Community School

Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc (PotashCorp) announced in June 2009 a donation of \$500,000 to help fund a community Wellness Centre within the new St. Mary Community School in Saskatoon's Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The Wellness Centre will feature a state-of-the-art indoor walking/running track, exercise facilities, and community gathering places.

Garth Moore, President of PCS Potash, presents a \$500,000 cheque to Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board Chair Diane Boyko.



Transforming the World

Making a Difference

Learning that makes a difference

Each year during Lent, students undertake a variety of service and fund-raising projects as part of their spiritual preparation for Easter. In 2009 nearly \$100,000 was raised by students and staff in 45 schools. Funds made a difference locally, nationally and around the world in Brazil, Kenya, Gambia, the Philippines, Tanzania, Nigeria and Ecuador.



In spring several high schools hold Box Lunch Auctions, where home room classes and staff create themed meals that are sold to the highest bidder. The Holy Cross event has raised more than \$25,000 for charity in one day.

Sometimes drawing on the walls is a good thing

There's boats, airplanes, butterflies and more. These themes are featured in hand-painted murals that students – largely from **Georges Vanier Catholic Elementary School** – have created throughout the Pediatric Outpatient Department at Royal University Hospital. The newly opened Gerard Ducasse Children's Art Gallery in the ward also features work from Georges Vanier students.



Transforming the World

Celebrating changes... helping their community

The "Ya Ya Sisterhood" - a group for Grade 7 and 8 girls at **St. Luke School** - wrote, edited, produced and marketed a book of stories, poems, reflections and artwork entitled Celebrate Changes: Girls Voices Matter. Because the girls participated in numerous fund-raisers to help cover production costs for the book, the approximately \$14,000 they earned in sales from the book was donated to the C95 Radio Marathon for Breast Cancer Research.

Students at St. Joseph High School prepare to STAND UP Against Poverty.



STAND UP Against Poverty

Hundreds of students from **St. Joseph High School** gathered on October 17, 2008, joining millions worldwide to STAND UP Against Poverty as a representation of their commitment to fight global poverty.

St. Volodymyr top fundraiser for Heart and Stroke Foundation

St. Volodymyr raised nearly \$13,419 in 2008 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. That made it the top school in northern and central Saskatchewan and among the top five provincially – out of 150 schools that participated in the Jump Rope for heart campaign.



Celebrating Excellence

"We Still Have a Dream"

Inspired by Jesus' words – love your neighbour as yourself – a half-dozen Grade 7 students at **St. Angela Elementary School** produced a video about standing up against racism. It won the following awards:

1ST PLACE

Kaleidoscope Real World National Video Challenge

1ST PLACE

Young Filmmakers Competition - Flicks International Film Festival

2009

City of Saskatoon Living in Harmony Award

Innovation and Excellence

The **St. Mary's Wellness and Education Centre** (St. Mary Community School) won the 2008 Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence. St. Mary's, located in Saskatoon's Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, takes a holistic approach to education – focusing on each child's spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual development in partnership with parents, caregivers and the wider community. There has been a pediatrics clinic on site since 2007. Children also participate in an agility program several times a week – doing workouts based on those done by high-performance athletes.



The St. Mary's Wellness and Education Centre (St. Mary Community School) won the 2008 Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence.

Celebrating Excellence



Allison Forseille won the national 2009 Canada Day Poster Challenge. Photo courtesy of Kevin Hogarth.

Champions of Children

The Saskatoon Preschool Foundation annually recognizes "Champions of Children" who make a positive difference in the lives of our children. In 2009, the following people from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools were recognized by the preschool foundation:

- Gary Johns**
Head Caretaker, St. George Elementary School
- Bonnie Mihalicz**
Consultant
- Cathy Sieben**
Facilitator, Family Support Centres
- Patti Tastad**
Teacher, St. Volodymyr Elementary School
- Laura Kuzub-Tremblay**
Teacher, Cardinal Leger Elementary School
- Gerard Woloschuk**
Head Caretaker, St. Gerard Elementary School
- Pope John Paul II Elementary School Staff**

Exemplary use of technology in education

Teacher **Reg Nakoneshny** was one of a handful of educators worldwide whose work received the Blackboard Exemplary Course designation in 2009.

Reg, a teacher at E. D. Feehan Catholic High School, developed the Communication Production Technology 20 course, which is delivered online. It helps students hone their skills in video, audio and multi-media.

Blackboard is a software company specializing in teaching and learning online.

With Glowing Hearts

Allison Forseille, a Grade 10 student at Bethlehem Catholic High School, won the national 2009 Canada Day Poster Challenge and a trip to the 2010 Winter Olympics. The contest theme was "With Glowing Hearts."

A lifetime of music education

Music and band teacher **Gary Evjen** received an honorary life membership with the Saskatchewan Music Educators Association upon his retirement from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. This distinction is reserved for those who have made a significant contribution to music education in Saskatchewan.

Living in Harmony

Several Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools students won 2009 Living in Harmony art and literary awards, which are presented by the City of Saskatoon. A picture created by **Bashir Abdul Qayum** of St. Luke School was the used for the Living in Harmony poster.

Giving back through sport

Jacqueline Lavallee, a teacher at Oskayak High School, won the 2008 National Aboriginal Coaching Award. She is currently assistant coach of the University of Saskatchewan Huskie Women's basketball team. Lavallee, who is Métis, also coaches in the community and has developed a health and wellness program at Oskayak.

Aboriginal leadership award

Tara Desroches, a Grade 12 Métis student from E. D. Feehan Catholic High School, won the 2009 SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Leadership Award and a \$20,000 Millennium Scholarship. The scholarship acknowledged Desroches' excellent academic standing and her involvement in her school and community. She was on her school's student representative council and participated in jazz band, the multicultural club, student newspaper, yearbook and Youth Action Circle. She also volunteered to work with children with disabilities and participated in the Whispering Winds Dance Troupe.

Using technology to keep students engaged

The Crooked Crazy Weather Project incorporates many facets of technology to help Grade 4 students learn about predicting the weather. The course, submitted by **Kelli Boklaschuk** of the Saskatoon Catholic Cyber School, was highly commended in 2009 by The International Society for Technology in Education.



Leadership award winner Tara Desroches with her father Jim at the 2009 SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Awards. Photo courtesy of Eagle Feather News.



Celebrating Excellence

Reaching their full potential

In 2009, 44 students from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools were admitted to the University of Saskatchewan's Greystone Scholars Society – which accepts students who achieve an average of 95 per cent or higher in Grade 11.

Accepting the challenge

The Advanced Placement (AP) program allows motivated and academically talented students to take university-level classes and receive credit for them before they become full-fledged university students. In 2009 149 students in our division wrote AP exams. Three students – **Joseph Eremondi, Paul Smith and Nicholas Wachniak** – received the Advanced Placement Scholar Award for above-average achievement on at least three AP exams.

Service... commitment... excellence

Superintendent of Education **Gordon Martell** received the University of Saskatchewan's 2008 Alumni Excellence in Aboriginal Initiatives Award. Martell, a member of the Waterhen Lake Cree First Nation, is a well-respected educator with a strong and passionate voice as an advocate for aboriginal learning.

Vision for the future

Tiffany Steeves, a Grade 10 student at E.D. Feehan Catholic High School, received a CIBC Youthvision scholarship, worth up to \$34,000. The scholarship combines financial support for post-secondary education with a summer internship program and ongoing mentoring.

Right: Gordon Martell received the University of Saskatchewan's 2008 Alumni Excellence in Aboriginal Initiatives Award.



Vision & Belief Statements

ROOTED IN FAITH

We see God in all things

Gospel Values: Love and Respect

A Catholic school is a community of faith, hope and love

Gospel Value: Community

Our faith is living and growing

Gospel value: Faith

Growing in Knowledge

We strive to have each student attain academic excellence, based on each one's God-given talents

Gospel Value: Hope

Students discover how their faith is part of learning and of life

Gospel Value: Courage

Our young people grow in freedom and responsibility

Gospel Value: Reconciliation

Reaching Out... to Transform the World

All are welcome, especially those most in need

Gospel Value: Justice

We reach out to transform our world

Gospel Value: Service





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