



ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you’re doing the impossible.”

St. Francis of Assisi

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT (January, 2010)

In February of 2009, St. Francis High School began a new strategic planning process. Among the factors that moved the school to articulate a new five year strategic plan were: a transition in school leadership, our participation in the “Continuous Improvement Program” with the AdvancED NCA CASI accreditation process, and the conclusion of the previous five year strategic plan.

Over the past decade St. Francis High School has enjoyed continuous growth and development. Enrollment has steadily increased from 592 to 772 students. This on-going growth in enrollment can be attributed to the positive experiences that students have enjoyed in the classroom and co-curricular activities that generate the awareness that St. Francis High School is a place where young people thrive. It is no coincidence that the progress and vitality of the school community has resulted from dreams, vision and planning of many devoted leaders among the Alumni, Board of Directors, Faculty, Staff and Parents.

The school facilities have grown with the addition of the Spyglass Athletic Center and the Ronald J. and Theresa A. Kuhn Cultural Arts Center in 2001. Significant renovations were made in the North Gym “Slant Dome”, the Ronald J. and Theresa A. Kuhn Music Room, the St. Clare Chapel and the Student Union (cafeteria). Additional transformations include the Business Office and Information Technology server room. Soon, a new west wing will house a state of the art Science Suite and Learning Resource Center. St. Francis High School stands poised to make the next significant move forward in its development as the “Catholic High School of Choice” in the Western Suburbs.

These new and improved facilities will provide teachers, moderators and coaches the opportunity to creatively enhance and improve programs for our students. These environments permit students to express their talents and parents and friends to appreciate the growth and maturity of their loved ones.

This current strategic planning exercise, begun several months ago, builds on the hard work and dedication of those who helped shape the high school through its previous planning processes in 2001 and 2004. These earlier efforts have contributed to the development and maturation of St. Francis High School. We stand today indebted to the vision and commitment of our predecessors.

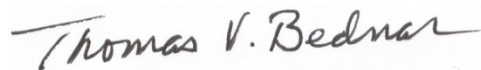
We sought to engage departments and committees early in the planning process and asked each to conduct its own SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) in order to develop its own vision of where our school could and should be in five years. These reports identified the goals contained in this final plan. The first draft of these major plans was presented to the Board of Directors for comments and feedback last fall. In its January, 2010 meeting, the Board of Directors approved this plan. This Executive Summary is available on the school’s website, www/sfhsnet.org.

The input and participation from a broad range of faculty and staff were key to the overall success of the effort. Many hours were dedicated to discussing and building consensus on future directions for departments. To everyone who participated in this planning process, I say thank you for the spirit of cooperation that marked our endeavor. In a special way, let me acknowledge the leadership provided by Ms. Raeann Huhn, Principal, Mr. Len Vokaty, Director of Finance and Operation and the Directors and Department Chairpersons within the school as well as the Chairpersons of the committees of the Board of Directors.

Inspired by our namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, we must continue to cultivate our culture which has been marked by determined and collaborative efforts. It will require the best in each of us—faculty, staff, student, alumni, parent and friend—to continue to build the distinguished learning community reflective of our greatest hopes. Annually, we will review our progress towards the achievement of the stated goals and make adjustments when it is in the best interests of our students. Our vision becomes reality by providing teachers the tools and opportunities to create a compelling learning environment that forms young women and men.

This Strategic Plan attempts to lay out the component elements necessary in the next five years for St. Francis High School to sustain the progress it has already achieved and to build on the momentum that is experienced constantly by those who engage in our mission, vision and philosophy. While it is assuring to know that our comparative reputation has continued to improve among suburban high schools, we are confident that a greater set of possibilities lies ahead of us.

May God continue to bless our St. Francis High School Community in our endeavors,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas V. Bednar". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Thomas V. Bednar

MISSION

St. Francis High School is a Catholic, college preparatory learning community that promotes spiritual, academic, physical and social development in the daily presence of Jesus Christ. (2010)

VISION

Develop students who are:

- faith-filled participants of the Church
- committed to Christian service
- critical thinkers
- effective and creative communicators
- persons of integrity
- physically fit and emotionally healthy
- respectful and accepting of others
- responsible citizens of the world
- self-directed, lifelong learners (2010)

PHILOSOPHY

Rooted in the Roman Catholic tradition and the charisms of St. Francis of Assisi, the people of the St. Francis High School Community seek to live as disciples of Jesus Christ through the cultivation of our faith by loving God and serving others.

St. Francis High School advances the educational ministry of the Roman Catholic Church. We are faithful to Christ, and the spiritual teachers who represent Him on earth, the Pope and the Bishops.

St. Francis High School exists to promote the values of the Gospel of Christ, each member of the faculty and staff has a responsibility to foster a disciplined, caring, and Christ-filled environment.

St. Francis High School partners with parents in the promotion of the spiritual, academic, physical and social development of each student entrusted to the school.

St. Francis High School strives to assist each student to achieve his or her spiritual, intellectual, and social potential.

St. Francis High School welcomes all regardless of their race, gender, religious affiliation, physical disability, national or ethnic origin. (2010)

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY

The Business & Technology Department is dedicated to the education of the complete individual. A core of electives provides students with opportunities to pursue college preparation, career interests and life-long living skills. This department creates an environment in which students develop abilities to analyze, compare, evaluate, problem solve, and respect the opinion of others. Through specialized instruction in preparing students for careers, through fundamental instruction to help students as consumers, workers and citizens, through preparation of students for college, and continually updating technology standards, the Business Department prepares students to find proper roles in life.

- To utilize upper class students (via their study hall) as classroom aides in predetermined technology courses. (2010)
- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)
- To utilize more real world applications. (2010-2015)
- To increase enrollment in Business and Technology classes. (2010-2015)

ENGLISH

The English Department offers two levels of English: standard English and honors English. Emphasizing book reading and expository writing, teachers at both levels prepare students to succeed in any college course requiring interpretive and composition skills. Honors English, a four year sequence, also prepares students to write the College Board's Advanced Placement examination in literature and composition. In honors English, students read more books, more difficult books, and write essays that demand the part-whole analysis typically required on Advanced Placement essay questions.

- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)
- To improve our students' ability to have novels on the day needed. (2010-2015)
- To improve intradepartmental communication. (2010-2015)

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The Foreign Language curriculum affords students the opportunity to begin or continue their study of Spanish and/or French. In accordance with the National Foreign Language Standards, the curriculum is designed to foster communication in the target language, to stress knowledge of the target culture, to encourage connections with other disciplines, to make comparisons between the target language and culture and their own, and finally, to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world.

Because communication is at the core of the Foreign Language curriculum, students must be encouraged to speak. In order to improve comprehension and verbal skills, students have the opportunity to work in an interactive language laboratory. Students have further opportunity to

perfect speaking skills and to gain cultural awareness during activities which simulate reality, use realia, and utilize audio-visual aids. The Foreign Language teachers ultimately gauge student progress by means of traditional as well as performance based assessment.

Finally, the curriculum is enhanced by trips to France and Spain, field trips, and varied classroom projects. By learning a foreign language, it is believed that students will nurture the critical thinking skills necessary to become life-long learners.

- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)
- To continue collaboration of teaching methodologies, new technologies and curriculum development. (2010-2015)
- To smoothly integrate Tell-Me-More into current curriculum. (2010-2015)
- To possibly offer a third language that would allow us to better serve our students in an ever globally growing market. (2011-2012)

MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics Department is committed to teaching mathematics not only for its own intrinsic value, but also as a valuable tool to develop our students' ability to think analytically and creatively, thus improving their problem solving skills. The curriculum provides opportunities for our students to practice logical thinking, organization, communication, and technology skills. The Mathematics Department is committed to providing a challenging and rewarding college preparatory program that empowers all students to realize their mathematical potential and to appreciate the value of mathematics.

- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)
- To refine the curriculum to assist students in mastering basic skills in Algebra I. (2010-2011)
- To refine the curriculum to assist students in mastering basic skills in Geometry. (2011-2012)
- To refine the curriculum to assist students in mastering basic skills in Algebra II. (2012-2013)
- To refine the curriculum to reinforce the basic skills learned in preceding math classes. (2013-2014)

PERFORMING AND FINE ARTS

The Performing and Fine Arts Department offers classes in four areas: art, drama, instrumental and vocal music. Students enrolled in the performing and fine arts often become involved in the school plays, concerts, musicals, and art exhibitions. Through this involvement, students bolster their self-esteem and learn self-discipline. Research shows that studying performing and fine arts increases academic success and achievement in today's evolving world.

- To increase enrollment in the Performing & Fine Arts Department classes. (2010-2012)
- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)

- To increase public awareness of the Performing & Fine Arts. (2010-2015)
- To assess Performing & Fine Art facilities (Kuhn Cultural Arts Center, Music Room, and Art Room). (2010-2015)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

The Physical Education and Health Department requires five semesters of classes. This requirement is met by one semester of physical education each year and a one-semester Health course required during the sophomore year. This required curriculum enhances the students' skills and knowledge in physical, mental, and social activities with an emphasis on fitness. It also enriches their background and develops their appreciation for the social and physical aspects of a variety of activities in their environment. Through both health and physical education classes, students develop lifetime activities to maintain a physically fit and emotionally healthy lifestyle.

- To implement specific weight training lifts to four-year curriculum. (2010-2011)
- To design and implement a Fitness Newsletter. 2010-2011)
- To evaluate Fitness Center Usage and Availability. 2010-2015)
- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)
- To evaluate equipment. (2011-2015)
- To determine the possibility of adding CPR to the Health curriculum. (2014-2015)

RELIGION

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we in the St. Francis Religion Department are called to continue His mission in the Church by proclaiming the Gospel to our students. Rooted in the Roman Catholic tradition and the charism of St. Francis of Assisi, the department seeks to make the kingdom of God present through the intellectual and spiritual cultivation of faith among our students. Through the study of theology and the religious traditions of the Catholic faith, our students should leave our faith community at St. Francis: knowing who they are as a Catholic women and men; prepared to bear witness to their faith; eager to continue their pursuit of truth and justice; and desiring to serve those in need. As religion teachers, we hope to evangelize our students with the Gospel in order to send them forth as disciples of Jesus Christ into the world.

- To continue to develop strengths as teachers and work together as a team. (2010-2015)
- To articulate our vision of the Religion Department Curriculum. (2010-2012)
- To analyze the departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)
- To increase student exposure to diverse backgrounds and experiences. (2010-2015)

SCIENCE

The Science Department curriculum affords students the opportunity to gain knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of scientific concepts. The sequence of courses develop the concepts of physical, chemical, and biological laws from the more simple to the more complex by incorporating a variety of instructional methods and laboratory experiences. An emphasis is

placed on implementing analytical skills of scientific study and measurement, while exhibiting the ability to problem solve and integrate technology in both scientific research and lab-based activities.

- To become aware of the role and responsibility of the scientific community in the solutions to global problems. (2010-2012)
- To develop an aptitude in a variety of measurement tools and methods to obtain, record, and process quantitative data. (2010-2015)
- To effectively utilize technology, such as computers and scientific equipment, for research, learning, and direct investigation of experimental analysis. (2010-2013)
- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)
- To relocate to the new science wing. (2011-2012)

SOCIAL STUDIES

The courses included in the Social Studies Department are designed to not only teach course content but also to encourage students to make comparisons of past events and current situations and to explore human behavior. The development of responsible decision making through an understanding of major themes, event and schools of thought within the Social Sciences is encouraged.

- To departmentally raise awareness of a social cause. (2010-2015)
- To utilize guest speakers, field trips and other community events. (2010-2015)
- To analyze departmental curriculum. (2010-2014)

STUDENT & SUPPORT SERVICES

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The Guidance and Counseling Department works with parents and faculty to help them understand the socio-emotional needs of St. Francis High School students. The counselors assist students, parents, and teachers in fostering the students' academic success, and achievement of long term goals for education and careers. Counselors are directly involved in student course selection, academic advising, standardized testing, career counseling, and college planning.

The Guidance and Counseling Department offers a number of group counseling programs that assist students dealing with issues of personal adjustment, stress management, peer relationships, family conflict, loss and grief, female empowerment, school transfers and other life changes.

Counselors also consult and work with outside counselors, psychologists, and therapists who are providing services to our students.

- To utilize technology to improve delivery of services. (2010-2015)
- To use the Administrative Assistant to improve efficiency in delivery of services. (2010-2015)
- To expand the use of the Naviance Family Connection program so that it becomes an academic, career, and college planning tool that parents and students can use for all four years, freshman through senior year. (2010-2015)
- To continue to meet the mental health needs of students through its group counseling program. 2010-2015)
- To continue to meet the academic needs of its students through its attention to special needs and students with learning problems. (2010-2015)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology Department supports the academic environment of St. Francis High School through the use of Audio-Visual and Computer technologies. The focus of technology is two-fold—to assist faculty with their curriculum content and delivery; second—to assist students with their assignments and projects through the use of technology. Students also gain familiarity and experience with hardware and software technologies used by business and universities. Students have access to high speed Internet Access, three networked computer labs, mobile laptop-projector carts, and audio-visual equipment.

- To continue to integrate segregated databases into integrated databases, where feasible, and improve access to databases. (2010-2011)
- To research, evaluate, and implement, when feasible, wireless networking and 1-to-1 computing initiatives. (2010-2015)
- To research, evaluate, and implement, when feasible, additional Information Technology infrastructure initiatives including, but not limited to: Security Camera system, Key Card Access system, and Distributed Video system. (2010-2015)

LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) supports the mission and curriculum of the school by teaching students to develop up-to-date research skills, core knowledge investigative methods and by providing current and interesting recreational reading opportunities, in an attractive and purposeful setting. The goal of the LRC collection is to provide students with the current suggested library standard of 20 titles per student, while being supported by an on-line catalog and over 20 online subscription databases. All on-line resources may be accessed 24 hours a day from either school or home through the LRC's web page, (www.sfhsnet.org/top/academics/acad-library). The St. Francis High School LRC is a member of the DuPage Library System which supports the development of library services and collaboration, while assisting in meeting statewide standards through training, consulting, resource sharing and advocacy.

- To provide students and teachers with quality service during construction. (2010-2011)
- To prepare for new Learning Resource Center space. (2010-2011)
- To relocate to the new Learning Resource Center. (2011-2012)
- To continue to improve print and Information Literacy curriculum. (2012-2013)
- To improve articulation with curricular departments. (2012-2014)
- To ensure the library is utilized to its maximum potential. (2014-2015)

PASTORAL MINISTRY

Pastoral Ministry seeks to build and maintain a distinctive Christian culture within our community by providing opportunities for service to others, action for justice and peace, liturgy, prayer, retreats, and personal formation. Within these opportunities, we work to equip the members of our community with the skills and abilities they need to lead and minister as Christians in the world.

- To utilize teacher/parent leaders to assist with specific service opportunities. (2010-2011)
- To strengthen Liturgy participation within community. (2010-2011)
- To formalize Adult Leadership Team for Pastoral Ministry. (2010-2011)
- To develop retreat follow-up formation. (2010-2011)
- To provide opportunities for Adult Formation. (2010-2014)
- To increase opportunities for Community Formation. (2011-2015)

WELLNESS OFFICE

The mission of the Wellness Office is to advance the well-being, academic success and life-long achievement of the students. The nurse in cooperation with the Athletic Trainer will promote and foster good health by providing emergency care, health information and instruction, preventative services, early identification of health problems, interventions and referrals.

There is a recognized relationship between health and learning whereas it is the role of the Wellness Office to also provide adaptations for students with special needs, to assist with the

development and evaluation of school health policies and programs, and also to be a liaison between school personnel, family, and health care professionals.

- To advance the well being of students by promoting and fostering good health. (2010-2011)
- To include oversight of Wellness Office (both RN and ATC) by a (physician) medical director. (2010-2011)
- To provide for health information via the nurse and athletic trainer website. (2010-2012)
- To promote and implement healthy habits for faculty/staff. (2010-2013)
- To provide health information and instruction for students. (2010-2015)

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULAR

- To assure textbooks are current and appropriate to meet curricular standards. (2010-2012)
- To provide opportunities for parent education. (2010-2013)
- To research, learn and integrate appropriate technology and methodologies. (2010-2015)
- To support faculty and staff professional growth. (2010-2015)
- To articulate with various levels of education. (2010-2015)
- To increase community awareness of St. Francis High School. (2010-2015)
- To continue a Catholic, family atmosphere amongst faculty and staff. (2010-2015)

CO-CURRICULAR

ATHLETICS

The St. Francis High School Athletic Department's primary commitment is to provide an opportunity for student-athletes to achieve their maximum potential both athletically and academically. The goal of the department is to provide an educational environment which fosters teamwork, collaboration, discipline, respect, personal responsibility, and sportsmanship. The priority for the department is to help student-athletes reach their academic, athletic, and personal potential through their overall curricular and co-curricular experiences at St. Francis High School.

- To investigate acquiring additional athletic facilities. (2010-2011)
- To implement a communication plan for athletics. (2010-2012)
- To attempt to increase stability of coaching staffs by improving retention. (2010-2014)
- To increase Athletic Camp figures to maximum capacity. (2010-2015)

ACTIVITIES

St. Francis High School offers an array of co-curricular activities that encourage students to realize and share their gifts and talents. Our clubs and organizations allow our students to develop communication, leadership and interpersonal skills that prepare them for success beyond their time at St. Francis High School. The goal is to create a student body that actively participates in clubs and organizations in order to expand their knowledge and experiences outside the day-to-day classroom.

- To better communicate co-curricular activity offerings to the student body. (2010-2011)
- To establish more effective parental communication. (2010-2015)
- To gauge membership retention, efficiency, and feasibility of all clubs and activities. (2010-2015)

FUNCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

DEVELOPMENT

The Development Department works to develop understanding and support among the various constituencies of the St. Francis High School community in order to secure the resources required to fulfill our educational mission. We provide integrated marketing communications to support the goal of achieving recognition as the "Catholic school of choice" of the western suburbs.

The Development Department strives to achieve these goals through a rigorous fund development, stewardship, and alumni and parent relations program as well as the implementation of a school wide marketing communications program focusing on consistent messages and identity, recruiting, public relations, publications, advertising, and web on-line communication.

- To increase yearly the Annual Fund income by 6.5%. (2010-2015)
- To cultivate an active and contributing Alumni Association. (2010-2015)
- To foster a culture of philanthropy among students resulting in contributing alumni. (2010-2015)
- To enhance the fundraising effectiveness of the Board of Directors. (2010-2015)
- To launch a new Capital Campaign. (2012-2014)
- To build the Endowment Fund through Planned Giving Program. (2010-2015)
- To increase public awareness of the school and Development Department. (2010-2015)

FACILITIES

The facilities function is committed to ensure that the buildings and grounds are maintained for a quality curricular and co-curricular environment for the faculty, staff and students of the St. Francis High School community. Key deliverables include execution of the daily/monthly/annual maintenance program; fleet management; life/safety issues; capital enhancements.

- To develop an annual Facility Maintenance Program for the entire campus. (2010-2015)
- To address life/safety needs of the campus. 2010-2015)
- To review and update the Campus Master Plan. (2010-2015)
- To review and assess capital equipment requirements in the performance of campus maintenance. (2010-2015)

FINANCE

The finance function is committed to build upon and instill a robust, sound and professional infrastructure for St. Francis High School. Key deliverables include: effective accounting; management reporting information based upon comprehensive internal controls and procedures; banking relations; accounts payable processing; payroll processing; benefit administration; Board of Directors interface.

- To obtain long term tax exempt bond financing for the current debt and additional debt related to the West Wing. (2010-2011)
- To ensure that the faculty and staff total compensation is competitive with our identified peer group. (2010-2013)
- To develop alternatives for affordable tuition. (2010-2015)
- To review all service related contracts. (2010-2015)
- To compile documentation detailing policies and procedures within the Business Office. (2010-2015)
- To ensure that the Business Office delivers the required functional support. (2010-2015)

RECRUITING

The Recruiting Office promotes, facilitates and coordinates efforts which positively reflect the image of the school to prospective students and their families in order to attract bright and well-rounded students to St. Francis High School. This is accomplished by the recruiter organizing efforts such as mailings, open houses, shadow days and coffees, where students, parents, faculty, staff and alumni all participate in the effort.

- To continue and enhance visits to grade schools, Open Houses, Parent Coffees and Shadow Days. (2010-2015)
- To provide additional opportunities to attract students interested in Co-Curricular activities specifically Athletics and the Performing Arts. (2010-2015)
- To increase the number of public school students who take the St. Francis entrance exam. (2010-2015)
- To strengthen the presence of St. Francis High School in St. Charles, Geneva, Batavia and Naperville. (2010-2015)
- To strengthen marketing to communicate our identity to prospective families and community members. (2010-2015)