

NATIONAL STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS  
FOR EFFECTIVE CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

STANDARD 1

**An excellent Catholic school is guided and driven by a clearly communicated mission that embraces a Catholic Identity rooted in Gospel values, centered on the Eucharist, and committed to faith formation, academic excellence and service.**

STANDARD 2

**An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides a rigorous academic program for religious studies and catechesis in the Catholic faith, set within a total academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture and life.**

BENCHMARKS:

- ✓ 2.1-Religious education curriculum and instruction meets the religious education requirements and standards of the (arch)diocese.
- ✓ 2.3-Faculty who teach religion meet (arch)diocesan requirements for academic and catechetical preparation and certification to provide effective religion curriculum and instruction.

STANDARD 3

**An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities outside the classroom for student faith formation, participation in liturgical and communal prayer, and action in service of social justice.**

STANDARD 4

**An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities for adult faith formation and action in service of social justice.**

BENCHMARKS:

- ✓ 4.1-The leader/leadership team provided retreats and other spiritual experiences for the faculty and staff on a regular and timely basis.
- ✓ 4.2-The leader/leadership team and faculty assist parents/guardians in their role as the primary educators of their children in faith.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 4.5-Every administrator, faculty, and staff member visibly supports the faith life of the school community.

STANDARD 5

**An excellent Catholic school has a governing body (person or persons) which recognizes and respects the role(s) of the appropriate and legitimate authorities, and exercises responsible decision making (authoritative, consultative, advisory) in collaboration with the leadership team for development and oversight of the school's fidelity to mission, academic excellence, and operational vitality.**

STANDARD 6

**An excellent Catholic school has a qualified leader/leadership team empowered by the governing body to realize and implement the school's mission and vision.**

BENCHMARKS:

- ✓ 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.

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STANDARD 7

**An excellent Catholic school has clearly articulated, rigorous curriculum aligned with relevant standards, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and Gospel values, implemented through effective instruction.**

BENCHMARKS:

- ✓ 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.

STANDARD 8

**An excellent Catholic school uses school-wide assessment methods and practices to document student learning and program effectiveness, to make student performances transparent, and to inform the continuous review of curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices.**

STANDARD 9

**An excellent Catholic school provides programs and services aligned with the mission to enrich the academic program and support the development of student and family life.**

BENCHMARKS:

- ✓ 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.

STANDARD 10

**An excellent Catholic school provides a feasible three to five year financial plan that includes both current and projected budgets and is the result of a collaborative process, emphasizing the faithful stewardship.**

STANDARD 11

**An excellent Catholic school operates in accord with published human/resource/personnel policies, developed in compliance with (arch)diocesan policies and/or religious congregation sponsorship policies, which affect all staff (clergy, religious women and men, laity and volunteers) and provide clarity for responsibilities, expectations and accountability.**

STANDARD 12

**An excellent Catholic school develops and maintains a facilities, equipment and technology management plan designed to continuously support the implementation of the educational mission of the school.**

STANDARD 13

**An excellent Catholic school enacts a comprehensive plan for institutional advancement based on a compelling mission through communications, marketing, enrollment management, and development.**

*Source: Catholic School Standards Project-March 2012*