

# Texas Catholic Conference Education Department

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SELF STUDY

For schools being visited during the 7-year cycle beginning with the 2012-2013 Academic Year

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC SCHOOL		
<i>Legal Name of School</i>		
ELAINE SCHAD		
<i>Principal Name</i>		
2301 NORTH BONNIE BRAE STREET		
<i>Street Address</i>		
DENTON	TX	76207
<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip Code</i>
<i>Mailing Address (if different)</i>		
940-381-1155	940-381-1837	
<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Fax</i>	
FORT WORTH		
<i>(Arch)Diocese</i>		
<i>Date Submitted</i>		
<i>Signature of Authorized Person Submitting Report</i>		

One (1) copy of the self study should be given to the (arch)diocesan superintendent, the chair person and team members. Two (2) copies of the self study, as well as two (2) copies of the school's strategic/long range plan should be sent to the TCCED office.

**Director of Education**  
**Texas Catholic Conference**  
**PO Box 13285 ▪ Austin, Texas 78711-3285**  
**Phone: (512) 339-8416**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>SECTION-PAGE NUMBER</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>METHODS OF RESPONSE .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>3-5</b>
<b>STATISTICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA .....</b>	<b>6-10</b>
<b>DOMAIN I: Mission, Philosophy and Vision.....</b>	<b>11-21</b>
<b>DOMAIN II: Community .....</b>	<b>22-34</b>
<b>DOMAIN III: Governance, Administration and Management.....</b>	<b>34-46</b>
<b>DOMAIN IV: Personnel</b>	
<b>Part A: Administration.....</b>	<b>47-57</b>
<b>Part B: Faculty and Staff .....</b>	<b>58-69</b>
<b>DOMAIN V: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.....</b>	<b>70-89</b>
<b>DOMAIN VI: Student Services, Resources and Activities .....</b>	<b>90-99</b>
<b>DOMAIN VII: Plant and Facilities.....</b>	<b>100-108</b>
<b>CUMULATIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>109</b>

This is the official document of the  
**Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission**  
to be used for the accreditation of Catholic schools.

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for 7-year cycle beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>SECTION-PAGE NUMBER</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>METHODS OF RESPONSE .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>3-5</b>
<b>STATISTICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA .....</b>	<b>6-10</b>
<b>DOMAIN I: Mission, Philosophy and Vision .....</b>	<b>11-21</b>
<b>DOMAIN II: Community .....</b>	<b>22-34</b>
<b>DOMAIN III: Governance, Administration and Management.....</b>	<b>34-46</b>
<b>DOMAIN IV: Personnel</b>	
<b>Part A: Administration.....</b>	<b>47-57</b>
<b>Part B: Faculty and Staff .....</b>	<b>58-69</b>
<b>DOMAIN V: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.....</b>	<b>70-89</b>
<b>DOMAIN VI: Student Services, Resources and Activities .....</b>	<b>90-99</b>
<b>DOMAIN VII: Plant and Facilities.....</b>	<b>100-108</b>
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## METHODS OF RESPONSE

In completing the Self Study, several types of responses will be used:

1. **Yes or No** – Questions in this category may be answered by a simple Yes or No answer. The response to a question is indicated by placing an X in the shaded box after the appropriate question. **Each “NO” response requires an explanation including a plan for future alignment in a comments section located at the end of the focus question section.**
2. **N/A** - Occasionally “N/A” will be offered as an opportunity to indicate that this item does not apply to this particular school.
3. **Checklist** – The response to a question is indicated by placing an X before each listed item as applicable.
4. **Descriptive Narrative** – In most sections, the school is asked to respond with a written commentary in a descriptive form. The narrative would be expected to address, but not be limited to, the question being asked. This provides the school an opportunity to expand and clarify all evaluative responses. Please look for a ►, this is where you are to begin writing the narrative portions.
5. **Supporting Data** – Within each domain a list of documents is included that can be found in most schools that would provide support to the response given in the self study. Not all documents listed will be found in every school. In most instances, this refers to items that are available for review by the visiting team. In some circumstances, copies may be provided to the visiting team in the work area where the visiting team will meet. In other circumstances, supporting data will be maintained in the proper filing places in the school.
6. **Domain Summary** – At the end of each domain an opportunity is given for the school community to record its view of its strengths, areas for growth, and a plan of action.
7. **Cumulative Summary** – At the end of the self study an opportunity is given for the school community to set future direction based on the areas needing improvement/strengthening that were identified in the action plan of the domain summaries.

**Please note – when placing the cursor in particular boxes, the cursor may be centered in the box. This is the formatting that has been set up, and will place the answer in the correct place.**

# **DEFINITIONS**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

The administrative structure of a school may be as simple as a principal in a small school with possibly some of the faculty acting as grade level/subject area coordinators, as well as teaching full time. It may be more complex in larger schools with principal, vice-principal, religion coordinator, grade level coordinators, etc. Some schools have a vice-principal with defined duties and others function only in the absence of the principal.

## **CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

Catholic identity is integral to every aspect of the Catholic school and is not just a separate component. Catholic identity is expressed in the daily experiences and interaction of students, faculty and administration. It permeates the spirit and climate of the Catholic school.

It is through daily prayer, prayer services, school liturgies, the sacraments, the integration of morals and values in academic studies, social interaction and service to others that the school expresses its Catholic identity and reflects Jesus' message of love. The school's mission statement, rooted in Gospel values, exemplifies the identity of the Catholic school.

## **COUNSELING**

Counseling is one aspect of guidance and is aimed at helping the student to make interpretations of facts relating to a choice, plan or adjustment, which he/she needs to make. Counseling assists the student in performing in one or more social roles to acquire a more adequate repertoire of coping behaviors.

## **CURRICULUM**

An evolving plan of sequential learning opportunities which enable a particular population to achieve goals by means of varied experiences with the integration of faith and values throughout the process.

## **CURRICULUM GUIDE**

A curriculum guide may be general or specific and can be a way of determining what to teach, how to teach it and in what way to teach material to diverse groups of students.

They may specify core concepts that must be taught, give suggested time periods that ought to be spent on each concept, and give specific recommendations on how to teach the concept.

The curriculum guide may be locally designed or may be developed at the (arch)diocesan level. It is also permissible to adopt/adapt a guide from another (arch)diocese depending on the local (arch)diocesan policy. The guide should include the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

## **FACULTY**

Faculty in this document refers to the professional personnel (i.e. teacher, administrator, counselor, nurse, librarian, specialized instructor, etc.).

## **GOALS**

A series of simple statements in broad terms stemming from the school's strategic plan and/or Accreditation Status Report recommendations clearly explaining what the school wants to accomplish.

## **GOSPEL VALUES**

Desirable or worthwhile qualities (i.e., faith, hope, love, community, reconciliation, service, justice, and courage) that are prominent in the teaching of Jesus and are rooted in the essential Gospel message of

Christ.

### **GOVERNING BODY**

The local or (arch)diocesan body which may be either advisory or limited jurisdiction, called a board, council, or commission.

### **GUIDANCE PROGRAM**

Lessons/activities conducted throughout all grade levels and taught separately or integrated into other curriculum areas. Content addressed by a classroom teacher or counselor would include the student's social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and emotional development.

### **LONG-RANGE/STRATEGIC PLAN**

Strategic planning is a management tool for organizing the present on the basis of the projections of the desired future. That is, a strategic plan is a road map to lead the school from where it is now to where it would like to be in five to ten years.

**Suggested Elements:** Action steps, persons responsible, timeline, resources, evaluation

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission statement should be brief and clear, describing the purpose of the school and its reason for existence, e.g.:

“To provide academic excellence in a Christian setting.”

“To form men for others.” (*Jesuit Prep*)

“To promote human rights throughout the world.” (*Amnesty International*)

“To teach the world choice theory.” (*Glasser*)

### **PHILOSOPHY**

A statement that expresses the beliefs and values that define the school.

The philosophy should be a short concise paragraph, e.g., “We believe that each child is uniquely created and loved by God, and therefore we are called to ...”.

### **COMBINED MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

It is acceptable for the mission and philosophy to be combined into one statement.

### **SOCIAL TEACHINGS**

The Church's social teaching comprises a body of doctrine, which is articulated as the Church interprets events in the course of history, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, in the light of the whole of what has been revealed by Jesus Christ. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2422*)

The themes of Catholic Social Teaching:

Life and Dignity of Human Persons, Call to Family, Community and Participation, Rights and Responsibilities, Option for the Poor and Vulnerable, The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers, Solidarity, Care for God's Creation.

### **STAFF**

Staff refers to all personnel employed by the school in a support role to the teachers and administration (i.e. secretary, maintenance, cafeteria, accountant/bookkeeper, bus driver, aide, etc.).

## **STEWARDSHIP**

“Stewardship is an expression of discipleship, with the power to change how we understand and live our lives. Jesus’ disciples and Christian stewards recognize God as the origin of life, giver of freedom, and source of all things. We are grateful for the gifts we have received and are eager to use them to show our love for God and for one another.”

Or

“A Christian steward is one that receives God’s gift gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.”

## **VISION**

“A picture or a dream of a desired future.” (*Glossary of Catholic Education Governance Terms*, by Timothy Dwyer, 2003.)

## STATISTICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

**School** Immaculate Conception Catholic School

**City** Denton **County** Denton

**Parish(es) (if name is different)** Interparochial School—Immaculate Conception and St. Mark Parishes

**Principal** Elaine Schad **Year appointed** 2000

**Pastor** Rev. D. Timothy Thompson **Year appointed** 2011

**Religious Community Representative** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year appointed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade Range:** PK3 to 8 **Before and/or After School Care Program:** Yes X No ☐

**Year in which school was established** 1995

### **STAFF AND STUDENT:**

**Current Total Enrollment** 230 **Catholic** 217 **Non-Catholic** 13

List enrollment totals for last five years:

<b>Year</b>	<u>2014</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2015</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2016</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2017</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2018</u>
<b>#</b>	<u>239</u>	<b>#</b>	<u>237</u>	<b>#</b>	<u>265</u>	<b>#</b>	<u>244</u>	<b>#</b>	<u>228</u>

Staff information:

<b>Total Professional Personnel</b>	<u>20</u>	<b>Catholic</b>	<u>19</u>	<b>Non-Catholic</b>	<u>1</u>
<b>Total Support Staff</b>	<u>10</u>	<b>Catholic</b>	<u>10</u>	<b>Non-Catholic</b>	<u>0</u>

Indicate percent of teacher attrition for last five years:

<b>Year</b>	<u>2014</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2015</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2016</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2017</u>	<b>Year</b>	<u>2018</u>
<b>%</b>	<u>&lt;1</u>	<b>%</b>	<u>&lt;1</u>	<b>%</b>	<u>1</u>	<b>%</b>	<u>&lt;1</u>	<b>%</b>	<u>0</u>

## STATISTICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

### **ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY:**

**How many students are Hispanic or Latino** 65



How many students are NOT Hispanic or Latino 165

### RACIAL/ETHNIC COMPOSITION:

Racial/Ethnic	(5 YEARS AGO)				(PRESENT YEAR)			
		Students		Professional Staff		Students		Professional Staff
American Indian/Native	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0
Alaskan	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0
Asian	%	3	%	<1	%	2	%	<1
Black	%	3	%	0	%	7	%	0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0
White	%	63	%	98	%	50	%	98
Two or More Races	%	9	%	0	%	12	%	0
Unknown	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0

### FISCAL DATA:

<b>Current Budget</b>	\$1,655,764.39	<b>Per Pupil Expenditure</b>	\$7,198.98
<b>Current Subsidy from: Parish</b>	\$12,000	(parish/interparish school)	
<b>(Arch)Diocese</b>	\$0	([arch]diocesan school)	
<b>Religious Community</b>	\$0	(private school)	

### Socio-economic Summary:

► Students enrolled at Immaculate Conception Catholic School come from Denton and surrounding areas. The population is diverse, ranging from professional and technical workers to farmers/ranchers and day laborers. A significant number of families whose children attend the school commute to jobs outside of Denton County. The two universities and a community college attract students from many racial/ethnic backgrounds, including foreign language exchange students. Denton County continues to experience rapid population growth, although demographic figures continue to be recalculated based on economic circumstances. Immaculate Conception Parish moved to a 20-acre campus in 2002 following the construction of a new school, church, and parish offices.

## STATISTICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

### DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

Give an explanation of any factors (*i.e. industry, finance, religious...*) that have impacted the school community within the last three years:

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School (ICCS) has grown in the number of cities that are served. Children are from various financial backgrounds. In our first two years the school could help only two children each year with one-half of their tuition. This year (2018-2019) Immaculate Conception School is providing \$141,350 in tuition assistance. Of that total, the school receives \$39,970 from diocesan and Stephen Breen Foundation assistance. In addition, \$37,324 is applied to tuition assistance from the school's endowment distribution with \$64,056 coming from local operating funds. During this school year 45 families out of the 141 families enrolled

in the school applied for financial assistance which is impacting 80 of the school's 230 children. The school utilizes the FACT Tuition Management System to determine need. The financial need as determined by FACT was set at \$227,281 for the current school year.

The city of Denton is the county seat of Denton County, Texas, in the United States. Its population was 128,421. The city ranks sixth in the state of Texas in population growth between 2010 and 2016. Geographically, Denton is situated 38 miles south of the Oklahoma–Texas border and 39 miles northwest of Dallas. Median income is \$50,487. The area is comprised of 59.9 percent Anglo, 23.4 percent Hispanic or Latino, 9.7 percent Black, 6 percent Asian, and the remainder of other ethnicities. 22.8% of the people in Denton, TX speak a non-English language, and 90.9% are U.S. citizens. The median age of Denton County residents is 28.5 with 19 percent of the population under the age of 17. 19.5% of the population for whom poverty status is determined in Denton, TX (22,945 out of 117,467 people) live below the poverty line, a number that is higher than the national average of 14%. Denton County is a more mobile county than average, with only 47 percent owning their homes which is significantly lower than the nationwide average of 63 percent. The predominant industries are construction, scientific and research, finance, food service, and education.

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/denton-tx/>.

The North Central Texas area is seeing large growth in the Hispanic population. In a 2009 study conducted by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth by Meitler Consultants, Inc., data showed that Hispanics will make up about 40 percent of the total population in Tarrant County by 2030. The percentage of Hispanic Catholics in the Diocese of Fort Worth in 2016 was near 60 percent. Of that total 22 percent are immigrant Hispanics in Spanish-speaking only households. Average Hispanic family size is 4.3 compared to 3.4 for non-Hispanic. In the Diocese of Fort Worth, median Hispanic household income is \$54,000 compared to \$86,000 for white households. Number of Hispanics/Latinos enrolled in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth from Kinder to 8<sup>th</sup> is 1,376 out of 4,252 enrolled. <https://vencuentro.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/1016-Fort-Worth-EN.pdf>

Immaculate Conception Parish data indicates about the parish is made up of approximately 50 percent Hispanic and 50 percent Anglo of its approximately 6000 registered families. A large percentage of Immaculate Conception parishioners are first-generation Spanish-speaking only Hispanics. While ICCS is an inter-parochial parish school, Immaculate Conception Parish is the lead parish. In spite of ongoing recruitment efforts, school enrollment has been impacted by the move of St. Mark Parish, which relocated to Argyle in southern Denton County in 2014. A third of ICCS students have historically come from St. Mark, but with the relocation, that total is closer to 23 percent. St. John Paul II Campus Parish is located on the University of North Texas campus. It provides a strong faith support system for students who have been promoted from ICCS and who eventually go on to college in Denton. ICCS students have gone on field trips to discover the campus community as part of their ICCS formation.

Denton County has shown clustered growth in master-planned communities, including Providence, Savannah, Paloma Creek and others. These are located in what is called the 380 Corridor, which is along U. S. Highway 380 and is a gateway to the larger and ever-expansive cities of McKinney and Frisco on the east, Argyle and Keller to the south, as well as the entire Dallas-Fort Worth greater Metropolitan area. Denton is a suburban community strategically located in terms of industry, education, housing, and agricultural growth. Transportation continues to be a challenge for many as mass transit is still trying to catch up with the demand from those who live in Denton County but work in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

The Immaculate Conception Catholic School community has been negatively impacted by numerous factors over the past three years--families moving due to job relocation, parent moving their entire families when a student is promoted from ICCS due to the lack of a nearby Catholic high school, the rise of charter schools, and the increased challenge of addressing the needs of English Language Learners and those with Special Needs. In addition, the school is threatened by the nationwide scandal in the Catholic Church (Nearly a third of Americans who were raised Catholic and left the Church have cited the clergy sex scandal as their reason for leaving, according to a 2016 report by the Public Religion Research Institute and according to other school choice research <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/ssqu.12361>), School enrollment data indicates trends that follow those nationwide. This includes the increase in requests for financial assistance from families that formerly had not been in need of such assistance as the gap between middle class income and tuition increases. There has been

a great deal of movement of school families who seek new jobs in the Metroplex and out of state. There is the lingering challenge of convincing families who are receiving financial assistance not to leave the school because they don't want to "be a burden" as they state, on the school since they are keenly aware of how hard it is for Catholic schools to remain viable financially.

The ICCS Advisory Council has been in consensus to keep tuition rates unchanged since 2014 as a means of attracting and retaining middle and low income families, where, in the majority of cases, both parents must be employed in order to make ends meet. The Council remained dedicated to paying just staff salaries by implementing a step salary scale and a bonus system based on available revenue stream. In spite of these measures the continued challenge of attracting families to a school that is tuition-based remains.

ICCS has worked with Sacred Heart High School in Muenster to run a bus to the high school, and this has been a good partnership. However, ICCS has lost several families to Sacred Heart as the first child is promoted and the entire family moves so all of the children can attend the same school. The same trend has been shown with other area high schools, including Faustina Academy in the Dallas Area, and Corinth Classical Academy, a large K-12 charter school in Denton County.

The rises of charter, online, private, and home schools, particularly in the North Texas area, have negatively impacted ICCS enrollment growth. There are approximately 12 charter schools in the immediate Denton County area that offer a "classical" curriculum with free tuition. Families have been drawn to these schools as Texas is second in the nation in the number of students in charter schools, estimated at 337,000 statewide.

[http://castro.tea.state.tx.us/charter\\_apps/production/map.html](http://castro.tea.state.tx.us/charter_apps/production/map.html)

The school continues to be impacted by the great demographic shift in the number of Hispanic Catholics that are moving into the Metroplex, including Denton County. This impact includes the challenge of being able to provide a Catholic education to every family that desires one while, on the same hand, being able to address increasing costs of operations and funding sources outside tuition when possible.

Denton County has great potential and will continue to be one of the fastest-growing regions in the United States. The challenge for Catholic schools nationwide, and for Immaculate Conception Catholic School specifically, is continuing to plan strategically while working with all stakeholders within the Catholic community, the greater Denton community, the diocese, and all other potential sources in order to find those ways to make Catholic education accessible, available, and affordable for those families who desire one.

Please give a brief history of the school highlighting major changes and events:

► **1995**--Immaculate Conception Catholic School is established as a member of the Fort Worth Diocesan Schools with an enrollment of 74 students in grades PreK-3 through second grade. Immaculate Conception Catholic School is an education ministry of Immaculate Conception Church (ICC) and Saint Mark Church (SMC). The school was located in the ICC Parish Center and Education Building.

**1996**-- PK3 is dropped and 3rd grade is added for an enrollment of 92 students. The school would continue to add one grade each year through 6th grade. A fenced playground with new equipment and soccer field is added. Computers are added to the classrooms.

**1997**-- PK3 is again added along with 4th grade for an enrollment of 111 students. Permission is granted by the Ft. Worth Diocese to become a PreK through 8th grade school. An anonymous benefactor purchases a two-room portable building to accommodate growth. Immaculate Conception School receives provisional accreditation from the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED).

**1998**-- The Immaculate Conception School Advisory Council begins the process to build a new school. There is still only one class per grade due to space constraints. Students come from Denton, Krum, Corinth, Argyle, Flower Mound, Gainesville, Krugerville, Valley View, Decatur, Sanger, Bartonville, Lewisville, Lake Dallas, Rhome, Highland Village, and Oak Point.

**1999**-- Building of a new school is in the developing stages. There is one class per grade, PK3 through 6th grade, and enrollment was 176 students. A computer lab is started.

**2000**-- There is still one class per grade, PK3 through 7th grade, and an enrollment of 202 students. Funding is

started for a science lab. A new school is getting closer to a reality.

**2001**—Ground is broken July 15, 2001, on the construction of a new Immaculate Conception Catholic School at 2301 North Bonnie Brae Street.

**2002**--Immaculate Conception Catholic School is granted full accreditation status in May 2002.

**2002**--Classes begin August 19, 2002, in the new facility located at 2301 North Bonnie Brae Street.

**2002**--The school promotes its first class of 15 eighth grade students in May 2002.

**2003**—The school gymnasium is used as a worship space as Immaculate Conception Parish transitioned to the new site with a new church beginning construction.

**2003**--Immaculate Conception Catholic School wins its first State Middle School Academic Championship of the Private School Interscholastic Association besting more than 100 schools in the state of Texas.

**2004**—The new Immaculate Conception Church is dedicated October 10, 2004, on the campus.

**2005**—Immaculate Conception Catholic School celebrates its Tenth Anniversary.

**2007**--The school files a successful Interim Accreditation Report in April 2007 and retains full accreditation as recognized by the State of Texas.

**2010**-- Immaculate Conception Catholic School celebrates its Fifteenth Anniversary.

**2012**—Immaculate Conception Catholic School retains full accreditation as recognized by the State of Texas.

**2015**-- Immaculate Conception Catholic School celebrates its Twentieth Anniversary.

**2015**—Immaculate Conception Catholic School wins the State Middle School Academic Championship of the Private School Interscholastic Association out of 108 schools in the state of Texas. The elementary placed second in state.

**2016**-- Immaculate Conception Catholic School creates, blesses, and installs a new permanent crest.

**2018**-- Immaculate Conception Catholic School receives the statewide institutional award from Keep Texas Beautiful recognizing the school's stewardship and environmental management of its resources.

**2018-2019**—Immaculate Conception Catholic School continues to serve families who desire a Catholic education as an inter-parochial ministry of Immaculate Conception and St. Mark parishes.

## DOMAIN I: MISSION, PHILOSOPHY AND VISION

**The Catholic school is a unique environment which has as its primary purpose the continued formation of the Christian person. The mission and beliefs of the school shall reflect the integration of Catholic faith and Gospel values.**

### **SUPPORTING DATA MAY INCLUDE:**

- Mission statement
- Philosophy Statement
- Vision Statement
- Statements above displayed (on bulletin boards, walls, etc.)
- Admissions and Recruiting Information
- Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook
- Faculty/Staff Handbook
- Strategic Plan
- Goals and objectives
- Other school publications (*e.g., Newsletters, Yearbook, etc.*)
- School Website
- 2009 Education Summit Documents

**FOCUS 1: The mission statement describes the purpose of the school, its reason for existence, and is rooted in Catholic faith and Gospel values.**

### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. State the school's mission statement.

**► *Immaculate Conception Catholic School exists to provide a Christ-centered academic environment designed to promote the total development of the child by serving the mission of the Roman Catholic Church through the educational process.***

B. Cite how the school's mission statement integrates Catholic faith and Gospel values.

**►** The mission statement focuses on providing a Christ-centered academic environment designed to promote the total development of the child. The Christ-centered focus is explicitly addressed in the phrase which states that the school is to provide resources which stimulate individual growth and integrity in consonance with Catholic-Christian ideals. It is emphasized again in the definition of environment which includes a unique environment in which students experience the presence and divine guidance of the Holy Spirit, where the environment stimulates and promotes a community of believers and learners in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Implicit within the focus of total development of the child are the five generally recognized areas of development: spiritual, physical, intellectual, creative, and emotional. Three of these areas are included in the definition of the focuses of spiritual/Christ-centered, intellectual/academic, and physical/environmental. The phrases stating that the child grows within a community of believers and learners addresses the child's social development. This social development is broad in scope and includes the school environment, Immaculate Conception and Saint Mark parishes, the diocese of Fort Worth, St. John Paul II Catholic Campus Parish, and the entire Catholic community. Additional resources related to the personal development of the child are provided to stimulate individual growth and integrity.

Our mission statement is rooted in our Roman Catholic faith which includes a daily walk through the Gospel message. The mission permeates the school environment from the moment anyone walks through the door of Our Lady's School. The Catholic Identity is evident through the many images of our faith as one enters the school which includes our school crest. Our Virtue of the Month program highlights our call to live the Gospel through virtue. The Morning Prayer reminds the students that we do all through Jesus and through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The prayer affirms our shepherd here on earth as we are reminded of the Holy Father's monthly intentions. Our mission moves forward through presentation of the four R's—Reverence, Respect, Responsibility, and Role Modeling. This is lived in every facet of school life, ranging from the images on our Facebook pages and website, to our classrooms of lively activity, to our bulletin boards and project displays.

**FOCUS 2: The philosophy of the school flows from the school's mission statement reflecting the integration of Catholic faith and Gospel values in everyday life.**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. State the school's philosophy statement.

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with the curriculum for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, that is enhanced by state and national standards, including the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools.

B. How are the school's policies and procedures consistent with the mission and philosophy of the school?

► Due to our call to Social Justice, students are considered for admission to Immaculate Conception Catholic School regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, or economic status. Immaculate Conception Catholic School is in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws governing non-discrimination in its employment and admission practices.

The admissions policy of Immaculate Conception Catholic School is designed to assist the student to be successful. An interview process, letters of recommendation, and testing, if deemed necessary, are all incorporated to determine the needs of the student and his or her eligibility for admission.

The Parent-Student Handbook, the Preschool Handbook, and the Athletic Handbook guide students and parents to understand their role as Partners in Catholic formation with the school staff, parish community, and the Catholic community at large. Included in the handbooks are extensive explanations of the parent's role in education, best practices on everything from arrival and dismissal to discipline within a Catholic environment.

The Faculty and Staff handbook is consistent with the mission and philosophy of the school including the introductory call "TO TEACH AS JESUS TAUGHT"—TEACHING THE WHOLE CHILD as it states that all Catholic academic programs center around the Catholic mission of teaching the whole child. The whole child can be defined as the following components: S-P-I-C-E... Spiritual, Physical, Intellectual, Creative, and Emotional. An evaluation of any program should involve each of these components. The handbook includes a lengthy segment on the Code of Ethics of the Catholic School Teacher. These include four benchmarks with extensive explanations of key components of the Code of Ethics including Commitment to the Student, Commitment to the Parents, Commitment to the Community, and Commitment to the Profession. The handbook is a ready guide for answering our Gospel Call to mission and philosophy through our daily interactions with those with whom we come into contact.

C. Does the school's philosophy address the Catholic identity of the school in terms of student development – spiritual, intellectual, personal, social, and physical? Describe.

► The philosophy statement of Immaculate Conception Catholic School stresses a Christ-centered, physical environment subsidized and encompassed within the larger local Catholic community, the Fort Worth Diocese, and the entire Catholic community.

This environment includes teachers and administrators who are committed to their Catholic faith and dedicated to sharing and passing on this faith. It is a community of believers in the spirit of Jesus Christ and results in students and teachers drawn to live the Gospel message, united in worship and responsive to the needs of the community. This includes fellowship and social justice as teachers and administrators serve others through the sharing of their spiritual gifts and temporal goods for the betterment of all.

There is a constant call to Servant Leadership on the part of all at the school, including students, staff, families, parish and community. There is a monthly call to help those in need on a school-wide basis, ranging from bringing food and toiletry items for the local food pantries and soup kitchen to accumulating items for Boxes of Joy to be sent to children in the poor countries of the Caribbean through Cross Catholic Outreach, to gathering items for Homeless Veterans, writing cards for shut-ins, participating in Immigrant and Homeless simulations in a partnership with Catholic Charities, and having a baby item collection for Loreto House, the local crisis pregnancy center.

The Catholic identity of the school is encompassed within a physical and social environment which stimulates and promotes a social community of spiritual believers and intellectual learners. There is the unique yet simple morning greeting to staff and visitors of “Good Morning, God Bless You!” There is the annual St. Francis of Assisi Pet Blessing where the community is drawn together to celebrate God’s creation of animals big and small. There is the Living Rosary when the school comes together to share each bead and decade within the context of the Catholic social environment that includes a visual physical object of a massive rosary.

The Catholic identity of the school is celebrated through the daily Angelus at noon, through the opening and closing prayer within each class of the Upper School, and with the Prayer for Vocations throughout the day in each classroom. The Catholic identity of the school is exhibited through the public and team prayers of the students and coaches prior to and after athletic contests. The athletic program is based on daily virtues exemplified through the physical athletic development of our bodies as Temples of the Holy Spirit. The school’s Christmas Program is a magnificent tribute to the Savior of the World who came into our lives as a little baby. The students share the weekly liturgy of the Eucharist together with classes rotating in attending weekly chapel Masses. School students and staff have the regular opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There are Advent Programs, Living Stations of the Cross, gathering for the recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, as just a few of the many opportunities of celebrating our Catholic Identity on a daily basis.

The student intellectual development includes an excellent, well-rounded program of instruction that stretches the critical thinking skills of the students while allowing each student to thrive in an environment so that they can seek and reach their potential. ICCS is dedicated to meeting the needs of each student through a well-developed system of identification of learning differences and utilizing varied teaching strategies which leads to best practices for success. A well-defined system of identification of students with special needs is in place with assistance and partnership of the Denton Independent School District which provides strong diagnostic support as needed. The school also has partnerships with other school districts which assist in providing materials based on federal funding formulas.

There is a constant reminder that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God. Whether it’s highlighting students who have achieved summer reading goals or those who have achieved state or national Duke Scholar recognition, each student is reminded that they have unique gifts to people up through the power of prayer, through a kind word, or simply with a smile.

Students are encouraged to maintain good physical and mental health. There are opportunities for the students to speak with our Dean of Student Services who has a counseling background with referrals as needed to the parish priests or professional counseling services. Students are encouraged to maintain safety awareness through a

variety of programs which include fire safety drills, lock-down, tornado, earthquake, lock-lights-out of sight through the school's Standard Response Protocol program.

In conclusion, the teachers and administrators in this environment are committed to their Catholic faith and constantly assist in addressing the intellectual and spiritual development of their students. The Catholic identity promotes Catholic-Christian ideals which stimulates individual and personal growth and integrity. It flows from the support of the local parishes and aids the spiritual, personal, and social development of the students.  
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D. How do the school's mission and philosophy drive programming decisions? Provide specific recent examples.

► All programming decisions are done through the lens of faith. The over-riding force that drives all decisions is the development of the total person who is formed in the Catholic faith so the child can make a difference in the present and in the future. A specific example is the school's decision to become a part of National Beta Club and to defer from participation in the National Junior Honor Society. While the school was utilizing good stewardship due to the rising dues of NJHS, the overriding decision was the greater emphasis on service and character brought by Beta. Beta's purpose is "to promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, leadership and service among elementary and secondary school students." The decision has reaped great dividends as our eighth graders take pride in everything from the initiation ceremony, to officer selection, to project coordination, to implementation.

The school's field trips are held to the standards of our mission and philosophy which include real-life experiences and those that relate to faith. There are many examples, including field trips to the University of Dallas and Cistercian Abbey for our eighth grade students. This reinforces our Catholic mission of reaching into the future with our Catholic faith through experience with Catholic university life. The eighth grade curriculum includes the study of monasteries, so the programming decision is to reach out to a real-life monastery so students can get a glimpse of the life from those who actually live it. Fourth graders experience a historic One-Room School House where they are able to go back in time to those days of struggle when everything wasn't at our fingertips. This programming decision bridges the reminder that our lives following Christ isn't expected to be easy as we all continue the journey to Jerusalem through Calvary.

In summary, the goal of our programming decisions is to provide real-life experiences whenever possible to reinforce the mission and philosophy of the school in order to give students strong tools so they can make a difference in the world through their continued faith walk now and when they leave ICCS.

E. How do the school's mission and philosophy guide the teaching and learning process?

► Our school's mission and philosophy guide the teaching and learning process on a daily basis so that "students and teachers are drawn to live the Gospel message, unite in worship, respond to the needs of the community with fellowship and social justice, and serve others through the sharing of their spiritual gifts and temporal goods for the betterment of all," as stated in our philosophy summary statement.

The daily routines at all grade levels are permeated with drawing our students and staff to live the Gospel message. Our staff members are highly visible from the very moment anyone enters the school in the morning and are greeted by people who exemplify the light of Christ in their greetings. For example, our Dean of Students is always ready to personally greet each student who comes down the hallway as he informs them of which National Day it is. If it's Dr. Seuss Day, he may be wearing the honorable doctor's signature hat. His more than 200 ties always bring a smile to faces. The day of our annual Thanksgiving Feast, one can't get through the hallway without smiling as the first grade teacher is wearing a turkey on her head, the third grade teacher with turkey legs on her head and the dean in an Native American costume.

We unite in worship as a school community led by our Upper School Choir Director who serves as the Parish Youth Minister. This brings an immediate connection to the future for these young people as they know "Mr. Ben" awaits them as they continue to high school youth ministry. The Upper School Choir leads a beautiful worship activity as their lesson plan includes Mass preparation or preparation for any other music need for school, parish, or community, such as the Denton Breakfast Kiwanis. Our Cherub Choir, which includes children in grade K-3, bring their talents as they feature angelic child-like voices as they sing from their



repertoire ranging from the beautiful “O Santissimo” , beautiful Catholic seasonal songs such as Silent Night, to classic songs from times gone by, such as “The Good Ship Lollipop,” which always lights up the lives on Grandparents Day.

Our lectors, altar servers, and gift bearers provide servant leadership roles during the Mass and on other occasions, such as during Lenten Stations of the Cross and by serving during the parish funerals throughout the year. Our school mission and philosophy dictates the development of servant leadership through our dedication to a continued highlighting of vocations. The school classes rotate taking the Vocations Chalice which is dedicated to prayer specifically that week for that class. The school has a daily Vocations Prayer in all of the classrooms. Our Kindergarten has adopted a seminarian, an ICCS alum, with whom they correspond and who visits our school as he can. The teaching and learning process includes constant focus, especially at the Upper School level, on discerning our future through the lens of faith while utilizing the gifts God has given us.

We respond to the community in many ways through the teaching and learning process. This includes helping to set up chairs in the gym for the next community or school event such as Veterans Day. There is parent and community involvement with our youngest students during the annual St. Jude’s Trike-a-thon. The children learn the latest in tricycle safety techniques along with interacting with local police officers in a positive way. They raise critical funds for the Tennessee hospital where children cannot ride their tricycles. This is an amazing and impactful curricular connection to the real world, which is an example of our dedication to mission and philosophy through the teaching and learning process.

The sharing of temporal and spiritual gifts is ongoing through the teaching and learning process. While there are many examples, an impactful one is the “Pounder Project”. Our kindergarten students collect rice and beans representing their birth weight. They put that together in the form of Baby Jesus, the message of a child giving to a child in need through the example of THE CHILD from Bethlehem. Our decade-long partnership with Catholic Charities has provided another direct bridge through the teaching and learning process by providing real-life interaction and simulations with their Families First, Immigrant, and Homeless curriculum. Our school partners with Catholic Charities as they come on-site to develop those components of our curriculum which focus on our mission and philosophy through the teaching and learning process.

These daily reflections on the continued development of the whole child drive the teaching and learning process every moment of the day. The overriding goal is for our entire school community to make a difference now and in the future as followers of Christ .We are committed as a school community of faith to spend every ounce of available energy to this critical mission.

### **FOCUS 3: The mission and vision of the school are clearly evident in strategic planning.**

#### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Does the school’s mission permeate the strategic planning process?

► The school’s mission definitely permeates the strategic planning process beginning with the opening Executive Summary which ties the mission to the vision: *“Our vision is more than just providing top academics and a solid religious education. We seek to ensure that all students are valued, inspired, and have a sense of belonging. We strive to promote excellence in each student, intellectually, spiritually, physically, creatively, and emotionally.”*

There are many indicators of how pervasive the school’s mission permeates the strategic planning process. It includes the parents as the primary educators, the parish, the Catholic community, and the community at large. The strategic planning process is bridged to the Defining Characteristics of a Catholic School from the Holy See’s teachings on Catholic Schools. This is further bridged to the Profile of the Catholic School Graduate which is defined through the school’s mission. Finally, all 14 goals in the strategic plan point to mission or to the sustaining of the mission.

B. How does the school’s vision drive the strategic planning?

► The school’s vision and how it drives the strategic planning process is set forth in the Executive Summary of the strategic plan *“Our vision for the future of Immaculate Conception Catholic School is grounded in the history of*

*the school and its successes, and is shaped by our strong Catholic identity. It is important to note that this is a shared vision, with support from the entire school community; forming the vision of the school has been a collaborative effort.” We are called to exert great energy toward the strategic planning process through the challenge that is also in the Executive Summary: “Young people of the third millennium must be a source of energy and leadership in our Church and our nation. Therefore, we must provide young people with an academically rigorous and doctrinally sound program of education and faith formation designed to strengthen their union with Christ and his Church. Catholic schools collaborate with parents and guardians in raising and forming their children as families struggle with the changing and challenging cultural and moral contexts in which they find themselves. Catholic schools provide young people with sound Church teaching through a broad-based curriculum, where faith and culture are intertwined in all areas of a school's life...” (Catholic Schools on the Threshold, no.9 - USCCB website)*

C. Describe the process used to formulate, review and revise the school’s strategic planning. What data is used to drive this assessment? What constituencies are involved in the process?

► As stated in the strategic plan’s introduction in the Spring of 2016, the School Advisory Council concluded that the school had achieved many of the goals of the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan and began preparing for an updated long-range plan to address the next five years. The Council appointed a long-range planning committee that would outline a strategic planning process for the school at the beginning of the 2016 school year. This process included basing the strategic plan process on local, state, national, and international documents. The Advisory Council decided to align the goals of the strategic plan with the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools: <https://www.catholicschoolstandards.org/>

A wide range of constituencies were involved in the process including the Advisory Council, staff, parents, clergy, parish staff, and the community at large. As the process continued and was brought to conclusion, the draft document was emailed and posted for final comment.

D. Does the strategic plan provide goals as well as yearly action steps? Provide an example.

► The strategic plan provides 14 specific goals with a list of objectives for each goal. An example would be Goal 13: Pursue alternate funding options that will provide financial support for the school’s short and long term operations and reserves. (Benchmark 13.3)

Objectives:

1. Explore, identify, and implement means to provide additional revenue growth.
2. Emphasize endowment fund growth with a view toward a long-term target of \$1,250,000 by 2023 that ensures the school’s permanence and affordability.

The action steps are: (1). The development of a brochure to highlight the visibility of the school’s endowment fund. (2). Establish endowments or add to endowments as donations are solicited and donations received.

A direct result of this goal and action plan is the development of two major endowments since the Strategic Plan was formalized in the spring of 2018: The Carol Hyatt Memorial Scholarship Fund (\$10,000) and the Irene Dougherty Memorial Scholarship Fund (\$30,000). These two scholarship funds pushed the school’s endowment total to more than \$1 million based on then market figures.

E. What goals are identified from the strategic plan for the current school year? What are the action steps to achieve these goals?

► In addition to Goal 13 highlighted in D. above, the council has selected Goal 14: Develop an enhanced plan for institutional communications, marketing, enrollment management and development. (Standard 13) as one of the major thrusts this year. The five-year marketing plan has been updated and a detailed yearly action plan with timeline has been established.

The yearly action plan is as follows:

<u>Month to Start - 2018-2019</u>	<u>Task</u>	<u>Person/Committee Responsible</u>	<u>Date to Complete</u>
Year-Round	Work on recruitment by having info available in bulletin, parish office, at key Masses and other parish events.	Recruitment/Development	Year-round
April - May	Set ad plan for 2018-2019 school year and set deadline schedule. Planned ads and campaign include: Post cards mailed ( <i>determine targeting ages PreK to 1st and 5th and 6th for Fall 2018 in zip codes in southern Denton, parts of Corinth, parts of Argyle</i> ); ads in June or July issues of Sanger and Krum Couriers and Cross Timbers Gazette, and June 380 News (covers Aubrey, parts of Little Elm and Pilot Point); ad on Catholic Radio in April/May and will run again in July/Aug; area bulletin announcements; reviewing Facebook ad and boosting posts.	Recruitment Development/Principal	31-May
May/June	Get brochures and materials out at Spanish and English to parish families. Work on a St. Mark database for mailing.	Principal/Staff/Recruitment	June and July 2018
July/August	Ads and Facebook campaigns. Direct mail pieces mail first week.	Principal/Staff/Recruitment	6/15 to July 30, 2017
August/Sept.	Giving Day Campaign kicks in high gear 3rd week in August through Sept. 13th. Plan to launch video and early giving campaign week of Sept. 3rd. <b>See detailed Giving Day plan.</b>	Principal/Staff/Development	1-Sep-18
August/Sept.	Work on Endowments brochure and need to start discussing work on Endowment Wall	Gary Payne is leading this and will work with Advisory Council members on development committee and Elaine; Christine Gossett can get with Tina Jezek to discuss how to create the Endowment Wall and plaques.	Fall 2018 - aim for mid-October completion
October	Begin plans for Catholic Schools Week and Annual Fund Drive (Catholic Schools Week raffle); Pulpit talks; ICC students serving in Mass; Recruitment table at ICC Parish elementary Faith Formation classes on Wednesday night and Sunday morning.	Recruitment/Development	
January - April	Work on recruitment activities at both parishes (pulpit talks, ministry fair at St. Mark, Preview Days)	Recruitment/Development	May
February/March/ April	Follow-up on leads from Catholic Schools Week, plan and execute direct mail piece to parishes, target zip codes, and advertising	Recruitment/Development	April
March/April/May	Hold Pre-K and Kinder Preview Days; Catholic Radio ads; Facebook ads and posts	Recruitment/Development	Mar - May

**FOCUS 4: There is an awareness of the school's mission, vision and strategic planning within the school community.**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. How is the school community aware of the school's mission and vision? (Identify key indicators of this awareness.)

The school utilizes parish weekly bulletins from parishes, church, and school bulletin boards, Facebook, Twitter, the school website, various newspapers including the North Texas Catholic, Denton Record-Chronicle and smaller area newspapers as public relations vehicles to communicate the school's mission, philosophy, goals and objectives. The school's mission, philosophy, goals and objectives are continually reinforced through signage, bumper stickers, liturgies, school assemblies, daily and weekly communications.

A specific example is the routine relationship among our parishes and the school in presenting pulpit talks. The students are asked to be in their dress uniforms during the Masses at both parishes. Adults, staff members, alumni, and present students give talks before or after the Mass specifically relating to the mission of our inter-parochial parish school. Their speeches include the holistic mission of the school that remains unique in its very strong Catholic identity. Displays are set up in the back of the churches and as part of ministry fair displays to continue to bring awareness to the school's mission, philosophy, goals, and objectives.

Other examples include presentations to the parish councils, community clubs, such as the Kiwanis Breakfast and Keep Denton Beautiful, participation in education panels at the university level for future teachers, collaborating with area universities to provide student observation opportunities. The school community reaches out in action through its mission statement to provide cookie bags to area businesses and other supporters during Catholic Schools Week, honoring our police officers on the Feast of St. Michael, Christmas cards to shut-ins, veterans, and nursing homes, collections to help our parish organizations and provide goodie bags for our service personnel overseas. This is just a very small number of key indicators of how awareness of the school's mission and vision is conveyed on a daily basis through word, visual displays, and action.

B. How are the school's mission and vision included in relevant school documents and media (handbooks, websites, publications, etc.)?

► The school's mission and vision are included in all relevant school documents, including but not limited to, student and parent handbook, faculty and staff handbook, strategic plan, advisory council constitution, advisory council agendas, marketing and other plans that drive school operations, newsletters, the school website, social media including Facebook, weekly family informational emails, and monthly parent letters.

C. How is the school's mission displayed on the campus?

► The school's mission statement is displayed hand-done in calligraphy in the school office. It is prominently displayed near the entry door of each classroom in yellow so as to be highly visible. The mission statement is recited every morning as a part of the morning routine.

D. How is the school's strategic plan shared with the school community?

► The school's strategic plan is located prominently on the school website and is in hard copy in the school office. The school advisory council shares the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the strategic plan through the monthly meetings and through their interaction with the school community and parish. The strategic plan is shared with faculty and staff as they become involved in the various planning and implementation of the goals and objectives of the plan. As the strategic plan was being formulated, the school community was asked to provide input through email or in person and continues to be invited to provide input. A specific example of the school community being involved with this year's strategic plan implementation is the "Bring a Family to ICCS" incentive program inviting the school families to be involved by reaching out to at least one family that might be interested in learning more about ICCS.

**FOCUS 5: The school's mission and vision guide staffing and professional development.**

## DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

### A. How are prospective staff and faculty informed about the mission and vision?

► Applicants are selected for an interview following a nationwide search for candidates from specific sources that might surface those prospective faculty members who already have a very good idea of the school's mission and philosophy based on their education, experience, and faith walk. Search venues include the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) job link site, the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth candidate database, parish bulletins, and searches through the school's website.

During the interview process conducted by the administrative team, prospective staff and faculty receive both verbal and written information regarding the mission and philosophy of the school which includes a tour of the school highlighting those areas that focus on mission and philosophy. As the interview process continues, questions are modeled after the Best Practices interview process as recommended by NCEA. Questions include, but are not limited to, how the candidate plans to support Catholic educational philosophy; the practice of their Catholic faith, or the practice of their faith if non-Catholic. Candidates are asked about their willingness to lead prayer in class and how they would do it, how they would join the school community for liturgy and prayer services, and how prepared they are to communicate the official teachings of the Catholic Church. The candidate is asked how they would integrate the school's mission and philosophy, i. e., their Catholic-Christian values into the curriculum, how they would encourage their students to be active Catholics and proud of their Catholic heritage, and how they take time with students in helping them with their personal faith and moral lives. The candidate is asked how they would support the social justice ministries as stated in the mission and philosophy, and how they plan to continue to holistically grow in their own personal faith walk. Finally, the administrative team collaborates with other faculty members in the hiring process to allow for the best possible candidate to be selected who would be passionate about the school's mission and philosophy.

### B. How are the hiring practices of the school influenced by its mission and vision?

► Teachers and administrators are hired based upon their verifiable involvement in their faith communities, their commitment to being a Catholic-Christian role model inside and outside the classroom, as well as past teaching experience. It is the school's philosophy to hire teachers and administrators who are committed to their faith and who are dedicated to sharing and passing on this faith. The staff members of Immaculate Conception Catholic School are enthusiastic advocates of their profession with the goal of working with their students toward a love of learning.

An integral part of the hiring practice includes background checks and education in the Safe Environment practices of the school and diocese so that the school's mission of ministering to the whole child is seen through practices of safety and security. Hiring practices include the checking of references during which time questions are asked to assure, to the greatest extent possible, that the candidate has a history of experience and action that coincides with the mission and philosophy of the school. Included in the hiring process are questions relating to any potential conflict with the mission and philosophy; specifically, "Is there anything that would prevent you from working in a Catholic School?"

### C. How do the mission and vision influence staff development and the supervision/evaluation of personnel?

#### (1) Staff Development

In order to provide for the total development of the child, faculty members are encouraged to continually update and enrich their professional skills by participating in continuing education programs which are paid for by the school and through federal Title II funding for professional development. This can include course work at institutions of higher education, educational workshops designed to identify learning differences and reading methodologies, and diocesan educational in-service training in order to stimulate and challenge their students to reach their maximum potential.

Because the school philosophy statement advocates the sharing of their faith, teachers are also encouraged to join Bible study groups, attend inspirational talks, participate in the annual faculty and staff retreat, and participate in church liturgies so they can model through word and example the Gospel message as reflected in the mission and philosophy of the school. We have been very fortunate and honored for the past several years to have Immaculate Conception Pastor Rev. Timothy Thompson present Lenten programs for the faculty over a series of six to ten

weeks.

To be qualified to teach religion, staff members are required to have completed or be working toward religious education certification. Staff members are continually challenged and encouraged to join in service activities as part of their parish, school and community so that they will model the philosophy of the school in their own lives. Staff members participate in health and wellness activities, including the school's Genesis Project and Theology of the Body curriculum which allows them to impart to our students that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and unique gifts from God.

Staff and students are trained and made aware of Stewardship opportunities and how they can give back to their school, parish, communities, and world. Through staff development in the arts, fine arts, and other activities, students and staff work together to foster the appreciation God has created. Through staff development and through interaction with many various stakeholders, our staff is able to assist students in carrying forth the Social Justice teachings of the church as a way toward making the world a better place because they have been created.

(2) Supervision/Evaluation of Personnel

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth requires that all teaching staff be formally evaluated at least once annually, with new staff formally evaluated at least twice annually. Through both formal evaluation instruments and informal classroom visits and teacher dialog, staff members are able to work on a united front to provide for the total development of the child. The principal, along with the pastor, is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of school personnel. The pastor is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of the principal as supported by the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

## DOMAIN SUMMARY

### DOMAIN I: MISSION, PHILOSOPHY AND VISION

**After conducting an in-depth study of this domain, the school finds the following:**

**1. Area(s) of strength:**

► By focusing on the environmental aspects of the mission and philosophy statements, a very strong, Christ-centered, extended family type environment has evolved. The school is physically a part of Immaculate Conception Church's facility, which meets the criteria and desire of those involved with the mission and philosophy statements related to a strong Catholic identity.

School goals have been revised and strengthened. They are clearly stated, detailed, and in alignment with the school objectives and the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB-ED) standards/policies. In the Immaculate Conception Catholic School Strategic Plan, Catholic Identity is recognized as one of, if not the greatest, strength of the school. Renewed by the call from the "Summit on the Future of Catholic Schools in Texas, and guided by the school's Strategic Plan, specific goals are in place to retain this highest level of Catholic Identity by maintaining a strong relationship among the school, local parishes and the Catholic community, by expanding knowledge, appreciation and practice of our Catholic heritage, faith traditions, and Gospel values throughout the school community, and by assisting parents or guardians in their role as the primary educators of their children's faith.

**2. Area(s) needing improvement or strengthening:**

(An area that needs growth/strengthening is one which, while present, could be improved or one which does not meet TCCED standards/policies.)

► School stakeholders have worked passionately since the school's inception to make sure that Immaculate Conception Catholic School's greatest strength would be its unwavering Catholic Identity. This vision has been achieved through consistent implementation of goals with Catholic Identity at the forefront. This includes hiring practices which have brought staff members to the school who are dedicated to the school's mission and

philosophy. With low turnover and a staff in place which reaches out to families and forms community through the parish and school partnership, this strength is evident. There is a confidence that Catholic Identity will continue to be nurtured with no significant improvement or strengthening needed. However, there will be constant review, evaluation, and updating as needed to sustain a critical cornerstone upon which Our Lady's School has been built.

### **3. Action plan:**

(List what the school plans to do within the next 3 years to strengthen or enhance the area(s) mentioned above.)

► Review as needed, at minimum on an annual basis, to make sure that the mission statement, philosophy, goals, and objectives remain a living, breathing part of Our Lady's School. All stakeholders will constantly be invited to review these goals on a consistent basis as we continue to implement the Mission and Catholic Identity benchmarks in the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan for the school's continued growth as a vibrant mission of the universal Catholic Church.

As presented in the school's Strategic Plan, the goals are as follows in this area:

#### **Mission and Catholic Identity**

Goal 1: Maintain a strong relationship among the school, local parishes and the Catholic community. (Benchmark 1.3)

#### **Objectives:**

1. Promote communication, coordination, and collaboration between the school and Catholic communities.
2. Increase parishioner ownership of and participation in school programs such as fundraising, volunteering, and educational enrichment programs.
3. Encourage members of the school community to participate in parish ministries, programs and activities.
4. Have representatives between churches and school serve on various councils and committees.
5. Bridge various service and other organizations through the development of scholarship opportunities, through visibility in bulletins, newsletters, and social media, and by students having more visibility with the parish.

--Goal 2: Expand knowledge, appreciation and practice of our Catholic heritage, faith traditions, and Gospel values throughout the school community. (Benchmark 3.1)

#### **Objectives:**

1. Heighten student awareness of vocations.
2. Increase presence and active participation of priests and religious in student activities.
3. Promote Christ-like attitudes and behavior among students, coaches, staff, and parents in extracurricular programs.
4. Teach, encourage, and expect full participation in the Liturgy.
5. Foster appreciation within the school community of our cultural diversity.

--Goal 3: Assist parents or guardians in their role as the primary educators of their children's faith. (Benchmark 4.2)

#### **Objectives:**

1. Improve communication at all levels within the school community.
2. Encourage and recognize parent volunteers that partner with the school to enhance academic, extracurricular, fundraising, and enrichment programs.
3. Provide increased parent education in areas such as discipline, use of social media, the school budget, vocations, guidance and counseling, and our Catholic faith.

## DOMAIN II: COMMUNITY

The school's Catholic identity promotes a community of believers and learners in the spirit of Jesus Christ as experienced in the Catholic Church and lived out as active citizens in today's society. Members of the school community are called to unite in prayer, to proclaim the Gospel message and to serve others.

### SUPPORTING DATA:

- Bulletins
- Calendar of events
- Catholic symbols on display
- Class schedules
- Documentation of service opportunities and experiences
- List of resources (books, audio-visuals and other materials)
- Local news media
- Newspaper clippings
- Parent/guardian meeting minutes
- Parent/guardian/teacher/student recognition awards
- Parish bulletins
- Religion assessment instruments
- Religion curriculum guides
- Religion program evaluations
- Sacramental preparation resources and materials
- Schedules of liturgies; student participation schedules, i.e., servers, etc.
- School bulletins
- School programs
- School publications
- Parent/guardian volunteer roster

**FOCUS 1:** The school's Catholic identity promotes and embodies Gospel values in decision making and operations in order to build a nurturing faith community.

### DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. How does the school embody Gospel values in the staffing processes?

► The staffing process, from initial resume information to the interview process, centers around the main objective of building a staff which embodies Gospel values. This includes Catholic interview questions, background checks, and references that point to a faith-filled staff member. This process reaps benefits daily once hired individuals become staff members. For example, staff members work together so that the children can become vibrant and contributing parishioners of tomorrow and citizens of tomorrow. Whether it's the coach, music teacher, librarian, technology director, or bookkeeper, there's a constant focus on integrating who we are as spiritual beings with the rest of our humanity as unique Children of God. There is a constant caring throughout the campus which is evident in every contact and communication throughout the day. All staff participates in any and all activities, pitching in where there's a need. A small, but very poignant and specific example, is the daily car line. When a staff member has to leave a little early on occasion for an important appointment off site, any and all available personnel, and community members, pitch in to help set up tables, take names, or assist in any way. Per the extensive explanation of the hiring process detailed in Domain I, all staff members are drawn to an awareness of their Call to Gospel as they serve the needs of the entire school community. The administrative staff works collaboratively with staff to address the needs of the school through the Gospel values that must be at the forefront through the staffing process. This leads to an umbrella of Social Justice opportunities through action as the Call to Gospel moves us to action through servant leadership.

B. How does the school embody Gospel values in the professional development process?

► Staff members participate in diocesan professional development opportunities with topics such as learning differences, the components of classical education, and various training sessions that lead toward state and local requirements for religion certification. In addition, the staff and administration seek professional development opportunities that assist them in developing the gifts they have to offer to their specific cog in the wheel of Our Lady's School, but each staff member is also looking for ways where they can reach the whole child through the professional development process.



Specific examples include the attendance of three of our staff members—the principal, the Dean of Students, and the Director of Hispanic Services—at the Latino Enrollment Institute at the University of Notre Dame to assist our entire school community in meeting the needs of all of our families. A staff member participated in a two-year certificate program at the University of Notre Dame to address the needs of English as a New Language (ENL) learners. This staff member assists students, staff, and families with identifying and formulating a plan of action to address the needs of our ENL community. Our Athletic Director completed the “Play Like a Champion” training at the University of Notre Dame so she could be a trainer in implementing the Gospel Values exuded through this unique Sportsmanship program.

The principal has attended countless professional development sessions which include the Tri-State Principals Catholic Identity Conference, Catholic School Law Conference, numerous principal leadership conferences, Catholic School management programs to assist in nurturing Gospel values throughout the school operation. The Upper School Science teacher attended a national Catholic Answers Conference with the topic of integrating the world of science and our Catholic faith which she continues to bring to the classroom and to colleagues. Our preschool teachers participated in Conscious Discipline professional development which embodies Gospel values by utilizing behavior management strategies and classroom structures that teachers can use to turn everyday situations into learning opportunities. Our fourth grade teacher attended NCEA and brought back Marvin Marshalls “Discipline Without Stress” which has been implemented for many years at all grade levels above preschool.

Many of our teacher have attended the annual TIA Conference (Think-Iterate-Act) with the focus of infusing critical thinking skills within the classrooms through the latest in STEAM techniques as is our Call to Gospel. “TIA accomplishes this goal by offering engaging keynotes and breakout sessions over the course of the conference in which the latest ideas in teaching, learning, and technology integration are blended together to create new and exciting ways to move students toward mastery on content and skills. Attendees are provided with opportunities throughout the conference to consider and **think** about new and exciting ideas surrounding technology and learning. **Iteration** follows as these ideas are refined and customized by each attendee to fit their learning into the unique context of their teaching role. As a result, teachers and administrators who attend TIA are equipped to **act** immediately on their new learning with the staff and students they serve.”

The list is endless in terms of how school staff members seek and complete professional development opportunities that ultimately embody Gospel values as we seek to form the whole child for Christ.

#### C. How does the school embody Gospel values in the teaching and learning processes?

► The school embodies Gospel values constantly in the teaching and learning process ranging from the daily curriculum in the classrooms to assisting with sacramental preparation, through service, and more. The school provides an opportunity for students to participate in the sacrament of Reconciliation at least three times a year, and staff members work cooperatively with both parishes in preparing young people for the reception of the sacraments, ranging from the reception of the first sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation to referral of a student or family to the parish as a possible candidate for the RCIA or RCIC preparation program.

The children are continually encouraged to witness and live their Gospel call throughout their entire school day, including leading morning prayer, recitation of the rosary within the classrooms, participation in the liturgy as altar servers, lectors, gift bearers and members of the choir and congregation. Students write essays that integrate Gospel values. The school staff, through modeling and personal witness, assists the children and greater community in witnessing Gospel values through integration of these elements within all facets of the curriculum, including special programs such as Christmas plays, Advent preparation, Lenten programs, and through service.

#### D. How does the school embody Gospel values in the student disciplinary process?

► As our handbook states, at Immaculate Conception Catholic School, we believe in the ability of our students to behave and react in ways appropriate to a Catholic community that nurtures Gospel values based on the Four R’s--**Reverence, Respect, Responsibility and Role Modeling**. We have high expectations for behavior, justice and fairness, and cooperative interaction among all members of the Immaculate Conception Catholic School community. Guidance and discipline are based on the idea of maintaining community. Behaviors are

decisions, and decisions engender consequences. At Immaculate Conception Catholic School, we believe in natural consequences for actions. The consequence for poor decisions should flow from the nature of the mistake, and reconciliation is based on mending the community. Students have a right to discipline that respects their dignity as children of God. Consequences reflect the natural outcome of the poorly made or inappropriate decisions and should not be punitive in nature. All people need help in realizing they are not perfect, and they are likely to make poor judgments and mistakes while learning and growing. Our responses to behavior problems are to reject the action and apply the appropriate consequences while remembering and reminding the child of our continued love and their God-given gifts.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School recognizes that each person has great dignity because each is made in the image and likeness of God; therefore, each person deserves respect. Respect and dignity are based on the Ten Commandments; we do not steal, lie, cheat, hurt a person in spirit or body, or do anything that would hurt the dignity of another. In union with our fellow schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth, the staff and teachers of Immaculate Conception Catholic School will not tolerate bullying on or off the campus while students are under their supervision.

In support of these values, our school has implemented two specific discipline systems that support and align our approach to the student disciplinary process. The preschool Conscious Discipline program was developed by Becky A. Bailey, Ph.D., an award-winning author, renowned teacher and internationally recognized expert in childhood education and developmental psychology. K-8 utilize Dr. Marvin Marshall's Discipline Without Stress which aligns nicely with our Gospel-value approach to discipline. Dr. Marvin Marshall is one of America's leading experts in reducing stress that is so prevalent in work relationships, schools, and homes. He demonstrates how to use *authority without coercion* so relationships are not adversely affected.

E. How does the school embody Gospel values in resolving conflicts and differences?

► Community-building that fosters Gospel values is nurtured in a consistent manner with policies and procedures that reinforce fairness, justice, and respect for all. Our handbooks, classroom policies, virtues, Safe Environment training, and more put forth those positive elements coupled with appropriate consequences so that the holistic development is fostered. Examples of this collaboration includes "Parents as Partners", "The Many Hats of Parenting" presentations, being good stewards through beautification and other programs, the Dominic Savio and American Heritage Girls, which nurture value formation, community service requirements, homework policies to develop responsibility, eligibility criteria, and positive reinforcement strategies.

Our school has a "pulse" on identifying those situations that might develop into conflicts and differences. This ranges from a situation where a child may think they are being isolated at the lunch table or on to playground to situations such as impending divorces that may disrupt the family dynamics. The entire staff is involved in passing along information as part of a very defined process which includes the Dean of Students, Dean of Student Services, Principal, and Pastor depending upon the circumstances. There is a genuine collaborative effort among staff to identify conflicts and differences early and bring them to resolution so that they won't develop into something greater according to the Gospel values to which we have been called.

F. How does the school embody Gospel values in promoting the value of the family?

► The school embodies Gospel values in promoting the value of the family through the invitation of constant interaction with the school community as part of the Body of Christ. This is exhibited on a daily basis ranging from family events such as the New Family Orientation, annual Family Picnic, Thanksgiving Feast, Lenten Pancake Luncheon, fine arts, athletic, and academic opportunities where Gospel values of community as the Body of Christ are exhibited. Parents are invited to see their children perform at various functions throughout the school year. They receive weekly, and sometimes daily, communications regarding upcoming events. The monthly letters from the Principal, Dean of Students, and Hispanic liaison all contain topics that promote Gospel values that are pointed toward strengthening the value of the family unit. The school has a monthly "Partners In Faith" publication that does the same specifically pinpointing those special elements that a family can implement in their home to keep Christ at the center of the family. Immaculate Conception Catholic School participates in the Title I Parental Involvement service which assists the school in providing resources to parents about a wide variety of topics. The school building serves as the center for all programs provided by Immaculate Conception Parish that are not held in the church or parish offices. These include marriage and sacramental preparation, safe

environment classes, Bible studies, youth education programs and diocesan programs.

G. How do faculty and staff members demonstrate an awareness and attitude of concern for the total development of students?

► Faculty and staff are quick to provide mentoring and support for those who wish and need it regardless of whether the need is spiritual, physical, intellectual, creative, or emotional. They collaborate on any need, ranging from curriculum correlation to having older students buddy with, read to, and mentor younger students. The school has a strong system of collaboration in place which provides opportunities for staff to cluster horizontally and vertically in order to discuss the ongoing needs of students and implement a plan of action as needed. Very specific examples are the regular cluster meetings and the monthly Upper School meetings which address specific developmental concerns regarding students. This collaboration is extensive and pin-pointed, ranging from whether a student should defer from participation in the One Act Play so they can spend more time on their academics to students who need hands-on activities such as helping with the greenhouse or developing their sewing skills. The staff generally has a pulse on the emotional needs of the students through direct interaction and through collaboration with the Dean of Student Services who has a counseling background. The spirit of collegiality and collaboration is very refreshing, and we are most thankful to be working with one another.

H. How does the school encourage a sense of caring, cooperation and belonging within its community?

► The school encourages a sense of caring, cooperation, and belonging within its community through service, participation in community events, and the utilization of its facility for community events as needed. The Cherub Choir sings annually at parish events such as the Fall Festival and at the Kiwanis Breakfast event. The school annually partners with Catholic Charities for projects such as homeless simulations, providing for the needs of immigrants, and its Families First program. The Immaculate Conception Catholic School facility has served the larger community in many ways since its dedication in 2002. The parish and school have worked together so that the building could be available to the larger community when scheduling could be accommodated. Examples include summer camps, English-As-Second Language classes offered by the Denton Independent School District, summer tutoring and remedial reading classes offered through Texas Tech University, and community-organized activities such as the annual Turkey Roll bike rally and fundraiser sponsored by Denton Kiwanis. The building has also been made available for sports activities, blood drives, festivals, and more.

I. How are faculty and staff members encouraged in their spiritual formation in order to build a nurturing faith community?

► There is a constant nurturing in the spiritual formation of the staff of Immaculate Conception Catholic School through personal ownership of their faith and through those opportunities as presented throughout the year. Staff members participate in the diocesan inservices and religion certification opportunities. The pastor leads the staff in mini-retreat opportunities on such topics as prayer and reflection. When possible, the school joins with its sister Catholic schools of Sacred Heart and St. Mary's in presenting a Tri-School retreat. Staff members participate in various ministries both in the school and the wider Catholic community. Some staff members serve as lectors, Eucharistic ministers, organists, choir directors, liturgists, and catechists as active members of their parishes. They model their faith experience by personally witnessing their Gospel beliefs to the students and wider Catholic and Christian communities in their roles as teachers, parishioners, and citizens. They are members or are affiliated with school, parish and community organizations ranging from the ACTS Core Team (Adoration, Community, Theology, Service) Knights of Columbus, Adoration and Rosary groups, and pro-life, missionary, and service organizations such as Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, Catholic Daughters, Youth Ministry, diocesan scouting organizations, and more.

J. How is the school's Catholic identity evident throughout the school?

► There are Catholic symbols throughout the school facility, including a picture of the Holy Father, crucifixes and prayer tables. Student work is continually on display, most of which is representing and witnessing Gospel values ranging from the Beatitudes to the Liturgical seasons. The school is promoting a "Virtue of the Month", ranging from peace to kindness, which is a continual reinforcement of Gospel values throughout the school community. Pope Francis Monthly Intention is posted at the corner of the hallway so to be visible as everyone turns the corner toward the 200 wing. Our Lady's Rosary Garden is prominent to the entrance to the gymnasium. St. Michael the Archangel greets visitors as they look up after entering the gymnasium doors. As they enter the gymnasium proper, their eyes are immediately cast upon a very large

crucifix donated by one of the promotion classes. There is a Last Supper painting as one enters the gymnasium.

One of the showcases of the school is evidenced through the vision of those who constructed the school. The Holy Family is featured above the entrance to the school. As one enters the school, Our Lady of Guadalupe is featured to the right. Our school crest is featured prominently as one raises their eyes after entering the school. There is statuary at the entrance including St. Anthony of Padua and a movable statue of Our Lady, which is used for May Crowning, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and on other occasions. As one walks the hallways, they see statuary in niches that was donated by patrons of the school. Memorial Room plaques are dedicated to various saints and patrons. A large mural featuring Our Lady and her charism that pervades the school is across from the office. Every bulletin board as one enters the room is dedicated to Catholic Identity. It is evident that our Catholic faith is the priority of Our Lady's School.

**FOCUS 2: The school provides regular opportunities for prayer, liturgy, spiritual formation, and service.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Faculty and staff attend school liturgies.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Students are involved in liturgy planning and participate in various roles during liturgy (i.e. reader, cantor, etc.).	YES	X	NO	
3.	There are specific programs for personal spiritual formation for the students.	YES	X	NO	
4.	There are specific programs for personal spiritual formation for faculty and staff.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Students are assisted in developing Catholic attitudes toward human sexuality and the family.	YES	X	NO	
6.	Teachers of religion participate in the TCCED Catechist Formation plan.	YES	X	NO	

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

**A. How does the school foster the spiritual formation of students?**

► The children continually are encouraged to witness and live their Gospel call throughout the entire school day, including participation in the liturgy as altar servers, lectors, gift bearers and members of the choir and congregation. Students write essays that integrate Gospel values. The school staff, through modeling and personal witness, assists the children and greater community in witnessing Gospel values through integration of these elements within all facets of the curriculum, including special programs such as the first grade All Saints program, Dia De Los Muertos, Christmas plays, Advent preparation, recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, participation in the Living Rosary and Living Stations, coming together for Stations of the Cross during Lent, and through service. The athletic staff members incorporate virtues within the sports program which emphasize the spiritual formation with the theme of our bodies being temples of the Holy Spirit. Our Fine Arts Programs are geared toward spiritual formation through the teaching of moral lessons and through the visual display of art through the lens of faith.

**B. How do the faculty and staff model their faith experience in the school and the wider Catholic community? Provide examples.**

► Faculty and staff work together so that the children can become vibrant and contributing parishioners of tomorrow and citizens of tomorrow. Whether it's the coach, music teacher, librarian, or bookkeeper, there's a constant focus on integrating who we are as spiritual beings with the rest of our humanity as unique Children of God. Faculty and staff model their faith by praying many times a day, including before and after each class in the Upper School, regular rosaries and Divine Mercy chaplets in other areas. There is a school-wide recitation of the Vocation Prayer and Angelus. Teachers constantly pray with their students and are highly visible faith models,

serving as Extraordinary Ministers at Mass, organizing liturgies, organizing a plethora of service projects, and more. Staff members are also active in their own parishes as ACTS team members, religious education teachers and through service organizations such as Our Daily Break and the Monsignor King Outreach Center. They model these faith experiences throughout the day to their students and to the wider Catholic community.

C. How are students encouraged to be actively involved in their parish communities?

► Students are encouraged to be actively involved in their parish communities through weekly emails, through social media, through the school's community service requirements, and through communication with families. Students are servers in their parishes. The school plays a vital role in the annual parish Fall Festival where they volunteer for a variety of game booths. Teachers and staff express the importance of attending weekly Sunday Mass. Upper School students obtain service hours by assisting with parish ministries including Vacation Bible School and Knights of Columbus (KC) breakfasts. Eighth grade students participate in the annual KC Essay Contest with the topic of Catholic Citizenship. Community service hour requirements are five for sixth graders, ten for seventh graders, and twenty for eighth graders.

**FOCUS 3: The school encourages awareness of the needs of others through service in the local, national and global communities.**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. How does the school create an awareness and commitment to issues of social justice at the local, national and global levels?

► The school's mission statement specifically states that we unite in a nurturing and loving Catholic community that promotes peace and justice through, among other things, the recognition of the value and dignity of each individual.

The school has a spirit of collegiality where staff, students, families, and the parish at large are working together toward the goal of preparing youth to carry the torch of faith onward to the next generation. Our staff is of varied background (most are natives of states other than Texas), experiences, and interests, which make for a very spirited climate. Some of our staff members have traveled overseas where they have completed missionary assignments, and they have brought this experience into the school environment to foster a global awareness which speaks specifically to our Catholic Identity through the Social Justice Teachings of our Catholic faith. The staff and students continually work together to fill in the gaps wherever needed and to support each other in time of need.

Global awareness is encouraged through the social studies programs in each class, through integration throughout the curriculum in all subject areas, and through additional projects such as the annual Lenten Pancake Lunch and collection for international missions. The spirit of cooperation is taught daily in all activities but specifically through cooperative learning methods used in physical education, reading, and other classes. The day-to-day climate exhibits students who typically support each other and their teachers, assist each other and work together when appropriate. Our Catholic Identity permeates our school environment and is our greatest strength.

B. How does the school promote service outreach?

► Numerous service programs presented throughout the school year reinforce the witness of Gospel values. The school works closely with the parishes by providing supplies for the Immaculate Conception Parish Guatemala Project which provides a Catholic education to students in a school located in Patzun, Guatemala. There are frequent food and donation opportunities to organizations such as Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen and area food pantries. Students write letters to the clients of Gainesville State School Juvenile Detention Facility. Service includes the St. Jude Trike-a-thon, Kiwanis Junior Builder Club Service Activities, and Catholic Charities programs to serve needy families, the homeless (including homeless veterans in the Denton area), and immigrants new to this country. There is a Lenten global mission collection dedicated to international missions such as the Salesians or Catholic Relief Services, Boxes of Joy for children in the Caribbean who have never received a Christmas present, and other miscellaneous collections of food, money, and clothing drives for the needy.

Additional school outreach community programs include participation by our fifth graders in the Denton Community Salute to Veterans, the presentation of an annual Veteran's Day program in which all the veterans of the area are invited to display their memorabilia and are honored. The school community and parishes are invited

to attend school activities such as the annual Pet Blessing, Texas Program, Grandparents Day, Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas Program and the school's auction. These activities reinforce living examples of Gospel values and virtues ranging from peace to fellowship to service.

C. How does the school encourage awareness of the needs of others?

► The school encourages awareness of the needs of others through numerous actions that make a statement about who we are as a faith-filled school community. We begin the year with a new spiritual theme. This year's theme is based on Pope Francis' Call to Holiness. This theme is represented on our signature annual shirt and drives an awareness of how we can draw others to the need for holiness. Our Student Council, Kiwanis Junior Builders Club, and Beta Club are official organizations that are dedicated to identifying the needs of the school community and the needs of others as a whole. The students assist with our annual events, such as North Texas Giving Day, to highlight the need to provide financial assistance to families so they can afford a Catholic education for their children. The students are part of class projects to help raise funds for the annual auction to assist with school operations. The students participate in Volunteer Appreciation Day as they thank those who help others through their volunteer efforts. The school continually highlights the needs of others as exemplified by each class receiving the Vocations Chalice each week to keep prayers for vocations constant, students and families gathering items for hurricane victims, and more.

**FOCUS 4: The school environment reflects its Catholic identity by its concern and commitment for individuals in the school community.**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. How does the school environment reflect its Catholic identity?

► The school environment reflects unabashed Catholic Identity, which includes teachers and administrators who are committed to their Catholic faith and dedicated to sharing and passing on this faith. It is a community of believers in the spirit of Jesus Christ and results in students and teachers drawn to live the Gospel message, united in worship and responsive to the needs of the community. This includes fellowship and social justice as teachers and administrators serve others through the sharing of their spiritual gifts and temporal goods for the betterment of all.

There is a constant call to Servant Leadership on the part of all at the school, including students, staff, families, parish and community. There is a monthly call to help those in need on a school-wide basis, ranging from bringing food and toiletry items for the local food pantries and soup kitchen to accumulating items for Boxes of Joy to be sent to children in the poor countries of the Caribbean through Cross Catholic Outreach, to gathering items for homeless veterans, writing cards for shut-ins, participating in immigrant and homeless simulations in a partnership with Catholic Charities, and having a baby item collection for Loreto House, the local crisis pregnancy center. Extensive reference to Catholic Identity is also listed under Domain I.

B. Do specific activities or programs inspire students with concern for one another? Provide an example.

Every class has the distinct objective in inspiring students with concern for one another through service and through a variety of team-building efforts.

Our Upper School Student Council, Kiwanis Junior Builders Club, and Beta Club provide inspiration through the programs and activities they develop for the good of the student body. A specific example was the fall team-building exercise with the theme "Color Our World through the Body of Christ". Students in grades five through eight were divided into teams of mixed grade levels. They wore colored shirts to reflect the various gifts they bring to the table. They reflected on Scripture through fine arts and athletic activities where they had to work together in order to be successful. One student commented, "Thank You!!! Whoever picked my team...I love my team!"

Students participate in the "Silence Speaks" Program in which they offer up silent lunch periods for special intentions on Fridays during Lent. The students have decorated gift bags for the shut-ins of the parish and collected toiletry and other items to put in the bags. Students have written to the soldiers overseas and this fall

joined with the Lady Knights of the parish in collecting items for as part of their annual “North Texas Stockings for Soldiers” effort.

The “Little Knights” Preschool this fall held their annual St. Jude’s Trike-a-thon, which has raised more than \$30,000 for St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Since its inception. Fourth grade annually features its “Stores Galore” making items from scratch, selling them, and then donating the funds to a charitable cause while learning economics, sharing, and service. Students inspire each other through teamwork in hand-crafting their items, and they then work together to market those items.

The entire school joined together to fill 72 “Boxes of Joy” for children of the Caribbean who have never had a Christmas. The students inspired each other as they showed concern for children their own age and worked together as a team to build the boxes.

There is a constant emphasis on service with joy, whether it’s doing the weekly recycling through the school-wide recycling project, pulling weeds or planting seeds in Our Lady’s Garden, where the produce is given to the needy, or praying the Rosary for the ill, for vocations, or for the unborn.

Whether it’s simply wearing their school uniforms to one of the weekly Masses or submitting a scrapbook of service activities to the Kiwanis Club, students at Our Lady’s School exude Matthew 7:16 “By their deeds you shall know them.”

C. How do faculty members, in their interaction with students, show an awareness and attitude of concern for their spiritual formation?

► Faculty members form a close bond with the students as is reflective of our call to Gospel and dedication to being a faith-filled community. As stated in Focus 1, letter G, the entire faculty and staff are highly collaborative as they interact with the students. Depending upon the situation, staff members stand ready to lead students in prayer, discuss spiritual topics and concerns with the students, and bridge with parents in this most critical process of spiritual formation. Should students have challenges or concerns regarding their spiritual formation, there is a solid support system that begins with the classroom teacher when then goes to the deans, principal, and ultimately with involvement of the pastor if needed. Faculty members model personal spirituality in their daily lives through their interactions with their students. Faculty members are very comfortable with discussing their own faith walk and assisting students with their faith walk.

D. Do faculty and staff handle conflict with due concern for all persons involved?

► Faculty and staff are highly collaborative in the Servant Leadership model. Whether it’s a student with a concern about a fellow student or a staff member, or if there is a challenging situation among faculty or staff members, there is a clear line of communication for addressing any issue from the perspective of our Call to Gospel making sure that the dignity of each person is at the forefront. For example, should an incident happen among students, there is a procedure which is initiated with interviews of those students/faculty members involved. Depending upon the outcome of the interviews, the Catholic teaching of Subsidiary calls us to settle the concern at the lowest level. This is outlined in our school handbook, faculty handbook, and is implemented as needed. Most of the time a teacher is able to clarify and give guidance to students who can then move forward in a positive direction. Should additional help be needed, then the issue is referred to the Dean of Students and/or the Dean of Students Services.

E. Is a sense of self-worth and belonging among students encouraged?

► The students are continually encouraged to see each of their peers as a Child of God made in His image and likeness as they assist in developing the self-worth and belonging through their one-on-one conversations with peers, participation in writing of petitions and prayers for the liturgy, regular classroom instruction, and daily lessons and writing. Additional efforts occur through their demonstrated behavior and appearance as they participate in community activities such as class field trips, sports programs, academic competitions, and other events that are open to the public. When a new student comes to the school, classmates of that student celebrate them and welcome them. They are assigned buddies who help them with specific questions as they navigate their new environment.

A great venue to develop a sense of self-worth and belonging among the students is achieved through the various athletic teams, through clubs, and through academic competitions such as the North Texas Independent League (NTIL) and the Private School Interscholastic Association (PSIA) competitions. The organizations welcome students from all faith affiliations. It's a tremendous opportunity for the development of belonging within and outside of the immediate school community as Immaculate Conception School students come to know students who are from Jewish, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Muslim, and other faith affiliations. Since ICCS is the host school for PSIA, students from other faiths have an opportunity to see student work, which is a testimony to our Catholic faith and personal witness. Through speaking events, the One Act Play competition, their behavior, and by working with others, students have a wonderful opportunity for the development of self-worth and belonging.

Activities such as the Living Rosary, Living Stations, and the annual Christmas Program are other venues for students to be ambassadors for the faith to visitors who view these programs and thus develop a sense of belonging. Non-Catholic and Catholic parents alike have shared stories of how their children, after being taught at Immaculate Conception Catholic School, have passed on their faith witness to parents who were not yet Catholic, leading them to beginning RCIA classes and ultimately becoming Catholic, which solidifies the bonding process to a new level through unity of faith.

F. Is a sense of belonging among faculty and staff encouraged?

► The fact that staff turnover remains at an extremely low level points to a definite sense of belonging among the faculty and staff at Immaculate Conception Catholic School. Staff members frequently verbalized how blessed they feel to be a part of a faculty and staff where people truly care about each other. The joy and challenges of life events are shared including birthdays, weddings, new births, deaths, and illness. There are quarterly pot luck lunches that bring the staff together as they share their favorite dishes. There are appreciation lunches during Catholic Schools Week and at the end of the school year. When staff members have attended a conference or has expertise in an area that is being addressed at a faculty meeting, there is a comfort level with a faculty or staff member leading the meeting or discussion. This fosters mutual respect and encouragement among staff members. There is a true spirit of collaboration and collegiality as the student and staff share this wonderful ministry of Catholic education.

G. Is a sense of belonging among parents/guardians encouraged?

► There is a definite sense of belonging among parents/guardians which is continually encouraged. The school has a vibrant Home and School Association which hosts events throughout the school year as they take true ownership of their support role for the school. This ranges from their sponsorship of "Meet the Teacher Night" at the beginning of the school year to the family picnic, to providing refreshments for all events ranging from All Saints, First Communion Recognition, Veterans Program, Fine Arts Night, visits by the bishop, promotion, and special events. There are three additional parent/guardian groups that are essential in providing support to the school. These include the Dads Club, the Moms Club, and the Latino Moms group. These groups love the camaraderie of their shared mission of providing additional support to the school. The parents love the school Facebook page (more than 1000 likes), which develops a close sense of belonging by the visual display of daily school activities as they love seeing the school community in action. This belonging pervades other areas of the school environment ranging from assisting families in short-term crisis, providing adequate financial assistance, providing such things as meals, school supplies, and uniforms to those in need to providing spiritual support through a strong prayer community.

**FOCUS 5: The school is seen as a viable part of the local civic community and is supported by pastor, governing body, parents/guardians, school organizations, and the larger Catholic community.**

#### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe how the school is supported by the civic and larger Catholic community.

► Immaculate Conception School enjoys the support of two parishes in Denton, Immaculate Conception and Saint Mark. In addition, the school has a connection to St. John Paul the Great Parish, the Denton Catholic Campus Community which serves the two universities of Denton and a community college with campuses in



Corinth and Gainesville. Both parishes support our school in a variety of ways, ranging from providing priests for our liturgies and reconciliation opportunities, assisting our school through a variety of ministries, including music and youth ministries, maintaining the school building and providing financial support.

The school is a member of the National Catholic Education Association, works in partnership with the Kiwanis Club of Denton, and is supported by many communities, particularly through active participation in the school's annual auction. The school has an ongoing relationship with Keep Denton Beautiful, which has provided unending support of the school's stewardship efforts through its grant program and providing resources in maintaining its school-wide recycling program, its service-learning garden, its greenhouse endeavor, tree planting, and all other environmental pursuits through its Denton Sustainable Schools Program. Thanks to the amazing support of KDB, the school was nominated and won in the summer of 2018 the top stewardship award given to an educational institution in the state by Keep Texas Beautiful.

B. Explain the pastor's relationship to and involvement with the school. (If there is more than one pastor or other priests involved, please explain their involvement.)

► The pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish serves as the direct line of authority between the principal and the diocesan Superintendent of Schools. The Immaculate Conception pastor signs all major contracts pertaining to the school's operation when needed. The Saint Mark pastor serves in a supportive role, by providing special collections, a school subsidy, use of parish facilities when needed, and use of parish publications and staff when needed. Peripherally, the pastor of St. John Paul the Great Catholic Campus Community has assisted with reconciliation and in approval to provide field trip opportunities so that our eighth graders can learn more about the Catholic campus community in Denton, specifically at the University of North Texas where the church is housed.

The Immaculate Conception pastor has a direct investment of time with the school, working with the Advisory Council, various parish and school committees and councils, and meeting on a regular basis with the principal. The Immaculate Conception pastor is present at most school functions, visits the classes, celebrates Mass and other services for the school community. The pastor is extremely supportive of the school. Each year he individually interviews every eighth grader so he can get to know them better, and so he can hear from each eighth grader about their dreams for the future and any suggestions they might have for the school. The pastor has provided many mini-retreat opportunities for staff, leading them in weekly learning sessions on such topics as Lenten meditations and prayer. The parochial vicar and the deacons of both parishes are visible and active participants in the school, mainly serving during the school liturgies and when needed for spiritual direction and other services such as our annual Pet Blessing, All Saints Celebrations, and St. Blaise Throat Blessing.

C. Explain what the school does to assist faculty, staff, students and parents/guardians in understanding the relationship between the school and parish(es).

► The school and parishes work together in bridging the role of parish and school. The school staff is informed and updated as to the status of activities that involve the parish. There is an almost seamless relationship among the faculty, staff, students, and parents/guardians when it comes to the relationship between the school and parishes, especially our lead parish of Immaculate Conception. School faculty also are members of parish ministries such as the choir, Monsignor King Outreach Center, Our Daily Bread ministries among a few. They participate in summer Vacation Bible School activities. The parish youth minister also teaches choir in the school. School families are actively involved in the formulation of parish retreats, Bible studies, scout and American Heritage Girls groups, and more. Students who are altar servers at the school regularly serve for parish funerals and at Masses that are outside of school time. There is a hand-in-hand relationship in the school bridging with the parish on service activities. This includes service projects where all work together to assist those in need such as the Catholic Daughters who donate school supplies and other items to the school while the school liaisons on projects such as letter-writing to shut-ins and collections for those in need. There are small things where students and staff assist the parish such as when a parish staff member requests that students help pull palms apart for Palm Sunday, do the inserting for the bulletins, placing pencils and envelopes in the pews for a stewardship drive, or replacing the old hymnals with the new.

The school and parish cooperatively share facilities and have implemented a Shared Use facility agreement. The school and parish, through its social media such as Facebook, and websites, publications, brochures, public relations efforts, and one-on-one communication, works to explain the integral role the school plays as an inter-

parochial ministry of two parishes. The school and parish work together to foster combined ministries. The principal attends parish staff meetings and serves as a liaison between the school and parish. School parents and patrons serve on parish councils and committees. The Immaculate Conception pastor participates on the various boards, committees, and activities of the school.

The parish staff members provide huge support through coordination of the Safe Environment Program, collaboration on providing information to the parish bulletin, bookkeeping support, database support as needed to provide information for marketing and recruiting, and speakers when requested for such topics as mission outreach. The parish Business Manager has been an ongoing source of support as the school and parish work on things such as facility upkeep and repair, master planning, and financial operation. The parish and school share maintenance personnel in a very positive relationship so that all parties can see the big picture of how the school integrates as a ministry to the parish. Immaculate Conception Catholic School is so very blessed to have such wonderful parish support.

D. If a private school, how does the school see itself in relationship to the (arch)diocese in the area of faith formation of the faculty, staff, students and parents/guardians?

► Immaculate Conception School is an inter-parochial parish school. It is a member of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth school system. The school sees itself as a bridge in fostering faith formation of faculty, staff, students, and parents. The parish and school facilities are used on a regular basis by the diocese as a regional point of presentation for a variety of programs ranging from regional RCIA and Confirmation gatherings to retreats to catechesis opportunities. The school regularly informs stakeholders of programs presented by the diocese. Faculty, staff, and students regularly attend programs that are sponsored by the diocese. Parents are made aware of the opportunities for faith formation that the diocese provides throughout the year. The diocese provides a large part of the faith formation opportunities to staff members who are required to attain religious education certification in order to teach religion or be employed in a Catholic school.

**FOCUS 6: The school maintains an active partnership with parents/guardians whose fundamental concern is the spiritual and academic formation of students.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Faculty and staff members, students and parents/guardians come together in prayer, work and social events.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Parent/guardian organizations give appropriate emphasis to spiritual programs and education.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Resource materials, programs, and activities for spiritual and academic formation of students are available through the school and/or parish.	YES	X	NO	
4.	There are a variety of roles and activities in which parents/guardians may choose to be involved.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:**► The Immaculate Conception Catholic School facility has served the school, parishes, and larger community in many ways since its dedication in 2002. The parish and school have worked together so that the building could be available to the larger community when scheduling could be accommodated. Summer athletic and academic camps, English-As-Second Language classes, Safe Environment classes, summer tutoring, and remedial reading classes offered through Texas Tech University and community-organized activities such as the annual Turkey Roll bike rally and fundraiser sponsored by Denton Kiwanis. The building has been made available to the community at large for other activities including sport activities, retreats, blood drives, festivals, diocesan educational opportunities, “Faith, Family, and Fellowship” quarterly events, and numerous special programs. Our sister parishes of St. Mark and St. John Paul the Great parishes have both utilized the school facility for fundraisers, appreciation events, and other special programs. The school facility is a vibrant place where the calendar is completely full and overflowing most of the time, so much so, that there are collegial standards in effect through a Shared Use Agreement to assist in resolving facility requests according to priority.

## DOMAIN SUMMARY

## DOMAIN II: COMMUNITY

**After conducting an in-depth study of this domain, the school finds the following:**

### **1. Area(s) of strength:**

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School continues to be blessed by the many members of our school, parish and community at large who give so generously of themselves. We all share the commitment to give of ourselves to help achieve the many goals we set forth in our strategic plan as we work together to build the Body of Christ on earth. The Pastoral Message *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1972) called on the entire Christian community to make a "generous effort" to support parents in educating their children and communicating the faith and to provide education programs that "correspond with the ideal of Catholic education." This concept drives another great strength of our school as evidenced by the community commitment of so many stakeholders in the creation of Immaculate Conception Catholic School in 1995, the construction of a new facility in 2002, the completion of the joint parish-school payment on the remaining \$1.3 million school debt in December 2016. While the challenges of paying a note were ongoing for 14 years, the community was also busy assisting the school in building an endowment that has now reached \$1 million.

*Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Schools in the Third Millennium* (2005) identified the importance of school choice for all parents, saying, "[It is the] responsibility of the whole Catholic community to strive towards the goal of making Catholic elementary schools available, accessible, and affordable to all Catholic parents and children." Our School Advisory Council, parish, and community have joined this call by keeping tuition rates stable and by providing major tuition assistance so parents who desire a Catholic education for their children can have one. This remains a great community strength.

The school promotes a community of believers and learners in the spirit of Jesus Christ as experienced in the Catholic Church and lived out as active citizens in today's society. The faculty and staff model their faith experiences in many ways in the school and in the wider community. Among many things, they share positive faith experiences with their students and set excellent examples on a daily basis. They are personal witnesses to the students about their Catholic faith and belief and are active members of their parishes through mass attendance and participation as extra-ordinary ministers. Students are encouraged to be actively involved in their parish communities by participating in Mass as altar servers. They are encouraged to volunteer as exemplary 'helpers' in charitable collections and other church and community ministries, participate in Vacation Bible School activities, support Knights of Columbus activities, support mission efforts of Patzun, Guatemala, cards to shut-ins among many community activities.

The faculty and staff of Our Lady's School continue to be extremely grateful for the blessings that have been bestowed upon our school, our Catholic parishes in Denton and surrounding areas, and in our community at large for this gift of Catholic education.

### **2. Area(s) needing improvement or strengthening:**

(An area that needs growth/strengthening is one which, while present, could be improved or one which does not meet TCCED standards/policies.)

► Through its Strategic Plan Immaculate Conception Catholic School seeks to foster opportunities for parents, parishioners and local community members to interact and communicate with our staff and students. Since community is another great strength of the school, there will be ongoing review of our current strong programs of community outreach as we seek new opportunities for visibility within the community at large.

### **3. Action plan:**

(List what the school plans to do within the next 3 years to strengthen or enhance the area(s) mentioned above.)

Our Strategic Plan sets the path for the next five years as we continue to enhance community, a great strength of our school.

► Goal 1: Maintain a strong relationship among the school, local parishes and the Catholic community.

(Benchmark 1.3)

Objectives:

1. Promote communication, coordination, and collaboration between the school and Catholic communities.
2. Increase parishioner ownership of and participation in school programs such as fundraising, volunteering, and educational enrichment programs.
3. Encourage members of the school community to participate in parish ministries, programs, and activities.
4. Have representatives between churches and school serve on various councils and committees.
5. Bridge various service and other organizations by providing scholarship opportunities, through bulletins, newsletters, and social media, and by students having more visibility with the parish.

## **DOMAIN III: GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

School governance supports an educational program of high quality with systematic, legal and fiscal responsibilities.

### **SUPPORTING DATA MAY INCLUDE:**

- Budget
- Operating budget for the previous school year
- Salary scale Governing body constitutions and bylaws
- Governing body policy handbook
- Minutes of governing body meetings for the last two years
- Organizational chart
- Notices and schedules for governing body meetings
- Faculty/staff handbook
- Student/parent/guardian handbook
- Governing body and/or (arch)diocesan policies covering rights of administration, faculty and staff, and students
- Personnel contract/agreement
- Grievance procedure
- Current operating for the past three years
- Copy of the most current financial statement and/or audit
- Public notices/forms of compliance with non-discrimination laws (Titles VI, VII, IX)
- Documentation verifying bloodborne pathogens training
- Emergency/Crisis Management Plan

**FOCUS 1:** The school has a governing body in place; its jurisdiction and function are clearly defined.

### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

Describe the governing body's type of authority (i.e., advisory, consultative, limited jurisdiction or full jurisdiction).

► As an inter-parish parochial school of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, the Bishop is the authority over the school in collaboration with the Office of Catholic Schools. The school is part of the educational mission of Immaculate Conception and Saint Mark parishes in Denton, Texas. The lead pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish is the canonical administrative authority of the school in collaboration with the principal. The School Advisory Council is consultative and serves with the principal for the good of the school and parish communities. The council is involved in planning, formulating, and modifying policies.

**INDICATORS:** (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)

1.	The constitution and bylaws of the governing body are periodically reviewed.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The practices of the governing body are consistent with the constitution and bylaws.	YES	X	NO	
3.	There is a process for reviewing and updating policies.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Regular governing body meetings are open.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Meeting dates, times and places are announced to the school community.	YES	X	NO	
6.	Orientation is given to prospective and/or new governing body members.	YES	X	NO	
7.	There is ongoing communication and coordination between the school's administrator and the governing body.	YES	X	NO	
8.	The roles and responsibilities of the governing body are clearly stated and recorded in the school's governance documents and school publications.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ► Immaculate Conception Catholic School is blessed to have actively-engaged council members who take their commitment on the council seriously. They come from a wide range of professional expertise including educators, accountants, managers, construction, to name a few. The council spent two years updating the present Long-Term Strategic Plan of the school which drives the decision-making of the council in its advisory capacity.

#### DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. Describe the school's governance structure and the range of authority.

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School is supported by the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Fort Worth in coordination with the lead pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish. The governing body consists of the pastor, the principal, and the ICCS Advisory Council. The principal is responsible for the implementation of all policy and procedures of the Diocese of Fort Worth and local policies as approved by the school Advisory Council and pastor. The diocesan organizational chart outlines the range of authority.

B. Describe how the governing body's members are selected, including how the school's public is given the opportunity to be represented.

► Membership on the School Advisory Council consists of twelve to seventeen members. When openings occur, when individual's term of commitment has ended, or when a resignation occurs, announcements regarding openings on the council are placed in the church bulletins, school newsletters, and posted on social media including the school website and both parish and school Facebook pages. In addition, current members solicit potential members. There is an effort to have all publics represented ranging from parish members, alumni parents, and current school parents. The pastor appoints one member who serves at his pleasure. All other potential School Advisory Council members undertake a process of discernment which is described in the by-laws of the constitution which includes criteria for identifying potential conflicts of interest.

The current Advisory Council reviews the candidates and seeks membership from those who have talents and expertise that can be utilized for the benefit of Immaculate Conception Catholic School. The goal is to recruit council members who can contribute to the defined Strategic Planning goals of the school in areas such as Education, Technology, Communication and Recruitment, Finance, Marketing, Policy Development, and Catholic Identity. Selections are made at the May meeting with final affirmation of new candidates and election of officers at the August retreat. The newly selected members join the council in August and serve three-year terms. All selections are subject to pastor approval. Incomplete terms may be filled by appointment.

C. How and when does the governing body communicate with:

(1) The Faculty and Staff

► Information is communicated to the faculty and staff in weekly informational materials from the principal's office. Council members are visible and available during school functions, and interact as members of the school

and parish communities. Advisory Council agendas and minutes are posted on the school website and are emailed in advance of all meetings to the school families and staff as part of the weekly school email.

(2) The (Arch)Diocese

► The principal attends diocesan principal meetings and reports information and policies as needed to the Advisory Council. The Catholic Schools Office is available for consultation as needed. The diocesan by-laws for Catholic schools is available to the Advisory Council. Copies of School Advisory Council minutes are made available to Diocesan Catholic schools office. Other news worthy information regarding the school is submitted for publication in the *North Texas Catholic*, the diocesan newspaper, and is readily available on the school website.

(3) The Parents/Guardians

► The monthly Brown Envelope is sent home with the school children to communicate information to the parents. Home and School Association Executive Board meetings are used to share information and to receive input for possible consideration by the council. The Home and School President holds a standing position on the council. Parents have access to Advisory Council activities through the school website, weekly and other regular communications via email and hard copy notes sent home and through local and area media outlets, including parish bulletins, newspapers, social media include the school website and school and parish Facebook pages, and the North Texas Catholic diocesan newspaper. In January of each year, the Advisory Council includes a letter to the school families outlining the tuition rates and state of the school that will set the path for the next school year.

(4) Support Groups

► The Advisory Council communicates with support groups via church bulletins, social media including both parish and school Facebook pages, the *North Texas Catholic*, and school newsletters which contain articles regarding the school. The school's Strategic Plan, agenda, and minutes are on the school website. The council members communicate with support groups through personal communication as they discuss their role on the council with those people to whom they come into contact on a regular basis. Council members are visible and assist with pulpit talks in the parish as they communicate information about the school and assist with the recruitment process.

D. Identify the dates and type of in-service for the governing body, including the most recent (arch)diocesan/local in-service. Describe.

August 18, 2018, was the most recent in-service retreat for the School Advisory Council. Father Tim Thompson, Immaculate Conception Pastor, began the in-service retreat with Mass in the Immaculate Conception Chapel. The council reviewed progress on the goals set for the prior school year, and then entered into a brainstorming session for goal-setting for the 2018-2019 school year. Father Thompson shared with the group his vision of the goals and responsibilities of the School Advisory Council along with the goals of the parish. The council reviewed most recent national data on Catholic schools, the Catholic Schools Standards and Benchmarks as related to the school's strategic plan, and was reminded of national council resources that are available through the National Catholic Education Association. The most recent diocesan in-service was on August 26, 2017, at Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth. Catholic School Management made a presentation on the various models of advisory councils nationwide in Catholic schools and a diocesan constitution for advisory councils was introduced.

E. **(For religious sponsored/private schools):** Describe how the governing body's purpose and function are clear in relation to the sponsoring organization's ownership and mission for the school.

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School is an inter-parish parochial school of the Fort Worth Diocese. The bishop is the authority over the school. The school is a part of the educational mission of Immaculate Conception and St. Mark parishes in Denton, Texas. The pastors delegate administrative authority in collaboration with the principal. The purpose of the School Advisory Council is consultative. The School Advisory Council is involved in planning, formulating, and modifying policies. The School Advisory Council does not enact policy. Regular and open communication among the pastors, principal and School Advisory Council is essential for success of this educational ministry. The School Advisory Council serves with the principal for the good of the school and parish communities.

F. List the major accomplishments of the governing body over the past three years.

► The most significant accomplishments over the past three years include:

1. Updating the school's Long-Term Strategic Plan that sets the vision for the school ministry through the year 2023.
2. Working with the parish in setting the strategy for paying off the \$2.5 million debt on the facility which was accomplished on December 8, 2016.
3. Placing a bonus system in place to enhance staff salaries that is directed to pay just salaries to school personnel while being sensitive to budget limitations of a Catholic school.
4. Stabilizing tuition rates within the framework of efficient budget management, debt reduction, while still providing significant tuition assistance to those families who need it.
5. Working with the diocese, parish, and school entities to assess and then enhance planning and best practices for the safety and security of the parish and school campus.
6. Providing support to school endeavors including recruitment retention, fundraising efforts, and endowment growth.
7. Working together with the school and church communities toward common interests and goals including involvement in the accreditation self-study process.
8. Becoming visible as a council with the goal of increasing the school's exposure in the parishes, the local community, and diocese.

**G. List the governing body's goals for the current year.**

In addition to assisting in any way with a successful accreditation process, the Advisory Council selected three goals from the Strategic Plan as the major focus of their efforts for the 2018-2019 school year in which plans of action are being formulated:

Goal 10: Maintain a secure and safe campus for our school community. (Benchmark 12.1)

Objectives:

1. Actively review and refine the emergency plan every year.
2. Work with parish staff located in the school building to prevent breaches in security.
3. Educate the entire school community on the security protocol.
4. Engage outside safety resources to continue to develop our safety plan.

Goal 11: Position the school for future growth while maintaining maximum enrollment levels. (Benchmark 13.2)

Objectives:

1. Take steps to stabilize and then reverse increases in tuition and fees.
2. Further develop collaboration with area parishes and the wider community to attract students from parishes without schools in the local geographic area.
3. Expand financial resources to enhance the school's capacity to attract and retain a diverse base of qualified students regardless of family economic means.

Goal 13: Pursue alternate funding options that will provide financial support for the school's short and long term operations and reserves. (Benchmark 13.3)

Objectives:

3. Explore, identify, and implement means to provide additional revenue growth.
4. Emphasize endowment fund growth with a view toward a long-term target of \$1,250,000 by 2023 that ensures the school's permanence and affordability.

**H. Describe the role of the governing body/committee in the school's strategic planning process.**

► The School Advisory Council, in conjunction with the principal, develops, modifies and updates long-range



financial plans and the five year plan which includes school operations, development and fund raising, budget, and other areas such as extra-curricular activities as is tied to the National Standards and Benchmarks for Catholic Schools. The goals of the most recent strategic plan were completed in May 2018 following a two-year process. The advisory council participates in an ongoing process of formulating action plans derived from the goals of the strategic plan. A copy of this plan is included with the support data.

I. Describe how the school community is represented in the strategic planning process.

The school community is represented through the membership of the Advisory Council, so members are vital in communicating and representing the school community in the strategic planning process. The Home and School Association Executive Board works with the principal and has a standing membership on the Advisory Council in order to represent the school community in the strategic planning process. A variety of school publics within the school community, including such organizations as the Dads, Moms, and Latino Moms clubs provide input to the strategic planning process. School staff participates with input as well as Parish staff members. The principal meets with the pastor and school business manager as needed to move the strategic planning process forward.

J. Describe how the governing body and administration ensure that the strategic plan is implemented, monitored and communicated to the school community.

► The Immaculate Conception Catholic School Advisory Council members, the pastor and principal monitor and assess the five-year strategic plan at each monthly meeting based on the goals for the current school year. For example, a high priority is Goal 10 which addresses safety and security. The Diocese of Fort Worth conducted a safety assessment of each parish and school in the spring 2018. Prior to that time, the school and parish had already been acting upon its strategic plan, specifically, the implementation of the Dads Club “Knight Guard” which assessed the needs of providing security before and after school as well as during the school Masses. The school and parish have worked together to enhance the school and parish emergency plan based on Standard Response Protocol as well as planning for and providing funds for the installation of additional security cameras for the school. The council simultaneously is working on long-term planning for tuition management, budget, endowment, recruitment, and enrollment retention which is communicated to the school community through the council, the clubs and Home and School Associations Executive Board, through newsletters, social media, and other communication vehicles such as the Brown Envelope as needed.

**FOCUS 2. The school's relationship with supporting groups is clearly defined for effective school management. These groups include but are not limited to: Home and School Association/PTO, Booster Club, Parish Council, Men’s Club, Altar Society, Knights of Columbus.**

#### **SUPPORTING DATA:**

- ◆ **Organization’s handbook, constitution, bylaws**
- ◆ **Minutes of group meetings for the last two years**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Input from persons (e.g., pastor, school council, Catholic Schools Office) involved is actively sought prior to making significant decisions which affect the school.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The roles and activities of the school’s support groups are clear and consistent with the mission of the school.	YES	X	NO	
3.	There is ongoing communication and coordination between the school’s administrator and the governing body.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ► Immaculate Conception Catholic School is truly blessed to have a pastor who is actively engaged in the overall operations of the school and is available to make significant decisions following collaboratively input from the persons and support groups mentioned above.

#### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

A. List and briefly describe the school's supportive groups and their functions.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School key support groups include both the Immaculate Conception and Saint Mark parishes. Immaculate Conception is the parent parish and Saint Mark grew out of this parish as a result of population growth in Denton County. The finance councils of both parishes support the school. The school is located at the parent parish.

The Home and School Association is a support group consisting of the parents and grandparents of the Immaculate Conception school student population. This group meets on a regular basis and is highly involved in activities related to the operations of the school. The Booster Club provides an extensive network of volunteers to assist with supporting the needs of our athletic activities such as providing scorekeepers, timers, concession stand, and gate volunteers. These volunteers provide assistance at our two major academics meets which are sponsored by the school with funds going to the Booster Fund. These volunteers are judges, concession help, hall monitors, grounds supervisors, and graders. The school has a very active Dads Club, Moms Club, and Latino Moms Group in which members assist in direct implementation of specific requests of the Home and School Association and administrative staff.

The Knights of Columbus and Catholic Daughters/Altar Society are wonderful supporters of the school, holding fundraisers for the benefit of the school and providing office supplies and other needs for the school. The Knights provide a Color Guard at our annual Veterans Day program.

Room Parents provide support to the homeroom teacher and is a liaison for the teacher to assist as needed with coordinating activities and fundraisers such as the annual school auction. The school's Alumni and Friends provide financial support through such activities as the annual school auction, through special collections in the parish, through representation on the school advisory council, through their participation in alumni events such as the annual alumni volleyball and basketball games, through their volunteer assistance with the academic meets, and through assistance with some special projects, such as small capital projects as funded through the auction's Fund-A-Project program.

**FOCUS 3: Rights and responsibilities of the faculty, staff, students and parents/guardians are explicitly defined in regulatory handbooks.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Student/parent/guardian handbooks are reviewed, revised and distributed to the parent/guardian and students annually.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Faculty/staff handbooks are reviewed, revised and distributed to the faculty/staff annually.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Suggestions for policy/regulation revisions are solicited from parents/guardians and staff leadership groups.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Acknowledgement of receipt of student/parent/guardian and faculty/staff handbooks are on file.	YES	X	NO	
5.	The school provides a process for addressing formal grievances by parents/guardians/students.	YES	X	NO	
6.	The school provides a process for addressing formal grievances by school personnel.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ► All local handbooks and policies are in place and reviewed regularly with amendments as needed. The handbooks can be found on the school website for ready access with hard copies distributed as needed to new families and to the school community at large upon request.

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe the school's grievance procedures or processes for resolution of conflict with students/parents/guardians.

► The Immaculate Conception Catholic School Handbook clearly outlines the school's procedures and processes for school communication based on supportive policies for best practices and on our Call to Gospel:

**PARENT/TEACHER/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION** Teachers are available to speak with parents during their scheduled daily planning periods or after school hours. Parents must schedule conferences in advance with the teacher to avoid grabbing "spontaneous" conferences at awkward times such as in the halls, large group functions, school meetings, cafeteria, or playground situations. Individual conferences can be scheduled by calling the school office or by requesting one in writing. Preparing for a conference ahead of time allows the teacher to best address the needs of your child during the meeting time.

In keeping with our church teaching, concerns should be handled at the lowest level. Note: It is Immaculate Conception Catholic School policy that a parent/teacher conference must occur before requesting administrative intervention.

**Parent-Teacher Communication:** Communication between parents and teachers is an important and integral part of Immaculate Conception Catholic School.

1. The procedure to arrange a meeting with a particular teacher is to call the school office or to send a note/e-mail to the teacher requesting such a meeting. Such a note or phone call should include more than one time over the next several days that a parent is available to meet.

2. Immediately before school or after school is not an appropriate time to have unscheduled discussions with a teacher. All teachers have duties both before and after school. A teacher may arrange to meet with parents before or after school or even during the school day, but such a meeting or discussion needs to be arranged in advance. When approached by parents before or after school wanting a meeting, teachers have been instructed to ask the parent to send a note/email or to call the office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a meeting.

3. Discussions between teachers and parents should not take place in front of students unless both parties agree that a particular student needs to be present.

4. If at all possible, within 24 hours, teachers will acknowledge parent calls or messages.

5. Concerns should be handled at the lowest possible level. Persons with concerns should first attempt to address the concern with the teacher. Only after such attempts have failed, should the dean or principal be contacted.

**Process for communication:**

Note: Discussion of concerns must always be done in person with all parties present per below:

--Parent/Teacher

--Parent/Teacher/Dean of Students

--Parent/Teacher/Dean of Students/Principal

--Parent/Teacher/Dean of Students/Principal/Pastor

--Parent/Teacher/Dean of Students/Principal/Pastor/Superintendent of Schools

B. Describe the school's grievance procedures or processes for resolution of conflict with school personnel (teachers, support staff, administrators).

## ► GRIEVANCE

Grievance is an employee's claim of misapplication or misinterpretation of terms of the employee's contract or alleged violation of established personnel policies at the local or diocesan level. Purpose: The purpose of the grievance procedure is to secure, at the first possible administrative level, equitable resolution of the grievance.

**Procedure:**

1. **Informal.** Before allowing differences to become formalized into grievances, every effort will be made to resolve local level disputes by means of a free and open discussion between the employee and the administrator with a view to reconciliation and resolution as befits those who minister in the name of Christ in the Catholic community. If the matter cannot be resolved by dialogue, a mutually agreed upon third party may be asked to sit in on the discussion. Without exception, informal attempts must be made to resolve the issue before the formal procedure is initiated.

**2. Formal.** If the informal attempts at resolving differences are unsuccessful, the formal grievance procedure outlined below is to be followed. The proceedings are kept appropriately confidential. The term "days" as used in this policy shall mean Monday through Friday, normal working days. A formal grievance shall not be accepted if it is filed or appealed out of the required sequence of levels. A grievance may be withdrawn at any level and cannot be reopened. The principal must inform the Superintendent of Schools immediately whenever a formal grievance procedure has been initiated. The Grievant must strictly comply with all time limits. The failure of the Grievant to comply with the time limits shall waive the grievance and any appeal.

#### **LEVEL ONE -- Immediate Supervisor/Principal**

The Grievant shall present the grievance in writing to the immediate supervisor/principal within ten (10) days following the event on which the grievance is based. The written grievance must (i) state clearly that it is a grievance, (ii) describe the event on which the grievance is based and informal attempts that have been made to resolve it, (iii) contain a suggested remedy, (iv) be signed by the Grievant and (v) give the date on which it is presented to the supervisor/principal.

Within five (5) days following the receipt of the written statement of grievance, the supervisor/principal will arrange a meeting. The supervisor/principal, a disinterested third party, agreed upon by the supervisor/principal and grievant, shall meet. Within five (5) days following the meeting, the principal will provide the grievant with a written decision on the grievance. If the decision is not acceptable to the grievant, a written appeal of that decision may be made to the pastor.

#### **LEVEL TWO -- Pastor**

If the Grievant wishes to appeal the supervisor's/principal's decision, the Grievant Shall Present the grievance in writing as outlined in Level One to the pastor within (5) days following receipt of the Level One decision. The pastor shall, within five (5) days of receipt of the grievance, meet with both parties to the grievance. The Pastor shall present his decision in writing to the Supervisor/Principal and to the Superintendent. If the decision is not acceptable to the Grievant a written appeal of that decision may be made to the Superintendent of Schools.

In the situation where there is no local pastor, Level Two does not apply and the Grievance Procedure goes to Level Three.

#### **LEVEL THREE -- The Diocesan Superintendent of Schools**

If the Grievant wants to appeal, he/she must file the written appeal of the Level Two decision with the diocesan superintendent of schools within five (5) days after receipt of the decision. The superintendent shall confer with both parties to the grievance and with the Pastor within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal from Level Two. The superintendent may also confer with such other individuals as the superintendent may wish concerning the grievance. The decision of the superintendent is communicated in writing to the parties involved not more than five (5) days after the conferences have been held. If the decision is not acceptable to the Grievant a written complaint will be submitted by the Grievant to the chairperson of the Diocesan Board of Conciliation and Arbitration.

#### **LEVEL FOUR -- Conciliation and Arbitration Procedures**

Any disputes relating to these policies that are irresolvable through the previously noted process must be submitted to Conciliation and Arbitration. Arbitration is the final step in the complaint process and is **the** employee's exclusive remedy for the resolution of such disputes. The final decision, to be made by the arbitrator(s), is binding on both parties.

All written decisions by principal, pastor or superintendent are registered and sent by certified mail. If grievant refuses to accept the mail the five (5) days time period shall begin to run on the day the letter is mailed.

**FOCUS 4: The instructional program and the educational facilities are funded to meet accreditation standards and the stated goals of the strategic plan.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1. The annual budgeting process includes input from the faculty and staff.

YES

☒

NO

2.	Progress has been made over the past three years to enhance faculty and staff salaries and benefits.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	The school has a plan in place for monitoring financial accountability.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Sufficient funding for the following is included in the strategic plan for the school:				
	• Salaries for all school personnel.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Benefits ( <i>if applicable</i> ).	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Support of instructional program.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Plant maintenance.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Future building needs ( <i>if applicable</i> ).	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Library.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Technology.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Depreciation of buildings and equipment.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments:**► Since the school building and campus grounds are shared between the parish and the school, the parish has a vital role of support in facility enhancement, plant maintenance, future building needs, depreciation of equipment and buildings, and designated use of the facilities that is monitored by the Parish Facilities Use Calendar which is updated at minimum on a weekly basis but is also updated upon request to assure efficient use of the buildings.

#### DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. Describe the timeline for budget development.

► The Advisory Council formulates Tuition and Salary committee reviews beginning in October as part of the process of developing the budget for the next school year. This is based on a review of anticipated enrollment, proposed needs, projected capital outlays, considerations of salaries and benefits, costs for new texts and materials, etc. The council advises by consensus on the setting of tuition rates and any staff salary increases for the next year. The preliminary budget is presented to the School Advisory Council in March and is submitted to the diocese for review by April 1 of each year. It is revised and updated as deemed appropriate at subsequent meetings with a final revision due to the diocese by October 1 of the fiscal year of operation. The current fiscal budget is included with this document. Copies are included in the Supporting Data File.

B. Describe the process of long range budget planning including evidence of multi-year projections for enrollment, cost and income.

► Operational Vitality is one of the five main focus areas of the school over the next five years as presented in the Immaculate Conception Catholic School Strategic Plan, so budget support is tied directly to the long-range plan for the school. The Advisory Council has several members with expertise in budgeting and accounting, so an operational projection spreadsheet has been developed that provides projections. The council updates the projections throughout the school year with the goal of developing a three-year model based on historic data.

C. Describe the process for reviewing the financial status of the school.

► The Advisory Council reviews financials at its monthly meeting through two methods. One council member, works with the bookkeeper in providing a monthly synopsis of revenue and expenditures in a spreadsheet that is presented at each council meeting. This includes updates on the school's trust. Another council member provides a more detailed projection spreadsheet that monitors cash flow through the end of the fiscal year. This provides the council with updated information regarding the financial status.

D. Document sources of funding provided to meet the accreditation standards and stated goals of the school (i.e., tuition, support from parish(es), corporate support, endowments, grant funding, (arch)diocese, private donation, federal funding, family school organization, alumni, foundation scholarships/grants). Indicate sources of funding and **attach a copy** of the school budget.

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School documents all sources of funding to meet the accreditation standards

and the stated goals of the school and monitors these sources of funding on a daily basis through the administrative and bookkeeping areas of the school and on at least a monthly basis through presentations to the school Advisory Council. Documented funding sources include Contributions, Grants, Tuition/Scholarships, Cafeteria, Event/Activity Revenue, Program Revenue, Fund Raising Revenue, Investment Income, Other Revenue, and Total Revenue. These major line items are broken down into subcategories that include grants, registration fees, tuition, trust distributions, fundraising revenue, afterschool care revenue, and donations.

Approximately \$28,000 in federal Title I,II, and III funding and \$11,000 in federal Special Education funding for the 2018-2019 school year is earmarked from the Lead Education Agency (LEA), which is the Denton Independent School District, for services, professional development, and materials for Immaculate Conception Catholic School. As a result of this funding, and through collaboration with local and regional public school entities, the school receives diagnostic services and is able purchase materials to support students within these categories. In addition, the school is able to purchase supplementary remedial materials with around \$1,000 in federal funding that is approved through other area school districts where ICCS students reside according to federal funding regulations.

**FOCUS 5: The school operates in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The administration is aware of new laws and regulations.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Administration informs the appropriate entities regarding current laws and regulations.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Administration ensures compliance with applicable laws and regulations.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The school has access to legal advice and representation.	YES	X	NO	
5.	There is evidence of adherence to ethical business practices.	YES	X	NO	
6.	The school has in place a crisis management plan.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ► The administrative team works collaborative with all entities, including the lead parish of Immaculate Conception, to make sure the school operates in compliance with the above categories.

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe how the various members of the school are informed about applicable laws and regulations:

(1) Administration

► The administrative team, which includes the Principal, Dean of Students, Dean of Student Services, and Executive Assistant, are informed about applicable laws and regulations through diocesan orientation, in-service training, and diocesan memoranda. Additional information is obtained through participation in professional conferences and related educational conventions, through liaisons with state and federal officials such as the Federal Programs officials with local and state education agencies and through the National Catholic Education Association publications and website.

(2) Faculty/Staff

► The administrative team informs the faculty and staff via the weekly staff memo, through frequent emails as needed, at regularly scheduled meetings that take place on a weekly basis, and through special meetings called on an as-needed basis. Cluster and team meetings take place in addition to the weekly meetings targeted at specific staff audiences, such as preschool, Language Arts, etc. The principal, bookkeeper, curriculum leadership team members, and other staff provide updated information as needed to particular staff members as needed. Faculty and staff also receive information at required diocesan meetings, in-service training, staff development days, and related educational conventions and professional development opportunities. Applicable laws and regulations are documented through the faculty and staff handbook, through the school’s Crisis Management Plan, through the diocesan Safe Environment Program known as VIRTUS, and through the student and parent handbook which



documents items pertinent to staff interaction. Staff members are required to sign that they have read the staff faculty handbook which is on file. All staff members are required to be VIRTUS certified with additional renewal requirements.

(3) Parents/Guardians and Students

► Parents and students receive information from the parent-student handbook, weekly or more frequent email and texting communication, from the school and diocesan websites and Facebook pages, at Home and School Association meetings, in school newsletters and parish bulletins, through newspapers and other public news media. Parents and students are kept updated on the various protocols related to the school's Crisis Management Plan and the diocesan Safe Environment Program known as VIRTUS. Parents and students (third grade and above) are required to sign that they have read the parent-student handbook. Parents are required to be VIRTUS certified in order to volunteer. Students are required to have Safe Environment training with documentation on file.

(4) Governing Body

► Advisory Council members are apprised of local, state, and federal laws and regulations affecting education in general and Catholic education in particular through communication with the pastor, principal, diocesan officials, newspapers, through the NCEA website, and through public news outlets.

## DOMAIN SUMMARY

### DOMAIN III: GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

**After conducting an in-depth study of this domain, the school finds the following:**

**1. Area(s) of strength:**

► The School Advisory Council has an excellent working relationship with the school principal and with the pastor and staff of Immaculate Conception Parish. Since its inception the work of the School Advisory Council has been instrumental in laying a firm foundation for Catholic elementary education in Denton County and in promoting the school in whatever way it can ranging from regular pulpit talks to representing the school at a variety of functions. There is a great collaborative spirit among the administrative team, the parish, the Home and School Association, faculty and staff, parents, students, and parishioners. This wonderful support is shown through the payment of the debt on the school facility, building the school endowment, and sustaining the school operation.

**2. Area(s) needing improvement or strengthening:**

(An area that needs growth/strengthening is one which, while present, could be improved or one which does not meet TCCED standards/policies.)

► A very strong support structure is in place revolving around the school's long-term strategic plan. The strategic plan will continue to be a living document which will drive the direction of the school for many years to come. The specific area of Domain III of the Strategic Plan which will be expanded under Governance and Leadership is as follows:

Goal 4: Insure the Advisory Council, representing the diversity of stake-holders, functions according to its approved constitution and by-laws. (Benchmark 5.1)

Objectives:

1. Maintain a diverse membership level thru discernment process.
2. Conduct an annual retreat at the beginning of each school year to set the priorities and duties of the

council and the tone and direction for the school.

3. Hold monthly meetings during the school year to insure the school's fidelity to mission, academic excellence and operational vitality.
4. Conduct a yearly evaluation of the effectiveness and progress of the council.

Goal 5: Recruit, develop and retain qualified personnel committed to the mission and philosophy of the school. (Benchmark 6.3)

Objectives:

1. Maintain a competitive compensation and benefits package for professional and paraprofessional staff members through diocesan collaboration.
2. Expand the existing collaborative interview process by having administration and faculty conduct joint interviews as part of the hiring process when possible and applicable.
3. Continue the new staff orientation program, providing new staff members with a mentor and support system during their first year of employment.
4. Create an Annual Staff Development Plan providing on- and off-site professional and spiritual development opportunities for faculty and staff.
5. Increase and maintain the percentage of religion teachers who have completed the Diocesan Catechist Certification Program.
6. Achieve and maintain an acceptable retention rate for professional faculty members.
7. Increase training and awareness of technology.

### **3. Action plan:**

(List what the school plans to do within the next 3 years to strengthen or enhance the area(s) mentioned above.)

► The stakeholders of Immaculate Conception Catholic School are dedicated to continued develop of the school's long-term strategic plan which will address the school's direction over the next five years. This will be done by expansion of committees with specific duties assigned to carry out specific tasks related to the strategic plan. These publics will continue to develop its Action Plan for each area of its Strategic Plan, specifically assuring that the school's operational viability will remain strong with a specific path set for the future. This Action Plan will be reviewed on a monthly basis by the Advisory Council and pertinent stakeholders, including the pastor, faculty, staff, parishioners, and school families.



## **DOMAIN IV: PERSONNEL**

### **PART A: ADMINISTRATION**

**The instructional leader initiates and monitors an effective and efficient program of studies. The principal has a major responsibility of providing instructional leadership in the school. Collaborative program planning is encouraged and assistance from appropriate faculty and staff is actively solicited. The contribution of all concerned, under the leadership of the principal, should be considered in evaluating the effectiveness of the educational program within the school.**

#### **SUPPORTING DATA MAY INCLUDE:**

- Accreditation Certificate
- Administrator's evaluation forms on file
- Bulletins
- Current Accreditation Status Letter and Report
- Current Visiting Team Consensus Report
- Faculty or (arch)diocesan handbook for personnel
- Job descriptions for administrators, teachers, and support staff
- Meeting agendas: students, faculty, parents/guardians, community
- Needs assessment for staff development on file
- Newsletters
- Newspaper clippings
- Personnel folders
- Procedures for hiring, evaluating, and dismissing personnel
- Self Study
- Specialized and support staff evaluation forms on file
- Surveys
- TCCED Annual Report for Continued School Accreditation
- Teacher memos
- Teachers' evaluation forms on file

**FOCUS 1: The administrative team meets the requirements as outlined in the TCCED qualifications for Catholic school administrators.**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

- A. Define your administrative team and list the administrative team's qualifications on the "Professional Personnel" chart on page 11.

► The Administrative Team consists of the Principal, Dean of Students, Dean of Student Services, and the Executive Administrative Assistant. Job Descriptions are on file. The Administrative Team is dedicated to the mission and philosophy of Immaculate Conception Catholic School and oversees the implementation of the day-to-day operations that carry out the mission and philosophy. This includes maintaining a strong Catholic Identity, collaborating with staff in decision-making in maintaining a strong academic environment, building positive relationships among faculty, staff, school families, the parishes, and the community, and working to make Our Lady's School a safe and secure place as we seek God's will in our lives.

- B. Administrative Profile

(Identify the positions and/or titles used in your school's administrative structure.)

<i>Position</i>	<i>Full-Time</i>	<i>Part-Time</i>	<i>Primary Responsibilities</i>
Principal—Elaine Schad	X		Oversight of all aspects of school operation; eighth grade religion teacher
Dean of Students—Paul Cuttica	X		Pre-K-8 student intervention/teacher-staff mentor/Federal Programs Director; part-time teacher—second grade and music
Dean of Student Services—Ann Morgeson	X		K-8 student intervention/after-care director, teacher mentor/special projects; part-time teacher—social studies and religion
Executive Administrative Assistant—Kristy Hawley		X	Administrative support/office management
Bookkeeper—Maureen Parsonage	X		Works with administrative team regarding financial operations; part-time after-care
Technology Director—Mitch Borowski	X		Works with administrative team and all staff in providing technical support and expertise regarding hardware and software operations as well as provide input on technology purchases that drive the teaching and learning process; math, science, and computer teacher

**FOCUS 2: The administrative team is visible and works collaboratively with the school community to ensure interaction and involvement in the total educational process.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1. The principal disseminates information to individuals and agencies in the local community.	YES	X	NO	
2. The principal maintains a good working relationship with other administrators of the (arch)diocese, as well as (arch)diocesan office staff.	YES	X	NO	
3. Teachers are free to share concerns about the school with the principal.	YES	X	NO	

4.	The principal is accessible when needed.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Through effective management of the day-to-day operation of the school, the principal promotes confidence among faculty and staff, parents/guardians and community.	YES	X	NO	
6.	Students feel free to initiate communication with the principal.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ►

### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

Describe the collaborative approaches the school principal initiates that supports school improvement.

► Parents are the primary educators of their children. They send their children to a Catholic school to receive assistance with the formal education process through the lens of faith. The parents have conferences with the teachers and principal, as required. Members of the community fill numerous volunteer positions in the school as well as give educational talks and presentations.

The Principal interacts and works collaboratively and launches initiatives that support school improvement as a result of participation at regular diocesan principal meetings, parish staff meetings, Advisory Council meetings, building meetings, Home and School Association meetings, Room Parent meetings, development and public relations activities, and other one-on-one daily interactions. The staff meets weekly or more frequently to discuss items concerning the school community. The principal provides leadership throughout the school community through constant planning of events that involve the entire school community, and through social media, memos, newsletters, and a weekly, or more frequent, principal's electronic event communication directed to all in the school community including the parish staff and advisory council. The principal utilizes many forms of additional communication including local and parish bulletins, local and regional newspapers, and advertising. The principal is readily accessible to parents when needed for collaboration on their child's individual progress, and to staff for a variety of needs ranging from facilities and supplies to evaluation. The principal meets regularly with the parish staff and pastor of the lead parish to report on school happenings and receive input. The pastor attends the school advisory council meetings so that he can provide parish and school input to the advisory council and principal as the council addresses various agenda items.

The principal collaborates with the following entities in responding to changes within the community in order to support school improvement: Immaculate Conception Catholic School Home and School Association, Immaculate Conception and Saint Mark Parishes, parents, Knights of Columbus, teachers, staff, Advisory Council members, meetings with the pastors, parish staff interaction, Kiwanis Club, Altar Society, all ministries of the parishes, City of Denton and Denton ISD officials, civic organizations, Diocese of Fort Worth officials. This is not an all-inclusive list as there are others in the community which provide information and feedback.

Since the parents are the primary educators of their children, the principal is in constant communication with this group in assessing the needs of the school community. The principal works with school staff in assessing and responding to changes in curriculum and instruction, personnel, facilities, medical indications, religious formation, Catholic identity, and other areas of need. The School Advisory Council is a constant source of aid in responding to short and long-term planning, including the development of a five-year strategic plan, financial changes and planning, school development, volunteerism, policy development, and brainstorming for the future. The principal attends regular meetings with the Immaculate Conception Parish staff in order to respond to any forth-coming changes at the parish level. The principal meets as needed with the Immaculate Conception pastor to keep current and respond to any changes that may be suggested. The parish communities of Immaculate Conception and Saint Mark provide input regarding the need for the school to highlight it's ministry to both parishes, including development and changes in how the school provides community service, and changes to liturgy preparation and participation. The principal is greatly aided by the ICCS Home and School Association, the Room Parents, and volunteers in responding to the increased need for completing tasks utilizing volunteers.

**FOCUS 3: The principal is aware of and responds to the changing needs of the community.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The principal knows the local community and is aware of changing needs, (e.g., economic, ecclesial, etc.)	YES	X	NO	
2.	The principal works with parent/guardian and other organizations to improve the school’s service to students and the community.	YES	X	NO	
Comments: ►					

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## DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. Explain how the principal, as the leader of the school community, learns of and responds to changing community needs.

The principal responds to the needs of those who cannot afford a Catholic education by seeing that assistance is given to any child who requests it within the financial constraints of the school operation. The school as a whole, or classrooms in particular, conducts community projects to help the needy in the community as well as responds to individual situations. An example would be any time a staff member has a life-changing event such as a new baby, a death, or an illness in the family, or there's a need to respond to a life situation within the school community, the principal, staff, and school community has responded with an outpouring of prayers and material support for those people as needed.

One of the greatest challenges facing the principal and the school community has been the financial restraints brought on by the evolving demographics of our Catholic community which has increased the requests for financial assistance from school families. In collaboration with the pastor and school advisory council, the principal has worked to maintain stability of tuition rates, and has worked to build the school endowment to fund scholarships. In addition, the principal has worked collaboratively with the parish on additional help for the school, such as the completion of paying off the school note and the implementation of a regular collection for the school by the lead parish. Finally, the principal has worked through various media and social media, including local bulletins, parent and community mailings, and the formation of various committees on goal-setting and implementation of development efforts.

The principal's greatest response has been in providing stability of leadership in the school. In her 18.5 years in the position, the present principal began her journey at Our Lady's School in 2000 when the school was in its infancy, beginning its sixth year of existence. The school was located in a Parish Center on Elm Street in facilities that were inadequate to sustain the growth of the school and had not yet attained grade levels through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The principal, working with the parish and school building committees, organized and implemented the Upper School model for the middle school, implemented Fine Arts programs, began the school's first athletic and extra-curricular academic league competitions, and organized efforts to move into the new school building. Once in the new facility, the principal has worked with all stakeholders in technology and telecommunication upgrades, playground and athletic field enhancement, aesthetic changes to the interior and exterior of the school facility, development of the Grotto area, and in the implementation of the Shared Use Agreement. The principal continues to respond to the evolving needs of the school through the continued development of new programs, refinement of existing programs, including extra-curricular activities, curriculum and instruction enhancement, retaining a faith-filled quality staff, and collaborating with the parishes and community at large.

The principal's philosophy is based on the servant leadership model of Jesus Christ (Luke 22:26) as reflected through the servant leadership educational model of Thomas Sergiovanni (1992). As a result, the principal continually seeks input from all school stakeholders ranging from community organizations such as Keep Denton Beautiful which supports the school's efforts at caring for God's creation through stewardship, to the Home and School Association, ICCS Advisory Council, parish staff of the lead parish, to the parish at large. The administrative team is an additional source of information which serves as a liaison for responding to community needs. Finally, every staff member is encouraged to be a part of the support structure in providing information that ultimately assists the principal in responding to the ongoing needs of the community.

B. Explain how the principal keeps current with and shares knowledge of issues (local, state, national) affecting education.

National Catholic Education (NCEA) publications, North Texas Catholic, social media, various education magazines and publications, fellow principals, the departments at the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Diocese, pastors, local, state, and national officials, and a variety of education-related websites, to name a few, assist the principal in keeping current with and sharing knowledge of issues affecting education. To keep current on general educational topics, the principal reads regular publications, including local, state and national newspapers and magazines. The principal and school are members of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA), which provides a plethora of information on issues concerning Catholic education. To keep current on issues affecting education, the principal attends monthly meetings of the diocesan principals as well as local, regional, and national meetings as are pertinent.

The principal has attended many National Principals Academies sponsored by NCEA, and has participated in at least one national conference on an annual basis, including a week-long Survival Strategies for Catholic Schools Conference at the University of Notre Dame hosted by Catholic School Management. The principal most recently attended the Catholic Law Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, and the Texas Safety Center Conference in Richardson, Texas. The principal is in communication with both public and Catholic local, state, and national educational organizations to keep current on educational issues. The principal receives continuing communication from the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth departments of education, human resources, advancement and development, risk management, and other groups to keep updated on policy changes and pertinent information which allows constant updating. This knowledge is constantly shared with all publics through vehicles such as regular advisory council meetings, Home and School Association meeting, formal and information parent gatherings, parish pulpit talks, and through a host of social media venues including the school and parish websites, Facebook, email, and group texting.

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**FOCUS 4: The principal focuses the attention of the faculty and staff on elements of quality programming.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The principal assists the faculty in developing an understanding of, and support for, the beliefs and attitudes which form the basis of the school's philosophy and mission.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The principal provides for the identification of, and the reaching of consensus on, the educational goals of the school.	YES	X	NO	
3.	The principal helps the faculty develop high, professional expectations and standards for themselves and the students.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The principal envisions future goals and directions for the school.	YES	X	NO	
5.	The principal communicates to faculty and staff the reasons for administrative practices used in the school.	YES	X	NO	
6.	The principal is knowledgeable of the general goals and objectives of the curricular areas.	YES	X	NO	
7.	The principal is knowledgeable of the varied teaching strategies teachers might appropriately utilize during instruction.	YES	X	NO	
8.	The principal administers a school wide curricular program based upon TEKS, curriculum guides and identification of content goals and objectives.	YES	X	NO	
9.	The principal involves all appropriate personnel in planning and providing quality education programs.	YES	X	NO	

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Comments: ►

**FOCUS 5: School effectiveness is monitored and evaluated by the principal.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The principal maintains an awareness and knowledge of recent research about the learning process.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The principal informs the faculty through in-service and other means of new developments and ideas in education.	YES	X	NO	
3.	The principal participates in instructional improvement activities such as program and curriculum planning and monitoring of student learning outcomes.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The principal possesses instructional observation skills which provide the basis for accurate assessment of the teaching process.	YES	X	NO	
5.	The principal promotes the diagnosis of individual and group learning needs of students and the application of appropriate instruction to meet those needs.	YES	X	NO	
6.	The principal actively and regularly participates in the observation and assessment of classroom instruction, including teaching strategies and student learning.	YES	X	NO	
7.	The principal has effective techniques for helping ineffective teachers.	YES	X	NO	
8.	The principal uses systematic procedures for faculty and staff appraisal, development, retention, and dismissal.	YES	X	NO	
9.	The principal uses a systematic process for program review and change.	YES	X	NO	
10.	The principal regularly provides teachers with clear and understandable information regarding school operations.	YES	X	NO	
11.	The principal identifies teacher and staff needs.	YES	X	NO	
12.	The principal addresses and mediates conflict situations.	YES	X	NO	
13.	The principal participates in instructional improvement initiatives.	YES	X	NO	
14.	The principal operates within the TCCED policies and procedures.	YES	X	NO	

Comments: ►

## DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. Describe the school personnel evaluation process.

► Evaluation of personnel is both formal, utilizing written evaluation instruments, and informal, in the form of accepting input from colleagues, superiors, those who work with staff members from day to day, including students and parents. New professional personnel are evaluated at least twice a year through a formal written instrument provided by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth. Returning personnel receive a written evaluation at least once a year. Support staff members have a written evaluation once a year in addition to informal input. Administrative team walk-throughs performed throughout the school year are taken into consideration during the completion of the evaluation. Prior to the formal lesson evaluation, the administrative team requires a lesson plan to be submitted which is to include all lesson components. The classroom lesson is evaluated and feedback is provided to the teacher/staff member through a conference. The evaluation process is constant and continuous so to enable an effective teaching and learning environment.

B. Describe the process the principal uses to evaluate school effectiveness.

The principal uses a variety of ways to evaluate school effectiveness. These include: school demographics, attendance, enrollment, school climate (based on formal and informal surveys and information gathering from various stakeholders), identification of at-risk students who qualify for Title I and Special Education services, norm-referenced testing, and bench-mark testing which provides pre- and post-test data. Weekly faculty meetings provide constant dialog regarding student-centered issues that need to be addressed. The Dean of Student Services is available to work with students who have a variety of challenges, whether it be a family issue or medical issue, to assist them with being a more effective student. The Dean of Students is the Federal Programs liaison between families for diagnostic testing which will assist students in their learning. Regular Upper School meetings provide a forum for faculty to discuss particular needs that relate to ongoing school effectiveness

C. Briefly describe the process used for reviewing, revising, and developing the following:

(1) Curriculum/Instructional Practices

► The administrative team coordinates curriculum and instructional practices with local, diocesan, state and national curriculum guidelines. The main secular curriculum is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) <https://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/teks/>. The curriculum is Catholic-infused based on local/diocesan, regional, state, and national components based on a variety of elements including the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools*; and those standards based on the call to Truth, Beauty, and Goodness which places the pre-eminent standard of faith to all curricular elements <https://newmansociety.org/catholic-curriculum-standards/>.

The curriculum is validated utilizing state and national standards and assessment practices, including pre-and post-assessment strategies, benchmark testing, regular classroom testing, and testing through the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (IOWA) and ACRE (Assessment of Catholic Religious Education). Curriculum is reviewed, revised, and developed on the local level through regular class-level and department meetings among appropriate staff members. Instructional practices are reviewed, revised, and developed through regular interaction among the principal, administrative team, and staff, including teacher evaluation, in-service opportunities, and staff meetings.

The administrative team and staff monitor student progress by reviewing progress reports, report cards, IOWA scores, benchmark scores, Duke Talent Identification data, math and reading data, and classroom performance. Students who are identified with learning differences receive accommodations depending upon need, including 504 plans, Special Education service plans, Title I remediation, speech, Dyslexia instruction, or individual tutoring within the classroom or during designated times during the school day.



The administrative team members guide the faculty in reviewing strategies for curriculum implementation as well as vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum. A great tool that has been utilized at Immaculate Conception Catholic School for more than a decade is the Cluster Meeting concept. Grade level aligned teams meet in clusters as needed, such as the Lower School teachers with the Dean of Students or the Upper School cluster with the Principal and Dean of Administrative Services. Face-to-face dialog on topics such as individual student concerns, to the effectiveness and alignment of textbooks to the curriculum, behavioral strategies, and strategies for efficient delivery of instruction reflect key indicators which allow for extremely strong practices in reviewing, revising, and developing curriculum and instructional strategies.

## (2) Long-Range Plans

► The Immaculate Conception Catholic School Advisory Council, through committee and through input from various stakeholders including staff and school families, developed the Strategic Plan, which was adopted through consensus by advisory council through the year 2023, to provide a common roadmap for direction and to guide the future success of our school and our students. The plan includes the school's mission, vision, benchmarks, and goals. These main elements will provide direction to the school community for the next five years.

The Strategic Plan affirms the Characteristics of Catholic Schools as flows through the Holy See's teachings on Catholic Schools and the pastoral letters of the American Bishops:

*Centered in the Person of Jesus Christ*

*Contributing to the Evangelizing Mission of the Church*

*Committed to Educate the Whole Child*

*Steeped in a Catholic Worldview*

*Distinguished by Excellence*

*Sustained by Gospel Witness*

*Accessible to All Students*

*Shaped by Communion and Community*

*Established by the Expressed Authority of the Bishop*

The long-term strategic plan affirms the Profile of the Catholic School Graduate as compiled by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth:

*Person of Faith*

*Moral Decision Maker/Problem Solver*

*Appreciative Human*

*Culturally Sensitive*

*Academically/Technologically Proficient*

*Effective Communicator*

*Creative Learner*

*Critical Thinker*

*Lifelong Learner*

The long-term strategic plan identifies priorities in each of the following areas that will guide the school community's activities and resource decisions as defined by the *National Standards and Benchmarks for*

*Effective Catholic Schools:*

*Mission and Catholic Identity*

*Governance and Leadership*

*Academic Excellence*

*Operational Vitality*

For each of these areas, a statement of strategic direction has been developed. These statements express a vision for the future of the school. Goals and strategies for each area have been identified to guide more specific action planning. The annual action plans, developed by administrators and faculty, with input from the School Advisory Council and its Committees, will provide a framework for ongoing accountability and ensure that the school manages its financial and human resources toward the realization of its vision over the next five years.

The Strategic Plan is defined clearly by fourteen goals with specific objectives set under each goal. Strategic planning is a fluid process, and as such, this Plan will continue to be evaluated and updated.

(3) Operational/Procedural Guidelines and Instruments

► The school operates according to policies and guidelines provided by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, state and federal policies as pertains to Immaculate Conception Catholic School, and local policies as developed by the school advisory council, administrative team and staff. These documents, which include policies such as admissions, Safe Environment, Risk Management, Asbestos Inspection, fire drills, emergency procedures, employee policies and Gospel mission, are located in the school's '*Parent/Student Handbook*', but are also part of local, diocesan, and other policy manuals located on site. These instruments are reviewed on at least an annual basis and are revised as needed with input from the various stakeholders of the school community, ranging from parents to the parish communities. The school staff and principal, the school advisory council, and others continue to work with Immaculate Conception Parish in refining, approving, and implementing procedures and guidelines for the shared use of school and parish facilities. These operational and procedural guidelines for facilities use are reviewed and revised as needed.

**FOCUS 6: The requirements and procedures of the TCCED accreditation process are implemented by the principal.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1. The principal develops/oversees/implements:

• Professional Growth	YES	X	NO	
• Deficiency Removal Plans	YES	X	NO	
• Academic Requirements	YES	X	NO	
• Religion Certification Requirements	YES	X	NO	
• Class Size Requirements	YES	X	NO	
• Strategic Planning Process	YES	X	NO	
• Actions on recommendations from last Visiting Team Consensus Report/Accreditation Commission Status Report	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

**FOCUS 7: The administration cultivates Catholic identity within the school community.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The Catholic identity of the school is a priority of the administration.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The direction set by the administration is rooted in the mission of the school.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Administrative decisions reflect Gospel values.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Commitment to spiritual leadership is a priority of the administration.	YES	X	NO	
5.	The hiring process for the administrator(s) assesses the candidate’s understanding of and commitment to the Catholic identity and mission of the school.	YES	X	NO	
<b>Comments: ►</b>					

**FOCUS 8: Procedures are in place for hiring personnel, and job descriptions are provided for professional and support personnel.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)							
1.	Procedures exist for identification of personnel needs, recruitment, hiring and assignments.	YES	X	NO			
2.	Job descriptions are on file for professional and support personnel hired by the school:						
	Principal	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Assistant Principal	NA	X	YES		NO	
	Counselor	NA	X	YES		NO	
	Teacher	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Coordinator/Team Leader/Dean	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Specialized Instructor	NA	X	YES		NO	
	Instructional Assistant/Aide	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Secretary/Receptionist	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Athletic Coordinator	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Coach	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Nurse/Health Representative	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Librarian/Library Manager	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Custodian	NA	X	YES		NO	
	Maintenance Personnel	NA	X	YES		NO	
	Cafeteria Personnel	NA	X	YES		NO	
	Before/After School Staff	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Bookkeeper	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Before/After School Program Director	NA		YES	X	NO	
	Religion Coordinator	NA	X	YES		NO	

Other ( <i>Specify</i> )	► Deans	NA		YES	X	NO	
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**Comments:** ► The school has a receptionist, athletic coordinator, and health representative by official titles so they are indicated in the appropriate areas. The custodian and maintenance personnel are under the direction of the parish.

### DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:

Explain the process used for identification of personnel needs, recruitment, hiring and assignments.

► The principal utilizes an aggressive program for recruitment of personnel, involving staff, the parish communities at large (including the bulletin and social media), the school website ([www.catholicschooldenton.org](http://www.catholicschooldenton.org)), local and national colleges, the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) employee databank, and other resources. Personnel needs are identified on an ongoing basis based on staff, Advisory Council, and the principal's assessment of daily operational needs. The principal collaboratively works with the administrative team and staff members as needed to hire personnel based on interviews (which includes Catholic Identity questions based on those recommended by NCEA), position qualifications, and recommendations. The job description is reviewed with each candidate and the hiring process is shared with the candidate. This includes Safe Environment requirement, application and transcript on file, offer letter or contract information, meeting with the bookkeeper to process all required documentation, and completing all required coursework to remove any defined deficiencies. An employee file is created and staff members are assigned where they can be best utilized based on their qualifications.

## PART B: FACULTY AND STAFF

**FOCUS 9:** Professional personnel hold valid credentials as required by TCCED and appropriate preparation for their assignment, with records on file in the school office.

**INDICATORS:** (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)

1. The school employs qualified personnel and assigns them properly.
  - A. The principal meets the requirements outlined in the TCCED Educational Personnel Requirements.

Check one in each section:

1.
 

X

 Master's degree in educational administration  
 Master's degree with 18 hours in administration/supervision  
 Master's degree without 18 hours in administration/supervision  
 No Master's degree

2.
 

Catholic	YES	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"><tr><td>X</td></tr></table>	X	NO	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"><tr><td></td></tr></table>	
X						
Is involved in spiritual/catechetical leadership development.	YES	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"><tr><td>X</td></tr></table>	X	NO	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"><tr><td></td></tr></table>	
X						

List the principal's qualifications including educational experience and religious formation.

► Attended Catholic School grades 1-8.

Bachelor's degree with dual majors in English and Journalism.

Masters Degree in Administrative Supervision with specialization in Educational Technology.

Religious Education teacher director of a parish for 20 years

Youth Ministry and Sponsor Couple

Natural Family Planning Certified Instructor for 15 years

Certified Catechist

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer stationed in West Africa as a teacher for two years

High school Technology Director and Journalism teacher

Adjunct Instructor at Community College for two years.

Catholic school teacher

Catholic School Advisory Council member

Catholic school principal

Safe Environment Facilitator

- B. The assistant principal meets the requirements outlined in the TCCED Educational Personnel Requirements. [Applies to assistant principals hired in 2001 or later]

Check one in each section:

1. 

N/A

 Requirement was not in place when assistant principal was hired
- Meets TCCED requirements
- Does not meet TCCED requirements and is on a Deficiency Removal Plan
- Does not meet TCCED requirements and is not on a Deficiency Removal Plan
2. Is involved in spiritual/catechetical leadership development      YES 



 NO
- List the assistant principal's qualifications including educational and religious formation
- N/A

- A. Teachers in a self-contained classroom: (*Indicate number*)

11	Bachelor's degree including 12 Education hours or valid appropriate state certificate
0	Bachelor's degree without 12 Education hours
0	On Deficiency Removal Plan for education hours
0	No degree

6	Teach Religion/Theology
8	Qualified to teach Religion/Theology
3	Not qualified to teach Religion/Theology

- B. Teachers of Religion/Theology: (*Indicate number **excluding** teachers in self-contained classrooms*)

2	Qualified to teach Religion/Theology
0	Not qualified and on Deficiency Removal Plan

- C. Early Childhood (3K, 4K) teachers: (*Indicate number*)

3	Bachelor's degree with 12 hours in Early Childhood Education or valid appropriate state certificate
0	Bachelor's degree without 12 hours in Early Childhood Education
0	Associate/Bachelor degree in Early Childhood Education or 60+ credit hours with 12 hours in Early Childhood Education
0	Not qualified and on Deficiency Removal Plan

- D. If your school employs the Montessori philosophy and methods, please indicate number of teachers:

N/A	Appropriate degree and Montessori certificate
	Montessori certificate only (teachers of ages 3 through 12)
	Appropriate degree without Montessori certificate
	Bachelor's degree and 12 Education hours (teachers of ages 12 through 15)
	No Montessori certificate or appropriate degree

- E. Teachers in Departmental Grades 6-8: (*Indicate number*)

8	Bachelor's degree with at least a minor in primary content area taught, 9 credit hours in each additional content area or successful completion of appropriate state certification exam(s), and 12 Education hours
1	Bachelor's degree, 18 hours in at least one content area taught or successful completion of appropriate state certification exam, 9 credit hours in each additional content area taught or successful completion of appropriate state certification exam and 12 Education hours.
0	Bachelor's degree without appropriate content hours/exam or Education hours
0	No degree
0	Meets requirements for hiring prior to 2001
0	Does not meet requirements and is on Deficiency Removal Plan

- F. Specialized instructors: (*Indicate number*)

N/A	Have on file a Specialized Instructor's Certificate
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List each individual with date hired and the rationale for hiring/placement.



G. Library Manager

X

Meets TCCED requirements in place at time of hiring

Does not meet TCCED requirements and is on Deficiency Removal Plan

Comments: ►

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. List the personnel assigned outside their field, the rationale for assignment and plan for removal of any deficiencies.

► All teachers have appropriate credentialing except for those who are still working on their religion certification. Those teachers have deficiencies on file and are in process for working toward their religion certification.

B. Records for all professional personnel are properly maintained in the school office.

Personnel folder contains: **(Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

Official college transcripts	YES	X	NO	
Certifications and endorsements (when applicable)	YES	X	NO	
Evaluations (current and past)	YES	X	NO	
T.B. test (if required by county)	YES	X	NO	
Religion Certification (when applicable)	YES	X	NO	
I-9 (if hired after 1986)	YES	X	NO	
Deficiency Removal Plan (when applicable)	YES	X	NO	
Technology proficiency documentation (if hired in 2001 or later)	YES	X	NO	
Extra curricular responsibilities	YES	X	NO	
Job description	YES	X	NO	
Professional Growth to Strengthen Competence form	YES	X	NO	
Specialized Instructor’s Certificate (when applicable)	YES	X	NO	
Superintendent's approval (when needed)	YES	X	NO	
Contract/Agreement (if required by (arch)diocese)	YES	X	NO	
Criminal Background Check Clearance	YES	X	NO	
Safe Environment Documentation	YES	X	NO	
Child Abuse Training (as required by (arch)diocese)	YES	X	NO	
Bloodborne Pathogens Training	YES	X	NO	

Comments: ►

## PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

REPLY: Y/N									
Last Name, First Name	Grade/content area(s) taught?	Date hired for position?	Is individual proficient in technology?	Does individual meet TCCED personnel requirements for position held?	Does individual have needed content hours?	Does individual have needed education hours?	Does individual have deficiency removal plan on file?	Does individual teach religion?	Does individual have religion deficiency plan on file?
Principal  Schad, Veronica Elaine	Religion	7/2000	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Asst. Principal									
Counselor (if on staff)									
Library Manager Revilacqua, Rebecca	N/A	8/2004	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N	N/A

### TEACHERS (Alphabetical by Last Name)

Jackie Boos	5	08/2014	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Mitch Borowski	6-8 Math/Tech/Science	8/2002	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Briones, Reuben	Music	8/2011	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Briones, Kristina	Athletics	08/2014	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Briones, Kelli	Fourth/Music	8/2009	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Castillo, Deana	Kindergarten	8/2002	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Cloutier, Eileen	Dyslexia	08/2017	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Cuttica, Paul	Second/Music	8/2011	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Gray, Jeanette	Third	8/2017	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Hermes, Robin	PreK	8/2007	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Jezek, Tina	Art/Drama	8/2010	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A



REPLY: Y/N									
Marshall, Jennifer	Math	10/2017	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Morgeson, Ann	Upper School	08/2015	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Musacchio, Leesa	PreK	8/2007	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Ordonez, Jennifer	Math 7/8	8/2013	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Park, Angeline	Strings 4-8	8/2018	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N/A
Paulus, Natalie	Science, Religion, Language Arts	08/2008	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Rocha, Andres	S. Studies/Foreign Language	08/2014	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Smith, Mary	PreK	8/2007	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Staats, Angie	Kindergarten/PE/Sp anish	8/2011	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Streib, Eileen	First Grade	08/2012	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Szabo, Alina	Language Arts 6-8	8/2017	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A
Takach, Carla	Second	8/2008	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N

## PERSONNEL WITH SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATE

Last Name, First Name	Position	Date Hired for Position	Education Level	Field(s) 1st Degree	Briefly Describe Qualifications for this Position
N/A					

## MONTESSORI TEACHING PERSONNEL

Last Name, First Name	Grade(s) taught	Date Hired for Current Position	Appropriate Degree (specify)	Technology Proficient Y/N	Montessori Certification Y/N	Deficiency Removal on File Y/N	Teach Religion Y/N	Religion Certificate Y/N	Religion Deficiency on File Y/N
N/A									

**FOCUS 10: Support staff are properly prepared for their assignments and monitored.****INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1. Personnel folder contains:

Official college transcripts ( <i>if applicable</i> )	YES	X	NO	
Certifications and endorsements ( <i>if applicable</i> )	YES	X	NO	
Evaluation	YES	X	NO	
T.B. test ( <i>if required by county</i> )	YES	X	NO	
I-9 ( <i>if hired after 1986</i> )	YES	X	NO	
Extra curricular responsibilities	YES	X	NO	
Job Description	YES	X	NO	
Contract/Agreement ( <i>if required by (arch)diocese</i> )	YES	X	NO	
Criminal Background Check Clearance	YES	X	NO	
Safe Environment Documentation	YES	X	NO	
2. All support staff are properly assigned, trained and supervised.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►****DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

Describe the assignment of support staff in terms of training, accountability and professional support.

► Support Staff are assigned according to job description. This includes teacher aides, bookkeeper, admissions, executive assistant, health representative, and other personnel who assist the teachers in conducting classroom exercises, tutoring students, maintaining order in the classroom when needed, assisting in the cafeteria, playground, security, and other areas where needed and assigned by the principal. Support staff members are trained according to need. For example, the bookkeeper and health representative regularly attend diocesan workshops to coordinate their particular duties. Other support staff members are trained by the supervising staff member and administrative team. They receive professional support as needed, are evaluated informally as needed and formally at the end of the year, and they are all Safe Environment certified.

TEXAS CATHOLIC CONFERENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SELF STUDY**

**SUPPORT STAFF**

Last Name, First Name	Position	Date Hired for Position	Education Level	Field(s) 1 <sup>st</sup> Degree
Aparicio, Maria	PK Aide/Ext. Day	08/2018	BSN	Nursing
Kahlig, Maria	Administrative Services	08/2018	BA	Psychology/Education
Hawley, Kristy	Administrative Assistant	08/2004	Associates Degree	
Hilliard, Margie	Administrative Services	08/2011	High School	
Magallanes, Ana	Receptionist	08/2017	High School/Junior College	
Martin, Marsha	PK Aide	08/2018	BA	Communication
Parsonage, Maureen	Bookkeeper/Ext. Day	08/2016	Associates Degree	
Ramsey, Debbie	Health Representative	09/2013	High School/CNA	Certified Nursing Assistant
Shaw, Sharon	Administrative Services	12/2017	BA	Education

TEXAS CATHOLIC CONFERENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SELF STUDY**

**FOCUS 11: Teachers assigned outside their fields of preparation, when necessary conditions require it, have appropriate documentation of approval.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Teachers assigned outside their field of preparation have been approved by (arch)diocesan superintendent.	YES	N/A	NO	
2.	Deficiency removal plans are on file in the school office.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Documentation of superintendent’s approval is on file in the school office.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Non-degreed teachers have received written approval from the (arch)diocesan superintendent.	YES	N/A	NO	

**Comments:** ►

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

A. Describe the assignment of paraprofessional personnel in terms of training, accountability and professional support.

► Support staff members attend training meetings as needed to provide clarity to duties, policies, and procedures. Members of the administrative team provide mentoring as needed. One of the after care workers is a certified educational paraprofessional so utilizes that training in the establishment of tutoring routines and other after care activities. Support and other staff members receive CPR and AED training per diocesan policy. Personnel are held accountable as outlined in their job descriptions and through the evaluation protocols.

B. List instructors granted a Specialized Instructor Certificate and state the rationale for employment..

► N/A

**FOCUS 12: A program of evaluation for all personnel is followed and staff development is systematically evaluated.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Administrator’s evaluation is systematically conducted.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Teacher evaluation is systematically conducted.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Specialized and support staff evaluations are systematically conducted.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The quality and relevancy of staff development programs are systematically evaluated.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ►

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe the process used in the evaluation of the principal.

► The evaluation of the principal is aligned with the policies of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Department of Human Resources, the Office of Catholic Schools, and the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth policies regarding the administration of parish schools. The principal evaluation process is as follows:  
The principal completes a self-evaluation and submits to the superintendent.  
The pastor completes an evaluation of the principal.

The superintendent completes an evaluation of the principal.

An evaluation is held between the principal and the superintendent with input and approval of the lead pastor.

B. Describe the process used in the evaluation of professional staff.

► Evaluation of professional staff is both formal, utilizing written evaluation instruments, and informal, in the form of accepting input from colleagues, superiors, those who work with staff members from day to day, including students and parents. New professional personnel are evaluated at least twice a year through a formal written instrument provided by the Diocese of Fort Worth. Returning personnel receive a written evaluation at least once a year. The teacher evaluation process includes classroom walkthroughs with verbal feedback, formative evaluation and conference, and teacher summative evaluation and conference prior to decisions on contracts.

C. Describe the process used in the evaluation of support staff.

► Evaluation of support staff is both formal, utilizing written evaluation instruments, and informal, in the form of accepting input from colleagues, superiors, those who work with staff members from day to day, including students and parents. Support staff members have a written evaluation once a year in addition to informal input.

D. Describe the process used to determine and evaluate staff development.

► The administrative team promotes, develops, and evaluates participation in staff development opportunities in a variety of ways. The process involves both input from the staff member who indicates a particular area in which he or she would like to receive professional growth to input by the administrative team in recommending professional opportunities that might enhance a staff member's expertise. The staff development process is further encouraged through funding opportunities, including setting aside a portion of the school budget for professional development or college coursework to providing Title II funding for professional development. The principal and faculty have been part of the diocesan Best Practices development through the University of Loyola. In addition, staff members have participated in National Catholic Education Conferences, National Preschool and Kindergarten Conferences, Texas Council of Teachers of Mathematics, as well as national conferences over a host of Best Practices ranging from the addressing the needs of second-language/new-language learners and those with other special needs to the latest development in school safety practices. The principal works in collaboration with the pastor and diocesan officials in providing opportunities for religious certification classes as well as online opportunities. Staff members are encouraged to share their experiences during faculty meetings in order to share their knowledge. Upon completion of staff development, appropriate certificates and documentation are included in the personnel file.

## DOMAIN SUMMARY

### DOMAIN IV: PERSONNEL

**After conducting an in-depth study of this domain, the school finds the following:**

**1. Area(s) of strength:**

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School has a strong academic/Christ-centered administrative team and staff. There is a great working atmosphere among the parishes, the Home and School Association, the school advisory council, and the administrative team.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School, in its 23rd year of existence, has a high staff retention rate which is considered a great strength as it allows continuity of the teaching and learning process. The school is blessed to have six employees with Master degrees and teachers who have served as administrators and/or lead teachers before they came to the school. The school has an extremely supportive community base from its two supporting parishes and from school families. Parental support is intense and focused. This is seen as a tremendously great strength to the educational process.

The school has had a solid foundation from which to build its policies. Long-range planning was in place from the school's first year of existence. Professional staff members are dedicated to continuing professional development, while all staff members are committed to the success of the school and are extremely committed to the school's mission of Catholic formation and holistic development. This type of camaraderie is an incredible strength of Immaculate Conception Catholic School.

**2. Area(s) needing improvement or strengthening:**

(An area that needs growth/strengthening is one which, while present, could be improved or one which does not meet TCCED standards/policies.)

► While current staff members represent a great strength of the school, Immaculate Conception Catholic School will continue its dedication to recruit, develop and retain qualified personnel committed to the mission and philosophy of the school.

**3. Action plan:**

(List what the school plans to do within the next 3 years to strengthen or enhance the area(s) mentioned above.)

► Maintain and expand a competitive compensation and benefits package for professional and paraprofessional staff members through diocesan collaboration. While the school advisory council, with the support of the lead pastor and principal, have put into place a unique annual bonus system to assist in providing a just salary to staff, salary issues will continue to be a challenge over the next three to five years. This issue will be addressed through intense teacher recruitment of those individuals who fulfill the profile for a successful Catholic School teacher, continued development of competitive salary scales, and increased efforts toward building the school's teacher endowment. Sustained recruitment efforts will be employed to encourage graduates of our school to return as teachers once they receive the appropriate educational training and degrees.



## DOMAIN V: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

**The purpose, design and implementation of the curriculum represent the school's mission. A Catholic atmosphere, which is shared as well as understood by teachers, students and parents/guardians, permeates all areas of the curriculum. Instructional decisions support the school's academic goals, objectives, and priorities. Evaluation of the curriculum is continuous and responsive to student needs.**

### **SUPPORTING DATA MAY INCLUDE:**

- Lesson plans Academic and special interest clubs
- Agency referral services
- AV inventory
- Class schedules
- Classroom displays of student work
- Classroom observation records
- Classroom observations by principal
- Contest participation data
- Curriculum documents
- Curriculum guides
- Daily schedules
- Expected outcomes
- Federal program inventory
- Library circulation data
- Library media catalog
- Library policies and procedures
- Library professional memberships
- Master inventory
- Materials resource list
- Professional materials for staff use
- Publishers' tests
- Religion curriculum
- Religion resources and materials
- Report cards and other reporting forms/procedures
- Resource materials
- Special program offerings
- Standardized test data
- Student award systems
- Student learning profiles
- Student permanent records
- Student portfolios
- Subject area annual or semester outlines
- Surveys of former students
- Teacher grade books
- Teacher schedules
- Teacher-generated assessments
- Technological equipment
- Technology software
- TEKS
- Test data
- Test results
- Written guidance programs/curriculum/documents/policies
- Authentic student work products

**FOCUS 1: The curriculum content and instructional program are rooted in Catholic teachings, traditions, and values.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

**The school demonstrates:**

1.	A Catholic worldview (a Trinitarian/communal, incarnational and sacramental perspective) is present.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Religion classes are viewed as an integral part of the academic program.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Basic Catholic beliefs, practices and values are reinforced across the curriculum.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The contributions of Catholic authors, thinkers and historical figures are studied across the curriculum.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Teachers invite students to think critically about the world around them through the lens of Catholic beliefs and values.	YES	X	NO	
6.	The school views itself first and foremost as a community of faith participating in the formation of disciples of Christ.	YES	X	NO	
7.	Hospitality, respect for others, integrity, service and a spirit of cooperation rather than competition are exhibited by students, faculty, staff and parents/guardians.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe how Catholic Gospel values, Catholic traditions and Catholic social teachings are integrated across the curriculum.

► All those involved in formation at Immaculate Conception Catholic School foster and promote Gospel values and virtues in all areas of the curriculum during the daily operation of the school. Even before one enters the school, it is evident that Catholic tradition is clearly manifested through statues, the school crest, and the many symbols of Catholic Identity throughout. From the greeting of students and families each morning, to the tradition of the Morning Offering which include Pope Francis’ monthly intentions generally based on Catholic social teachings, to our Theme of the Year and Virtue of the Month programs, our curriculum inside and outside the classroom is entrenched with the values, traditions, and teachings that form our children in the Catholic faith so they can make a difference in the Lord’s Vineyard now and in the future.

The curriculum guide is Catholic-infused, based on the tenets of Truth, Beauty and Goodness which are the trademarks of our Gospel call. This curriculum provides a strong roadmap to integration which revolves around the school’s philosophy and mission to *Teach As Jesus Taught* and to develop the total needs of the child. Faculty meets regularly and discusses the integration of Gospel values along with other curriculum development. Staff members look for opportunities to do cross-curricular activities, such as essay writing, handwriting, reports, or other areas that include research on a religious topic in subjects other than religion. Assemblies, Home and School presentations, retreats, school plays, and the use of bulletin boards and room displays, to name a few, incorporate themes that reinforce Gospel values and Church teachings.

Guest speakers who model Gospel values, ranging from missionaries to the local pastors, are regularly invited to the classrooms as part of curriculum implementation. Field trips to places such as churches and Catholic Charities include participation in activities that integrate Gospel values and church teachings. The school

curriculum includes modeling Christ-like behavior based on the four R's: Respect, Responsibility, Reverence, and Role Modeling. The school symbol of Christ teaching the children is spread throughout the community on the school uniform, t-shirts, other attire, and on stickers and other material that is a visual representation of Gospel values as reinforced through the curriculum.

The examples to support curriculum integration are endless. Our Lady's Service Learning Garden provides a hub for the Social Justice teaching of Care of God's Creation. Students conduct STEAM activities ranging from the fifth grade being buddies with the preschool students to assist them in planting techniques. Kindergarten students are doing inquiry science. Students at all grade levels are assisting with composting, pulling weeds, planting, and harvesting. The Upper School elective classes are involved in the construction of a greenhouse, recycling, and activities such as the speech and drama, coding, and art which support this integration.

Service projects and a host of activities, such as the Homeless Simulation Project involving our seventh graders in conjunction with Catholic Charities, reinforce Gospel values, Catholic traditions, and Catholic social teachings. Kindergarten students participate in a "Pounder Project" in which they find out how much they weighed when they were born, work with their parent to bring that weight of rice and beans, wrap them in a baby blanket, draw a baby's face to place on the blanket, and then present their "babies" to Catholic Charities to be given to refugees. This is an amazing reinforcement of our Social Justice teaching of helping the poor and vulnerable while touching many areas of the curriculum. There are countless other examples that reinforce our social justice teaching as integrated across the curriculum. This includes the annual Respect Life Poster Contest, the Veterans Program which infuses our focus on faith, family and freedom, the Cherub Choir which learns faith-filled songs to present to the public, and the many service-oriented activities of the various clubs of the school, including the Student Council, Beta Club, and Kiwanis Junior Builders Club.

Teachers discuss and convey the Gospel value meanings daily through teachable moments in the hallways, gymnasium, playground, and in all areas of the school. All are encouraged to work together in community by respecting their property and the property of others and to think about how Jesus would handle a situation. An example is the fourth grade Dominic Savio Club where students meet together to collaborate on the virtues put forth through the charism of this patron saint of young children.

Students, staff, and families carry on the traditions of the Liturgical calendar ranging from decorating the school with all types of Advent symbols, putting their shoes out on the Feast of St. Nicholas, making Christmas cards for shut-ins, regular Reconciliation opportunities, the Lenten Pancake event to help the missions on Shrove Tuesday, Living Stations of the Cross, Ash Wednesday, Blessing of the Throats on the Feast of St. Blaise, praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet as a school community, May Crowning, First Communion Recognition, and a farewell to our eighth graders which centers around the Eucharistic Celebration.

As Pope Francis reminded us in his Spring 2018 Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* (Rejoice and Be Glad) that *"We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves..."* He calls us to be *"...the saints next door...contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God's people: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile."* Gospel values are imbued through our 2018-2019 theme of Holiness as Our Lady's School continues as a vessel that leads to holiness.

B. Give evidence of how the school's mission statement influences the educational program.

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School exists to provide a Christ-centered academic environment. Christ calls us to service and ICCS responds through such activities as the eighth grade immigrant project, the drive for homeless veterans, providing Boxes of Joy to children who have never had a Christmas present, and raising money for several overseas missions. Christ calls us to an academic environment rich in prayer as exhibited by a focus on

vocations, bringing the school community together through the Liturgy of the Eucharist, daily prayer, and recitation of the Holy Rosary.

Our mission calls us to community, to the promotion of peace, and to value and recognize the dignity of each individual. This is accomplished at Immaculate Conception Catholic School daily through such simple gestures as the student greeting, “Good morning, God bless you!” to our athletic and academic competitions where students are charged with working in community for the greater good of the team through the reinforcement that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School is constantly described as a nurturing community that has a feeling of family. When we join in community with the mission of forming those who will make a difference through the lens of faith, the results are amazingly hopeful and inspiring. The school mission has dramatically impacted the lives of our students and families as influenced by the education program and evidenced through the words of 2014 ICCS alum Molly Melloan: *“I feel extremely blessed to have been born into a family who loves their Faith so much as to make sure that I am exposed to God’s love for us every day. My time at Immaculate Conception Catholic School is a very precious aspect of my life that I will always hold on to, and it has shaped me into the person that I am today. I find myself reaching out to those who need a helping hand instantaneously and constantly yearning to help the younger generation of children, teaching with a loving servant’s heart.”*

C. Describe the instructional program of religion in the school.

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School follows the curriculum standards of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth as expanded through its Catholic-infused curriculum. The school uses the Faith and Life series through grade five and the Loyola textbook series for grades 6-8. Supplemental curriculum resources include the Genesis Project and Theology of the Body human sexuality curriculum with additional online resources. Religion is taught as a class four days a week with the students participating in the Liturgy of the Mass on Thursdays. The spirit of the instructional program focuses on the four crucial elements of the faith as conveyed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

- The Profession of Faith (the Apostle's Creed)
- The Celebration of the Christian Mystery (the Sacred Liturgy, and especially the sacraments)
- Life in Christ (including the Ten Commandments)
- Christian Prayer (including the Lord's Prayer)

The program encourages all involved to first proclaim Christ’s message through daily classroom instruction in the deposit of faith and morals, student participation in the liturgy, written essays, participation in scripture study, sacramental preparation, and integration of Christ’s message throughout the curriculum and daily routine, whether it be daily prayer or reinforcement of Christ-like choices. This formation on a daily basis is reinforced through bulletin boards, daily prayer, and integration throughout the curriculum.

The instructional program of religion in the school fosters and supports service projects, liturgies, and sharing of resources. The instructional program supports seasonal religious events at the school including the annual Pet Blessing on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, special Rosary services and Stations of the Cross, opportunity for Reconciliation and Adoration, May Crowning, and the special celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the patroness of our school.

The religion program motivates the students and school community to serve others through modeling. Several of our staff members have served as foreign and domestic missionaries. The school has formed a junior builders’ club for the Upper School focused toward global community service. Upper School students are required to perform a minimum number of community service hours each year depending upon grade level. The school continually focuses on the needs of service, ranging from Rice Bowl to Respect Life, to monthly collection of

items for many organizations including Loreto House pregnancy center, Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, and the Monsignor King Outreach Center. The intent of the school's instructional program of religion is for the faith to totally permeate the school day, reach beyond the school to assist their families, parishes, and communities, and then focus on the future when the children will take their place as adult leaders in the Church.

**FOCUS 2: The school's expectation for academic success exists and is visible.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Teachers maintain high academic expectation for all students.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Teachers differentiate instruction consistent with students' abilities and needs.	YES	X	NO	
3.	The school, in partnership with parents/guardians, strives to ensure that achievement is held in high esteem by the students.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

What programs of encouragement exist within the school to develop a general attitude and expectation for academic success?

In addition to a core curriculum and an extracurricular sports program, the school as a ministry and extension of the lead parish, currently provides students with a variety of services, electives, and extracurricular activities including:

Art	Speech
Music	Spanish
Technology	Cheerleading
Physical Education	Stringed Orchestra
St. Dominic Savio Club	Student Council
Geographic Bee	Science Fair
Spelling Bee	Cherub Choir
Upper School Choir	Pep Rallies
National Handwriting Contest	One Act Play
North Texas Independent League	Chess Club
Private School Interscholastic Association	Beta Club
Upper School Choir	Field Trip Opportunities
Yearbook	Girls Volleyball
Girls and Boys Basketball	Girls and Boys Track
Girl and Boy Scouts	American Heritage Girls
Individual piano and voice	Garden Service Learning
Summer athletic and math camps	Tutoring and Title I services
Sewing and Inquiry electives (finance, etc.)	Environmental science elective
Duke Talent Identification Program	IXL Math

These programs encourage students to strive academically beyond the classroom. Students have participated in a National Handwriting Contest and have won state, national, and Grand National awards. The National Geographic Bee, Howard Scripps National Spelling Bee, and the Duke Talent Identification Search are programs promoted with student achievement in mind. The school participates in several academic competitions with other schools, including the North Texas Independent League and the Private School Interscholastic Association.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School has earned 17 NTIL Championships and 16 PSIA championships over the last 18 years with two PSIA state middle school championships.

There are extensive services to assist and encourage students to be the best they can be. This includes in-classroom and small group individual tutoring, diagnostic testing, and use of test data, to assist with learning differences, Title I and special education services. Progress Reports and mandated parent-teacher meetings at the end of the first quarter and as needed reinforce the parents as partners in the educational process while providing a great barometer of student progress with the ability to put a plan of action in place for continued student encouragement.

Many religious enrichment programs are offered that enhance the students' formal religious instruction, including a weekly school Mass, chapel Mass, Pet Blessing, All Saints Day Living Saints, Eighth Grade Retreat, Living Rosary, Advent Prayer Program, Christmas Program, Blessing of the Throats, Living Stations, Holy Week Retreat, May Crowning, altar serving, lectors, ushers, and gift bearers.

The school sponsors field trips that are both educational and enjoyable including visits to historic Catholic churches, service-learning field trips to area nursing homes and Catholic Charities, One-Room School House, aquarium, zoo, theater, living farm experiences, area museums, University of Dallas, Cistercian Abbey, and curriculum-related field trips to areas throughout the North Central Texas area.

The school is blessed with an active Booster Club that supports the fine arts and athletics programs and a Parent Teacher Organization called the Home and School Association that provides educational enrichment programs. All parents are members of Booster Club. The club is layered with the school's volunteer requirements. Parents of student athletes are required to fill needed jobs in order for the events to be successful including gate, concessions, and scorekeepers. The school conducts two major academic meets each year in which Booster fills positions ranging from concessions, to hall monitors, to graders, to judges, to playground supervisors and litter patrol.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School students develop a general attitude and expectation of academic success by participation in poster contests, writing contests, extra credit projects as well as displays of class work throughout the school. In addition, each teacher has individual programs that motivate the students inside and outside of the classroom, ranging from chess, Braum's Book Buddies, Six Flags Read-to-Succeed, IXL Wall of Fame, and more. The school as a whole participates in summer reading programs, the honor roll, and in recognition ceremonies for various achievements throughout the school year.

**FOCUS 3: Curriculum (*objectives to be taught*), instruction (*what is actually taught*) and assessment (*what is tested*) are explicitly aligned.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Does each teacher have appropriate access to curriculum guides according to grade level/subject areas taught?	YES	X	NO	
2.	Are the curriculum guides used for the purpose of instructional planning and assessment?	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ►

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## DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. Describe how curriculum guides are used in instructional planning across grade level/subject areas taught.

► Teachers use curriculum guides based on Catholic-infused state, local/diocesan, regional and national standards along with textbook scope and sequence as a basis or guideline for teaching the concepts and skills during the school year. The curriculum guide standards offer structure as they provide objectives and aid in creating assessments. The guides also are used to allot timeframes for the various themes and objectives to be taught.

Teachers use this information to develop lesson plans based on the objectives of the curriculum guide. They utilize one of two preferred cloud tools to upload their lesson plans—OwnCloud or Planbook.com so that the administrative team can have ready access to the lesson plans. Teachers plan their lessons with the awareness that all objectives for that grade level are covered by the end of the school year so they are monitoring their progress through their lesson plans and the scope and sequence as the year progresses.

B. How does the school ensure that the curriculum, instructional strategies and assessments are aligned and articulated across the grade levels in support of the expectations for student learning?

► Each teacher is provided with a curriculum binder listing all curriculum objectives for the particular subject and/or grade level as well as appropriate textbooks and teacher resources. Teachers monitor progress through lesson plan development. Teacher vertical alignment collaboration among grade levels takes place to make certain that students are prepared for the next grade and to inform teachers of areas of individual student reinforcement. The administrative team and faculty work to ensure textbooks are aligned in the best way possible to the curriculum, that instruction of objectives are carried through, and that proper assessment tools are used to meet each curriculum objective. The textbooks and other teacher resources, including publisher, online, and teacher-made assessment tools, support curriculum alignment which supports student learning.

C. Identify the resources, data and processes used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum.

► In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum, first and foremost, a school must have qualified professional and support staff who fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction, and the educational program. This is truly a great strength of Immaculate Conception Catholic School. Through professional collaboration, professional development, and review of data such as standardized testing, benchmark testing, and frequent formal and informal assessment, staff continually evaluates curriculum effectiveness and enriches those areas as needed. For example, our preschool is just one grade level that carries out thematic lessons which are highly engaging, such as rodeo day, that incorporate many facets of the curriculum ranging from new vocabulary to learning about a real-life application. Fourth grade, for example, will use its basal reader as a resource to integrate all facets of the curriculum, utilizing curricular elements ranging from spelling, to learning about major historical figures, to visual displays of their learning which are showcased in the hallways.

An important aspect in evaluating the curriculum includes making sure material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the learning. During the spring a process is used where faculty members are asked to evaluate textbooks and other resources in their subject areas to make sure such resources are adequate driving instruction for the next school year. While fiscal responsibility is a key aspect of any Catholic school, priority is given to providing those resources that directly impact classroom instruction in order to ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum. For example, the language teachers have vertically aligned the Spanish instruction with the goal of eighth graders being able to begin high school at second year level through the school's Advanced Spanish classes. Resources are provided to support that curricular goal. In addition, students and parents provided input to the language program that requested an expansion of language offerings other than Spanish at the Upper School level. After collaboration on the best way to approach this request, the school implemented the Duo Lingo program so that students could become familiar with other languages. This gives flexibility in providing a diverse curriculum since students are engaged in their language of choice.

The process in using data showing the success of the various strategies and the degree of implementation is important in evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum. Faculty members meet during inservice in

August to set the path for implementation of programs to support learning. This includes reviewing prior standardized testing that will assist in identifying curricular needs for individual students and in areas showing a pattern within a certain class where curriculum enhancement should take place. For example, vocabulary instruction is highly effective throughout the grade levels due to the vertical alignment provided by the Sadlier vocabulary series. However, data, which is supported by national research, shows that math computation skills continue to be a challenge for students at all grade levels. Faculty members utilize data, cluster meeting and full faculty meetings to take a look at the data and see what strategies can be employed to support a strengthening of those areas. Other data may consist of test scores, attendance counts, observations, and evaluation regarding the effectiveness of staff development activities.

**FOCUS 4: The administrator and faculty develop the goals, objectives and broad based concepts (*specifics taught by grade*) for learning and the expectations for student performance.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Instructional goals and objectives provide academic focus.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Faculty input and recommendations are utilized in program development.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Objectives are clearly and sequentially stated based on expectations for student learning.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Students are made aware of objectives to be taught and performance expectations.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Subject area objectives and expectations are communicated to parents/guardians.	YES	X	NO	
6.	There is continuity in the use of materials at the various grade levels of the school.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe how objectives are documented in planning and implementing the curriculum.

► After extensive planning, utilizing the curriculum and textbook scope and sequence, teachers upload their lesson plans at the beginning of each week to ensure that planning for the upcoming week has taken place and instruction is aligned with the curriculum. Lesson plans document the accomplishment of objectives as related to the curriculum. A variety of assessment forms that reinforce the curriculum objectives are used in the classroom such as standardized tests, teacher-made tests, publisher tests, performance assessments, anecdotal notes, and student portfolios.

B. Describe how subject area objectives and expectations are communicated to students.

► Goals and objectives are communicated to students both written and orally, the timing of which depends upon the teacher goal for the instructional lesson. Teachers utilize inquiry learning in which students are expected to use their critical thinking skills as part of discovery learning. One of these techniques includes seminar-style learning where students are expected to contribute to the learning process directly and through their input as they are engaged in the lesson. Students engage in individual, small group, large group, and whole class activities as part of the instructional process in order to achieve objectives and expectations. In-class and pull-out tutoring and individual instruction strategies are used to assist in communicating subject area objectives and expectations to students who are struggling with a particular lesson. Teachers regularly check for understanding and



comprehension of objectives and expectations through a variety of assessment tools and/or application of newly-learned skills.

C. Describe how subject area objectives and expectations are communicated to parents/guardians.

► Throughout the year, the teachers and administration send letters and emails home to the parents addressing material being covered in class, upcoming projects and tests, and any academic and/or discipline concerns occurring in the classroom on an individual as well as a class basis. Teacher/parent conferences are held in the fall and spring as well as by appointment when deemed necessary by teacher, parent, or administrative team. Parents receive individual notes, progress reports and report cards updating their student's progress. Parents and teachers communicate via telephone, letter, and e-mail, electronic gradebook checks on Fast Direct, website, and online classroom pages on the school website, to ensure objectives and expectations are being met to the best of the student's ability.

**FOCUS 5: Teachers systematically plan for instruction. Instructional planning focuses on adapting teaching strategies to meet student learning needs.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Teachers have a planning period.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Instructional strategies and materials are adapted to a variety of individual learning styles and needs.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Special instructional programs for individual students support and reinforce the overall school curriculum.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:►**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. What components do the daily lesson plans include (*e.g., objectives, materials, activities, assessment and adaptations for special populations*)?

► Teachers adapt their lesson plans to curriculum requirements, standard strands, assessment (formative/summative), student differentiation/instructional needs, utilization of Bloom's Taxonomy, materials, technology component, homework, counseling element, and individual teaching styles. Activities are listed to reinforce the objective being taught. While many include the elements listed above, teachers also include things such as time allotment, textbook page numbers, and topic.

B. How is instructional planning monitored?

► Lesson plans are written and uploaded to cloud storage OwnCloud and Planbook.com at the beginning of each week for review and evaluation. The principal conducts formal teacher evaluations at least twice a year for new teachers and once a year for veteran teachers. The principal and Leadership Team teachers also conduct frequent informal walkthroughs and evaluations.

C. What criteria are used to determine instructional grouping to improve student learning?

► A mixture of homogenous and heterogeneous student grouping is used in the classrooms based on different criteria ranging from IOWA results that determine Title I student groupings, diagnostic testing to determine special needs and accommodations, and group dynamics. Title I and Special Education inclusion and pull-out instructors, classroom aides and volunteers are utilized in assisting with group work. Students are sometimes teamed so that stronger students can peer-teach, thus assisting their fellow students with a concept. Some groups are leveled, particularly in reading, based on teacher recommendation and best practices. Some student grouping is project-oriented and may include social-dynamic factors, particularly at the Upper School level. Finally, some student groupings are random when utilizing certain study sessions or subject-specific work.

- D. Explain how the school designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations and activities that reflect best practices.

► In classrooms throughout the school, teachers design many instructional strategies which aim to fully engage students, such as Word Walls, partner work, cooperative learning groups, simulations, demonstrations, mock court, cooperative learning games, reenactments, project-driven instruction, discovery learning, student-led lessons, and online interactive activities. Teachers utilize engaging content video clips to reinforce classroom instruction in addition to traditional techniques such as note-taking in order to engage the various types of learning styles.

When students reach a higher level of learning, they are given project-driven work that allows them to differentiate their learning toward a deeper understanding. Examples include science fair projects and online resources such as IXL math and Study Island. A strong instruction-driven innovation is the elective system in the Upper School for grades 6-8. Some of the electives are inquiry-based where students can explore a variety of topics ranging from finance to basic mechanics. The school participates annually in the Edible Car Contest sponsored by Texas Woman's University in Denton where eighth grade teams must design a car completely from food so that it can functionally operate down an incline. Students participate in real-life application activities such as set design for the school's One Act Play and service learning through the school's extensive gardening and environmental science electives.

- E. Show evidence of the kinds of collaborative approaches designed to support the implementation of instructional strategies and encourage improvement.

► A key to supporting the implementation of instructional strategies and encourage improvement begins with the student-teacher relationship. Research indicates that frequent student – instructor contact in and out of classes is an important factor in student motivation and involvement. Instructor concern helps students overcome difficult challenges and persevere to refocus on learning. There is constant collaboration among all faculty members in working with this student-teacher relationship. For example, if the coach or the science teacher is concerned about the performance of a particular student, they collaboratively share their concern with appropriate parties, including the administrative team, so that the situation can be resolved or a plan of action put into place to assist the student.

Students are encouraged to work together as they prepare for classes, create study groups as needed within the classrooms or during study hall opportunities. They are asked to give their feedback to instructors so that instructional strategies can be modified if needed in order to encourage improvement.

Collaborative approaches include encouraging active learning by students presenting their work to the class, giving them real-life situations to analyze (such as the construction of a greenhouse or building benches for the garden), and using technology to encourage active learning in which they are responsible for research instead of having the teacher supply them with the answers.

Collaborative approaches include giving prompt feedback, emphasizing efficient use of time on task, communicating high expectations, and respecting diverse ways of learning and talents. An example of all of these collaborative approaches would be a religion project in eighth grade which directs students to research two Catholic universities so they will have this in their toolbox as they head on to high school. The students are asked to place themselves in a real-life situation where they are actually marketing this university to their colleagues through the design of a brochure. The students are given some time in class to research the college so they can receive prompt feedback as to whether they are on the right track with the project. They are encouraged to use their time efficiently which includes an incremental timeline for completion. Diverse learning and talents are taken into consideration since students are directed to seek and research those universities where they have an interest in what they will ultimately seek as a career. One student researched a Catholic university in Australia

that was devoted to agriculture production since that was their interest. This type of project definitely communicates high expectations as the students are initially outside their comfort levels, knowing very little initially about a university, marketing, or brochure design. They end up with a sense of pride in the accomplishment of this challenging task. As a follow up, the students take a field trip to the University of Dallas so they can have a real-life experience on a Catholic university campus. These types of collaborative approaches result in a high level of student engagement which drives instruction and leads to great improvement.

## **FOCUS 6: Students are actively engaged in learning activities.**

### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. What process is used to ensure active involvement of all students in learning activities?

► Differentiated student learning styles are taken into consideration when actively engaging students in the learning process. Teachers use individual projects, hands-on activities, grouping, teaming, peer learning, dialogue, question and answer that is both oral and written, guided practice, re-teaching, portfolio, board exercises, competitive games, assigned homework, demonstration and experiments, remediation, and assessment as some of the tools for active involvement of all students in learning based on the curriculum and the learning objectives of the day.

B. How do teachers ensure that instructional time is maximized for all students?

► Students begin the day with routine “bell work” so that they are immediately engaged shortly after they reach the classroom. Teachers have lesson materials and supplies ready at the opening of each class. Lesson plans reflect a time allotment per each activity to ensure maximum utilization of the class period. Students are encouraged when they use time efficiently. Special needs students receive assistance through additional one-on-one instruction when possible through inclusion within the classroom, through Title I services, or through extra study time with assigned tutors. Continuing projects, group work, learning centers, guided practice, re-teaching, and assessment are among additional techniques utilized to assure that students are on task while maximizing instructional time.

C. How do teachers use varied pedagogies and methodologies of instruction to maximize student learning?

► Teachers use developmentally appropriate pedagogies and methodology to ensure that students of all learning abilities and styles receive equal learning opportunities, including accommodations, grade modifications, hands-on activities, independent research, and cooperative learning activities. Teachers use manipulatives, online learning, and other differentiated techniques to teach, reinforce, and utilize real-world situations when possible in order to allow for different student learning styles.

D. What provisions have been made to foster student responsibility for learning in subject areas?

► In line with our school’s philosophy of fostering learning as a lifelong tool, students are expected to take a great deal of responsibility for developing their skills in various subject areas both in the classroom and at home. This is accomplished by expecting students to take responsibility for homework assignments and independent projects, and by developing the skills necessary to organize assignments, textbooks, and other property. Parents are encouraged to bolster student responsibility for learning by reinforcing the school philosophy. Teachers assist in fostering student responsibility through the nurturing of intrinsic motivation and through written guidelines, such as homework policies and requirements for research papers and special projects.

**Instructional resource materials are available and used.**

## FOCUS 7:

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Teaching resource materials are available.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Varied manipulatives and materials are used in the classroom.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Necessary equipment/technology ( <i>copy machine, computers, digital projectors, electronic whiteboards, etc.</i> ) is provided for faculty use.	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments:** ►

## DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:

What is the process used for selecting, adopting, maintaining and evaluating textbooks and other appropriate educational materials? Who participates in the process?

► Every classroom teacher, support staff, along with the administrative team, participates in evaluating, selecting, and maintaining instructional materials and resources on an annual basis beginning in the early spring of each school year. The teachers evaluate the needs based on potential curricular support and curriculum effectiveness. The administrative team makes the final decision based on effectiveness and financial feasibility. The administrative team, teachers, resource teachers, and the local public school district officials collaborate regarding the purchase of materials for Title I, ESL, and Special Education students that are used for remediation, assessment, benchmarking, diagnostic indicators and general support of the curriculum.

## FOCUS 8: There is evidence of the use of current technology in the instructional program.

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Does the school have an on-going technology plan? If yes, when was the plan last updated?	► 2018	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Does the school have ethical guidelines and acceptable use policies for staff?		YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Does the school have ethical guidelines and acceptable use policies for students?		YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Does the school have ethical guidelines and acceptable use policies for volunteers?		YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Does the school provide technology training for teachers?		YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Technology is integrated into classroom instruction.		YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Indicate all current technology that is used in the instructional program.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Calculators  
Cassette recorder  
CD-ROM drives  
Closed circuit television  
Computers  
Digital cameras

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

LCD projectors  
Overhead projectors  
Robotics  
Technology, equipment and bandwidth capacity (*distance learning*)  
VCRs  
Video cameras

<u>X</u>	DVDs		Interactive white board
<u>X</u>	Internet access	<u>X</u>	Digital equipment
<u>X</u>	Scanners	Other ( <i>specify</i> )	► Ceiling Computer Projectors, Student Laptops Grades 6-8

**Comments:** ►

### DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. Who is responsible for the teaching of technology applications, skills and concepts? Describe the setting in which instruction takes place.

► The individual classroom teachers and aides, with the assistance of the technology director and administrative team, are responsible for teaching technology applications and skills up through fifth grade. Students in grades six through eight have regular computer courses as part of their class schedules but also integrate technology into all subject areas under the guidance of subject area teachers. Teachers encourage technology integration whenever possible, such as utilizing the computerized media of the internet, software for researching various projects, and the development of word processing, PowerPoint, spreadsheet, database, and keyboarding skills. Teachers in grades six through eight integrate technology throughout the curriculum, emphasizing the use of computer application skills in completing as many assignments as possible, particularly research projects such as term papers and multi-media presentations. Students in grades six through eight are issued laptop computers and utilize Google Classrooms as a main cloud-indicated communication vehicle between them and their teachers for turning in assignments and for instructor feedback. The eighth grade science and math instructor utilized Moodle for directed assignments.

B. Describe the process used to provide teachers with professional development opportunities in the area of technology.

► A great professional development resource available to all staff is the annual summer TIA Conference sponsored by the Denton Independent School District. The goal of the conference is to explore the effective marriage of technology and pedagogy in an effort to better serve students. TIA accomplishes this goal by offering engaging keynotes and breakout sessions over the course of the conference in which the latest ideas in teaching, learning, and technology integration are blended together to create new and exciting ways to move students toward mastery on content and skills. Attendees are provided with opportunities throughout the conference to consider and think about new and exciting ideas surrounding technology and learning. Iteration follows as these ideas are refined and customized by each attendee to fit their learning into the unique context of their teaching role. As a result, teachers and administrators that attend TIA are equipped to act immediately on their new learning with the staff and students they serve.

Staff members who attend TIA bring their ideas back to those who did not attend and collaborate on what would work in terms of implementation within the curriculum. An example was the expansion in use of Google Classrooms at the upper grade levels. In addition to this conference, staff members are trained as needed in technology skills that are pertinent to their job description. An example is the recent implementation of a new payroll system in which employees are required to clock and learn a new application. This applies to everything from keeping up their classroom pages on the website, to securing passwords, to the utilization of technology to enhance safety and security, to effective use of technology in the classroom.

C. Describe how teachers and students use technology and multimedia to support skills development and to provide opportunities for individualized learning.

► All students in Kindergarten through 8th have access to the computer lab and have a minimum of weekly computer courses with emphasis on keyboarding proficiency and computer literacy. In addition, beginning in fifth grade, students have access to mobile technology that is located in the Upper School classroom wing for access to laptops. Student in seventh and eighth grade are issued laptops that can be utilized throughout the

school day for all subject areas for skill development and to supplement teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Teachers utilize software that reinforces the core curriculum and integrates the curricular content with multimedia tools such as tutorial software, curriculum-aligned software, and use of the internet. The school also utilizes videos, overhead projectors, cassette recorders, calculators and video cameras throughout the curriculum during regular class instruction and with special projects. In addition, preschool students access IBM Young Explorer computers in each classroom with software specifically for the preschool level.

D. Describe how the use of technology supplements teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

► Technology is intricately integrated into the classrooms as is age appropriate. Teachers take care in making sure students are using technology in a Christ-centered environment and with appropriate restrictions and technology policies in place. Student-driven projects such as video slideshows based on topics such as the lives of the saints or the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy allow teachers to integrate cross-curricular activities utilizing technology. Teachers are able to utilize websites for a variety of purposes, ranging from current events to web-based lessons tied to specific curriculum goals. Student technology assessment includes proficiency of computer use, keyboarding proficiency, and project-based assignments. Upper School teachers utilize Google Docs, Grammarly, and Google Classrooms for efficient use of technology in support of the teaching and learning process within the classroom.

**FOCUS 9: The administrator and faculty review and analyze student achievement information and test results to plan program effectiveness.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Achieved objectives and expectations are measured by:				
a.	Performance on standardized achievement tests.	YES	X	NO	
b.	Scores on teacher-made tests, writing samples and other measures.	YES	X	NO	
c.	Analysis of student grades and progress.	YES	X	NO	
d.	Curriculum-based tests adequately reflect and correspond with objectives stated in the curriculum guides.	YES	X	NO	
e.	Age-appropriate assessment methods and instruments.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The results of ACRE or another appropriate test are used by the school to improve religious instruction.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Teacher made tests are reviewed periodically by the administrator.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Publishers’ tests reflect and correspond with the objectives stated in the curriculum guides.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Varied assessment methods are used by teachers.	YES	X	NO	
6.	Standardized tests provide norm/criterion-referenced data on achievement in basic fields of study.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. How are test data, formal and informal, collected and used for modification of materials, instruction, and programs?

► Teachers give students written tests at the end of each unit. Data is recorded in electronic grade books.

Review of test questions help determine the information that needs to be taught and modified to ensure that learning has occurred. Informal oral testing aids the teacher in modifying instructional methods. Benchmarking is used for preschool through fifth grades to mark progress in math and language arts so that modification to the instructional program can be accomplished as needed. Mid-term and final examinations are used in the Upper School to assist with data collection regarding mastery levels so that modifications can be made if needed.

B. Describe the specific use of standardized test scores by the teacher and how teachers are prepared to interpret and utilize test data.

► The school administers the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Assessment of Catechesis for Religious Education (ACRE) religion test on an annual basis. Homeroom and special area teachers review the test scores, as needed, as a diagnostic tool. The administration and staff work together in reviewing the scores of those students who are in need of modification and remediation and then share those scores with the appropriate teachers. The scores are also utilized for identification of students who may fit well with enrichment activities offered through the school's academic competition such as mathematics skills, social studies, science, etc.

The tests are utilized to assist with identification of students who are in need of remediation in any of the areas of the test with some students eligible for Title I or Special Education services utilizing the data as one of the pieces of evaluation.

C. How are achievement and test results reported to and interpreted for students, parents/guardians and community?

► Test scores and rankings are discussed at parent/teacher conferences. Group achievements, specifically the Duke Identification Talent Program, are reported in the school newsletter, to the school advisory council, and other school promotional materials. While individual standardized test scores are shared with appropriate parents, the scores are used for diagnostic purposes.

#### **FOCUS 10: There is evidence of formal and informal monitoring of student progress.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The administration and faculty regularly monitor student progress and report the results in a way that is useful to students and parents/guardians.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Individual student records are maintained concerning achievement, discipline, and attendance/tardiness.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Tests and other forms of student assessment measure what is actually being taught.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Achievement data are used on a regular basis to revise and improve curriculum and instruction.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Re-teaching and specific skill remediation are important parts of the teaching process.	YES	X	NO	
	Is this documented in the lesson plans?	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

#### **DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe how the school develops and implements a system for assessing progress toward meeting the expectations for student learning.

► The school uses best practices in implementing its system for assessing progress toward meeting expectations for student learning. This includes but is not limited to diagnostic assessment such as pre-



assessment, formative assessment which includes incremental student learning checks throughout a lesson or project, summative assessment to monitor if learning goals were achieved or if reteaching or other strategies need to be utilized, norm-referenced assessment through the use of the IOWA testing which includes COGAT cognitive ability assessment, and interim benchmark assessment to monitor skills or progress on a quarterly or semester basis. These standard best practices entail a host of venues ranging from teacher-created tests, quizzes, tests from textbooks, performance assessments, rubrics for such learning opportunities as projects or essays as applicable, and other assessments through daily teacher observation.

B. How does the school use student assessment data for making decisions to ensure continuous student progress?

► The school uses assessment data analysis to provide a snapshot of what students know, what they should know, and what can be done to meet their academic needs. This data analysis can be of an informal nature, such as a parent or teacher expressing a concern about an aspect of student progress, to more formal data such as collected through a variety of standardized and other assessments. For example, a teacher expresses a concern about a student to the administrative team. There is holistic collaboration to determine whether the student is being influenced by physical factors, such as eyesight, lack of sleep or inadequate diet, or some other physical or medically-indicated factor. Family dynamics are included in the assessment, especially life-changing events in the student's life such as an impending divorce, move, or the death of a family member. The collaboration includes other teachers/staff members who also teach this student or who has regular interaction with the student. Student progress is analyzed over a continuum that is recent, over several months, or longer if needed. After all indicators have been analyzed, a decision could be made; for example, to partner with the parents to recommend that diagnostic testing, medical intervention, additional tutoring, or other tools be completed that could assist with student progress. The same type of data is used to note patterns from a classroom perspective, subject-area perspective, or vertical alignment perspective.

C. Describe the frequency and process used to discuss student progress and achievement with parents/guardians.

► Mandatory parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall and by appointment as deemed necessary by the teachers, parents, or administrative team. The electronic grade book is open to parents and students grades 4-8, and parents are encouraged to frequently check the gradebook and dialog with the child to keep up with progress. Progress Reports go home at mid-quarter. Report cards are issued every quarter. A member of the administrative team approves progress reports and report cards noting any student who may need follow up with the parent or teacher. In the Upper School, student athletes have a weekly grade check to make sure they are keeping up with their studies. Upper School teachers hold a monthly meeting during which they collaborate regarding any student progress items. On a continual basis, parents are encouraged to speak with the teacher regarding their child's progress. This may occur by telephone, letter, e-mail or an informal meeting before or after school. If necessary, a formal meeting with the teacher, parent, and/or administrative team member or members will be held to address a particular student's progress. This meeting may be called by the teacher, parent, or administrative team member.

# **FOCUS 11: Students' special needs are met through appropriate programs of instruction.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1. Does the school admit students with identified special needs?	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ►



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**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

- A. Describe how supplementary instruction is delivered to students who are significantly below grade level (*e.g., Title I Reading, Content Mastery, etc.*).

► Adaptations are made for special student needs within the confines of limited funding. Teachers and parents make referrals for potential diagnosis of special needs students. The school works with parents and the Denton Independent School District Special Education Department in developing a Service Plan when indicated. The school works within the confines of federally funded title programs to provide for special needs populations. Adaptations are made based on the indicated special need. Physical adaptations are done as indicated, such as providing for special seating, allowing extra time for assignment completion, oral testing, and speech therapy.

Students with special needs are assessed according to their abilities and are expected to perform at their level, which may include grade modification. Tutoring, both inclusion and one-on-one, are available to students with special needs. Denton ISD Special Education Department provides a part-time learning specialist to work with special education students. Immaculate Conception Catholic School works with the Denton ISD federal programs department in identifying instructors who provide Title I services to identified students throughout the day. Approximately \$28,000 is designated in federal funds for direct instruction through the Denton ISD. All stakeholders of special needs students, including Title I and Special Education teachers, regular classroom and special area teachers, principal, parents, and school districts are kept informed through letters and informational meetings. In addition, the school has an expansive Title I and Differentiated learning inventory of supplies that have been acquired from a variety of school districts which serve Immaculate Conception Catholic School through federal programs.

- B. Describe your school's enrichment program or the services that are provided for students that are gifted and/or talented.

► Differentiated student learning styles are taken into consideration when actively engaging students in the learning process. Teachers use individual projects, hands-on activities, grouping, teaming, peer learning, dialogue, question and answer, guided practice, re-teaching, remediation, and assessment as some of the tools for active involvement of all students in learning. In addition, gifted students, have the option of participating in academic competitions that will challenge them at their ability levels. They can also participate in regular and high-level classes in math, Spanish, and online Foreign Language at the Upper School level.

- C. Describe any additional instructional services that are provided for special populations of students (*e.g., ESL, bilingual, learning disabled, limited vision, hearing impaired, behavioral and attention difficulties, physically, mentally or emotionally challenged*).

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School provides dyslexia support services utilizing materials from the Scottish Rite Dyslexia Education Center. Diagnostic services are available through Title III funding by the Denton ISD. The school has a teacher who is trained in English As A New Language through the University of Notre Dame who is available as a resource and mentor to teachers for students who need ESL assistance. Appropriate referral services are made available to parents for other special populations of students such as behavioral and attention difficulties, mentally or emotionally challenged.

**FOCUS 12: A functional guidance program is provided by the school to serve the student population.****INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The guidance program supports the goals and philosophy of the school.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The guidance program serves all students, including those in special populations.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Teachers are aware of their role in the guidance program.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Teachers are knowledgeable of the age-appropriate developmental needs of students.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Teachers integrate age-appropriate guidance concepts into a variety of subject areas.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►****DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

- A. Describe the guidance program and how it addresses the spiritual, educational, personal and social needs of all students at all levels.

► The school guidance program incorporates the *Faith, Family, and Friends*, curriculum. Recognizing the expanded role that teachers play in the classroom, the National Catholic Educational Association generated this elementary guidance curriculum as a support and guide for the Catholic classroom teacher. This program assists teachers and the administrative team in providing a nurturing learning environment for the healthy development of children who grow in their relationships through a Christ-centered approach based on the school mission.

The six-volume series (vol. 1: program manual; vol 2: early childhood and kindergarten; vol. 3: grades 1/2; vol. 4: grades 3/4; vol. 5: grades 5/6; vol. 6: grades 7/8) which extends from early childhood to eighth grade, includes, among others, the following 18 topics: (1) understanding self and others; (2) courtesy and respect for others; (3) communication; (4) friendship; (5) family; (6) moral decision-making; (7) stress management; (8) time management; (9) self-safety; (10) self-direction and responsibility; (11) substance abuse awareness; (12) describing and expressing feelings; (13) conflict resolution; (14) cultural similarities and differences; (15) loss; (16) individual differences; (17) Catholic sexuality; and (18) HIV/AIDS. The first volume includes the philosophy and scope and sequence of the curriculum as well as directions on how to use the manual. The competencies required for guidance teachers are considered under the three headings of attitudes, skills, and concepts. The teacher's personal qualities and attitudes are prerequisites for fostering student affective growth. Concepts considered as important for guidance teaching include normal development; group dynamics; individual needs, self-esteem, indicators of distress, and affective education concepts. The program helps the teacher integrate value and guidance in instruction and thus enhance the growth of the total person.

This program is enhanced through daily curricular elements integrated within all subjects, but especially the religion class, where these same topics layer well. The school's human sexuality program, The Genesis Project and Theology of the Body for the Upper School, enhances the guidance program. The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Safe Environment Department requires that a safe environment curriculum be completed annually which is implemented from preschool through eighth grade as an additional guidance resource.

In addressing career and vocational guidance, students visit Nolan Catholic High School on annual shadow days to learn more about high school. The school asks counselors from area Catholic high schools to give presentations to Upper School students and parents, particularly eighth graders, on opportunities that are available as they begin

to make decisions about their future beyond their elementary years. The Upper School teachers incorporate career studies as part of their elective and core classes as is integrated with the curriculum. This includes exploration of vocations to the priesthood and religious life as is supported by the diocese through such things as the daily vocations prayer and visits to the school by seminarians.

B. Who is responsible for designing and implementing the guidance program?

► The administrative team, under the main direction of the Dean of Student Services, implements the guidance program in collaboration with the faculty. Teachers support the goals of the guidance program through the integration of concepts through the regular religion program, through the Catholic Identity of the school including the Social Justice Teachings of the faith, and the mission statement which focuses on development of the whole child.

C. How does the guidance program encourage all students to reach their maximum potential?

► When students are able to focus on their schooling, they have the opportunity to be successful. Through the guidance program, students are encouraged to develop a personal relationship with God and to work toward resolution of challenges at all levels of their development. By doing our best to provide for the guidance needs of our students, they are then able to produce to their maximum potential should they choose to do so.

## DOMAIN SUMMARY

### DOMAIN V: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

**After conducting an in-depth study of this domain, the school finds the following:**

**1. Area(s) of strength:**

►

A. Religion is an integral part of the curriculum and is lived on a daily basis by all those involved with the school, including staff, students, families, and parish communities. This is accomplished through regular religion classes, the centrality of the Eucharistic, a plethora of opportunities for gathering as a school community in prayer and spirituality, and continuous community service projects.

B. The school has an academic program that aligns with diocesan, state, and national standards. The curriculum is enhanced as needed, utilizing a variety of teaching strategies. The school has great strength in its offerings of electives, especially at the Upper School level. The academic program provides for academic success as reflected in standardized test scores, ACRE test results, and other methods of measurement. The academic program is enriched through highly-engaging academic competition which allows students to stretch their abilities beyond the classroom.

C. A great strength is the school's process for identifying students with learning differences and students who need extra assistance. The school has built a strong diagnostic program through its partnership with area school districts that provide these services through federal programs. The Dean of Students, who directs this process, is highly engaged in partnering with all publics in making sure students are served through the development of individual service plans, 504 plans, and assigning appropriate Title I instruction. The dean is to be commended for building a strong relationship with the area school districts which has resulted in a wonderful inventory of remedial resources that assist students and teachers.

D. A great strength lies in having highly qualified and veteran teachers who systematically plan for student success and engage students in active learning.

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**2. Area(s) needing improvement or strengthening:**

(An area that needs growth/strengthening is one which, while present, could be improved or one which does not meet TCCED standards/policies.)

► While a high level of staff retention has resulted in an extremely strong curricular program, stakeholders will continue to partner in enhancing academic areas as outlined through goals 6 through 9 of the school's long-term Strategic Plan. These include ongoing evaluation of curriculum and overall program support, maintaining and updating materials and resources that enhance classroom instruction, continued emphasis on the development of servant leadership and social responsibility skills, and the reinforcement of efficient and Christ-like appropriate use of technology in and outside the classroom environment.

**3. Action plan:**

(List what the school plans to do within the next 3 years to strengthen or enhance the area(s) mentioned above.)

► The school will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure there is adequate funding, communication, and support of the goals of the long-term Strategic Plan in order to secure the school's pursuit of academic excellence through the development of the whole child as is supported through our mission.

## DOMAIN VI: STUDENT SERVICES, RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES

**Student services enhance the curriculum and are an integral part of the learning process.**

**SUPPORTING DATA MAY INCLUDE:**

- Athletic policies
- Child abuse reporting procedures
- Communicable disease procedures
- Enrichment programs
- Extracurricular activities schedules and programs
- Field trip policies
- Health manual
- Immunization records
- List of agencies
- List of student organizations
- Documentation verifying bloodborne pathogens training
- Medication distribution records
- Medication procedures
- Parent/Guardian permission procedures
- Referral procedure / packets
- Regulations to assure confidentiality
- Schedules
- School emergency plan and procedures
- Student cumulative health records
- Student emergency procedures
- Teacher's extracurricular duties list
- Tutorial programs
- Verification of First Aid, CPR and AED training

**FOCUS 1: Counseling services are available to students.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Teachers and parents/guardians are familiar with the referral process for counseling services.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Professional counseling referrals are recommended when necessary.	YES	X	NO	
3.	School regulations assure the confidentiality of student records and information.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Approved lists of counselors/counseling service agencies are provided as needed to parents/guardians as needed.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Parent/guardian notification is required prior to student referral for counseling services.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

What counseling services are available to students and parents/guardians in the school?

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School is blessed by our Dean of Student Services who has extensive administrative and counseling background. Staff members work with the Dean of Administrative Services, the Dean of Students, and the principal in addressing concerns that might indicate a need for counseling services. The school has access to the lead pastor who assists and to parish counseling resources as needed. The school makes available information as needed regarding university and private counseling programs as it partners with parents on behalf of the student and family.

**FOCUS 2: The library provides resource and media support to the school's instructional program and is available for student use.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The library services and materials support the instructional goals.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Library holdings support the curriculum and are reflective of the requests/requirements of the professional staff and students.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Instruction in the use of the library is provided by the library staff for both teachers and students.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The library is available outside of regular class hours.	YES	X	NO	
5.	The library is adequately staffed for the number of clientele served.	YES	X	NO	
6.	Written policies, procedures, and guidelines have been developed for appropriate use of the library.	YES	X	NO	
7.	The library staff utilizes a variety of techniques to enhance the library program and student learning.	YES	X	NO	
8.	Memberships in library and other associations and agencies are maintained.	YES	X	NO	
9.	Annual inventories of materials and equipment are maintained.	YES	X	NO	
10.	Students have access to various forms of technology for information, access, research, writing, etc.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

4. The library has limited availability before school if a student is allowed access by a staff member, during after care, and at times after school should a faculty member wish to tutor or utilize the library.

6. Policies and procedures are available for review.

8. Library manager is a member of the Catholic Library Association.

10. The construction of the school building took into consideration the integration of technology and library accessibility. Because of this, the library and computer lab is conjoined for ready access to both technology and library services while allowing for dual supervision capabilities.

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe how/when the services and resources of the library are available to students, faculty and staff.

The library is open to all students, staff and administration, Monday through Friday. Use by parents or community members must be pre-arranged. All visitors must report to the office to register and obtain visitor badges.

There are approximately 9,395 volumes and resources in the library which are weeded and updated on a regular basis. The library manager coordinates and organizes resources of the library during the hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday. A library aide provides library access on Fridays for most of the day as needed. Students in grades K-5 have regularly scheduled library class during the week which include topics related to efficient use the library. Grades K through 4 have 30 minutes per week; grade 5 has 45 minutes per week while grades 6 through 8 come in at various times, such as during their literature classes, as needed to do research or check out materials. The library manager or guest volunteer frequently reads aloud to the grades K through 3 students to enhance their appreciation for reading. The library class also includes the opportunity for silent reading sessions. At least once a week the students check out books according to the topics the students are researching for a project, material they are covering in their classrooms, or for their own leisure reading interest.

Seasonal decorations provide a comfortable environment for library visits and personal reading time. Book fairs, posters, and book displays are utilized to encourage students to read. The library manager on occasion schedules the Denton County Travelling Museum which presents curriculum-based support for a variety of classes. Examples are: Hispanic Heritage in Early Denton County; African American Families of Early Denton County; 20th Century In Denton County; Farm Life in Early Denton County; and Ranching in Early Denton County.

### **SERVICES**

The library manager plans, organizes and coordinates the library program. The library manager is responsible for library instruction and for the administration of the library. Faculty can expect the library manager to do the following:

- Gather material for teachers to aide them in classroom instruction.
- Teach library skills as directed by the teachers.
- Acquire books and audio visual materials needed by the faculty.
- Work cooperatively with teachers in planning research projects.
- Work with teachers to schedule class visits.
- Work with staff and students to determine library resource needs.
- Assist staff and students with book selection.
- Keep faculty and students informed of new material.
- Provide orientation for new students and faculty.
- Teach students and faculty use of the library.
- Select books and materials for the library.

### **BORROWING**

All students, staff, and administration may check books out. Parents may check out books with approval from the principal, teachers or the library manager. All material must be checked out through the database or other circulation method determined by the library manager. No material may be taken without such a record being made. Materials are defined as books, magazines, videos, DVD's and equipment.

### **Loan Limits**

Books may be checked out for a period of one week and may be renewed. Books must be present to be renewed. Students who do not return books on time are not allowed to borrow more books until the overdue book is returned. Students in kindergarten through first grade may check out one book. Grades 2 through 8 may check out two books. Exceptions may be made for classroom projects, reports and research papers with approval from the library manager.

### **Library Activities**

The library manager organizes a "Quarter Book Sales" in September of each school year where students can purchase books that have been weeded from the library, books that have been donated but are not usable by the school, old textbooks, and other items. The library manager hosts book fairs three times a year to promote reading among students, including Catholic book fairs as are available to promote the school's Catholic Identity as an extension to the family. The library manager has sought grant funding from the North Texas Book Festival with funds used for many years to enhance library book offerings. The school has been the recipient of a donation from the Texas Woman's University History Club for the past two years for added volumes. The library manager is a critical support to the school's extra-curricular academic meets as she is the major meet organizer and assists with coaching some of the events. The library manager is in charge of ordering and coordinating the school's annual IOWA standardized testing and assists with data collation that assists identification of students with

special needs of both a remedial and gifted nature. The library manager is a member of the Catholic Library Association in order to keep abreast of latest developments in library management and networks with fellow librarians to share ideas. The library manager encourages reading through the annual Braum's Buddy, Six Flags, Pizza Hut and Summer Reading Programs in which children receive various small awards for reading a certain number of minutes or books.

**B. How do library programs and services meet the needs of students and personnel?**

► The library programs and services meet the needs of students and personnel through their mission and goals that are set based on the mission. The mission of the Immaculate Conception Catholic School library is to support the goals and the philosophy of the school; to provide information service to the students, faculty and administration; to collaborate with staff to design learning activities that utilize information resources; and to acquire materials that support the school curriculum.

**GOALS**

- To provide an environment conducive to learning.
- To provide materials which inspire interest in learning.
- To maintain facilities, materials, and equipment for optimal use.
- To keep faculty and students aware of new materials and sources of information.
- To keep abreast of faculty and student informational needs and interests.
- To optimize accessibility.
- To teach information literacy skills in order to produce life-long learners.

By continual focus on the goals above, the library is able to meet the needs of students and staff through a nurturing learning environment, supplemental materials which enhance the classroom, and information literacy skills to inspire and produce life-long learners.

**FOCUS 3: Student health services are provided to ensure that the school is in compliance with all statutory requirements.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1. Indicate the number of personnel certified or trained in:

	<b>First Aid</b>	<b>CPR</b>	<b>Bloodborne Pathogens</b>	<b>AED</b>
Professional Staff	0	0	25	25
Support Staff	2	2	9	9
Before and After School Staff	2	2	2	2
Bus Driver	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coaching Staff	2	2	2	2

2.	First aid supplies are readily available.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Student immunization records are maintained and in compliance with the Texas Department of Health regulations.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Student health records are maintained and updated; these include vision, hearing, spinal screenings and Texas Risk Assessment for Type 2 Diabetes in Children (acanthosis nigricans).	YES	X	NO	



5.	Provisions are made for students with special health needs.	YES	X	NO	
6.	There are written policies and procedures for the dispensing of medication.	YES	X	NO	
7.	Medications are kept in a secure and locked area.	YES	X	NO	
8.	Records are kept documenting the dispensing of medications.	YES	X	NO	
9.	There are written policies and procedures for:				
	• Reporting of child abuse	YES	X	NO	
	• Handling of life-threatening situations	YES	X	NO	
10.	Faculty and staff know the school's emergency procedures.	YES	X	NO	
11.	Bloodborne pathogen training is conducted and documented annually for all staff.	YES	X	NO	
12.	There are written procedures regarding communicable diseases that incorporate Texas Department of Health and county regulations.	YES	X	NO	
13.	There are written procedures for care of students and faculty in health emergencies.	YES	X	NO	
14.	Emergency cards are on file for all students.	YES	X	NO	
15.	Emergency cards are on file for all personnel.	YES	X	NO	
16.	Written reports of serious accidents are filed with the principal and reported to insurance and/or Workman's Compensation.	YES	X	NO	
17.	Parents/guardians are informed promptly when a student is injured or becomes seriously ill.	YES	X	NO	
18.	Injury, accident and illness notifications are documented in writing for the school records.	YES	X	NO	
19.	Reports required by the Texas Department of Health are filed annually.	YES	X	NO	
20.	Personnel tuberculosis records ( <i>if required</i> ) are updated as required by the county.	NA		YES	X
21.	Student tuberculosis records ( <i>if required</i> ) are updated as required by the county.	NA		YES	X
22.	Records of regularly scheduled safety drills are on file.	YES	X	NO	
23.	Records of regularly scheduled safety drills for the before/after school program are on file.	YES	X	NO	
24.	An emergency card for each student in the before/after school program is on file.	YES	X	NO	
25.	The emergency cards for the students in the before/after school program are readily accessible to the before/after school staff.	YES	X	NO	
26.	Emergency cards are accessible to school personnel during all field trips and off-campus activities.	YES	X	NO	
27.	Health and safety regulations are followed for athletic events and extracurricular activities.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:►**

9. Procedures for reporting suspected child abuse are included in handbooks and covered during teacher in-service; copy of crisis management policy is enclosed.
20. Tuberculosis records are required by Denton County only when first hired. None are required after that time.
21. Student Tuberculosis records are not required in Denton County.
27. The following safety measures are required for athletic events, extracurricular activities and field trips:
  - a. All participants, students and adults, must properly secure seat belts.
  - b. All travel must be pre-approved by the administration.
  - c. A first-aid kit and cell phones must be carried by the parent and teacher chaperones.
  - d. Emergency medications must be included for special needs students.

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

- A. Describe the process used for acquiring and maintaining health records. Include a description/title of the records that are kept and how they are used.



The process used for acquiring and maintaining health records is a collaborative effort with great support provided by the nurse from the Diocese of Fort Worth Catholic Schools Office. The diocesan nurse meets at the beginning of the school year with all health representatives from the diocesan schools to outline procedures and update representatives on any changes in the maintenance of health records. The diocesan nurse visits the school several times a year to collaborate with the health representative, check all health records, and answer any questions the health representative or administrative team might have. The diocesan nurse is readily available in case of a higher level health concern in which an incident report is filed with the diocesan office. Should there be a health concern or incident involving staff that might indicate workman's compensation paperwork so the employee can receive medical attention, the diocesan nurse is available to assist with the process. The diocesan nurse, with her many years of experience and expertise, is a great gift and support to all of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth.

A yellow card entitled "Catholic School System Student Emergency Care Form – Diocese of Fort Worth" is completed by a parent or guardian for every enrolled student. This form contains home, work, and mobile phones telephone numbers so that parents can be contacted in case of illness or emergency. The form also contains information regarding family physician, preferred hospital, insurance carrier, names of persons allowed to pick child up from school, allergies, most recent tetanus immunization, and special medical problems. It also contains a permission to treat clause, which is signed and dated by the parent. The original card is kept on file in the school's main office and a photocopy is kept in a notebook in the health office. Changes to the card are completed as needed. Confidential information listing students with allergies is provided to the health representative and shared with faculty and staff as needed.

Parents complete a form titled "Emergency Information for Field Trips" each time the child goes on a class field trip. This form contains phone and address information for reaching parents, as well as an additional emergency contact persons. It also contains name of physician, pertinent medical information, allergies, daily medications, tetanus immunization data, and permission to treat. This form must be completed by the child's parents before the student is allowed to go on the field trip and is then carried by the designated parent or teacher responsible for the student during that trip. After school care personnel have access to paperwork completed by parents prior to enrollment in the program.

The school conducts yearly health screenings for vision and hearing for all grade levels, preschool through eighth grade. Scoliosis screenings are administered to students in grades 5 through 8. There is a process and form when a student requests to see the health representative or visit the health office.

B. Describe the frequency and type of safety drills conducted by the school.

► Safety drills are scheduled regularly for school and after school care to ensure the safety of the school community in the event of a disaster. Following the school's Emergency Management Plan, the school follows Standard Response Protocol for "Lock, Lights, Out-of-Sight" drills and "Shelter-in-Place" drills (once every six weeks to two months). Evacuation plans are located at the exit door of each room in the school. Other drills include fire drill (once a month), tornado drill (at least once a year), earthquake drill (once a year).

Timed fire drills are conducted throughout the school year by the administrative team in coordination with the parish facilities director. Each grade is given an assigned area and a specific routine on where to move and stand. Each teacher carries his/her own cell phone for easy contact. During the fire drill practices, students must exit and re-enter the school building in silence and in an orderly fashion. Fire drills are conducted every month to assure the safety of the students and personnel. Fire drills are scheduled at various times of the day so students and staff can be familiar with exit routes in all areas of the school. A log of completed fire drills is kept in the school office.

The fire department conducts an annual inspection of the building and a private company is paid to annually check the fire extinguishers, which are available in case of emergency. The fire department brings a fire truck on site annually during Fire Prevention Week to assist students in learning more about emergency situations such as "Stop, Drop, and Roll".

**FOCUS 4: The school sponsors extracurricular activities, including athletics and student organizations, to meet the special interests of the students.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all "NO" answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The extracurricular activity program reflects the school's mission, philosophy, goals and objectives.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The extracurricular activity program provides opportunities for student leadership, decision making and cooperation within the groups.	YES	X	NO	
3.	A strong service component is incorporated into extracurricular activities.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The extracurricular activity program assists students to experience a sense of loyalty and commitment to the school.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Schedules for extracurricular activities and events are developed with a concern to minimize conflicts.	YES	X	NO	
6.	Extracurricular activities are supported by school policies and the school budget.	YES	X	NO	
7.	Extracurricular activities are actively supported by the parents/guardians.	YES	X	NO	
8.	Extracurricular activities are sponsored by the school and are under the supervision of school personnel.	YES	X	NO	
9.	Activity sponsors gain administrative approval of proposed events and follow the school's money management policies.	YES	X	NO	

10. Trips are taken only with administrative approval and with written parent/guardian consent.

YES

X

NO

Comments: ►

### DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:

A. Describe the school's extracurricular activities and indicate how they meet the special interests of the students.

► Extracurricular activities include stringed instrument lessons, volleyball, basketball, track, cheerleading, Beta Club, Student Council, chess club, Kiwanis Juniors Builders Club, Cherub Choir, Theater, academic competition in the North Texas Interscholastic League, and various community service projects, especially an ongoing partnership with Catholic Charities of Fort Worth. A comprehensive list and explanation is located in Domain V since extra-curricular activities are tied to curricular enrichment. Students may participate in several activities at a time, depending on their interests. Extracurricular activities have been added as the school has grown and at the request of students and their parents. Teachers, parents and outside instructors are sensitive to the demands of the students' and schedule lessons and practices around test and heavy homework periods. Allowances are made for participation in activities outside of the school. In addition, students must maintain extra-curricular eligibility by remaining in good academic standing. This encourages students to place high priority on academics and fosters responsibility and time management.

Parents, in close communication with the school administration, actively participate in extracurricular activities. Parents are involved in volunteering to assist with the Booster Club and drive students to most activities.

B. Describe how the school's extracurricular activities incorporate Christ-like attitudes and behaviors among students, coaches, sponsors and parents/guardians.

► A description of the school's extra-curricular dedication to Christ is stated in the school's athletic handbook which is also representative of the philosophy of all of our extra-curricular activities. Parents and students are required to read the handbook and sign that they will conduct themselves according to the handbook which is reflective of the mission, philosophy, and goals of the entire school. The activities are described as follows:

#### Mission of ICCS Athletics

The ICCS Athletic Program dedicates itself to the pursuit of excellence in athletics. The mission of ICCS athletics is to promote the development of the child as a whole, in a nurturing environment while strengthening our mind, body and spirit through sport.

#### Philosophy

The philosophy of ICCS athletics is to provide an opportunity for safe and rewarding participation in a variety of sports for students with an athletic interest. Participation on a team is a privilege. With this privilege comes the responsibility in the areas of academics, preparation, attitude, and sportsmanship. These responsibilities exist both in and out of school, both in athletic and non-athletic settings.

#### Objectives

- To provide a competitive athletic program and compete at the highest level possible
- Instill good habits, sound Christian morals, exemplary citizenship, and a high standard of sportsmanship in the students of the ICCS athletics programs

- Encourage students to grow spiritually, physically, mentally, and socially
- All athletes should have an appreciation for optimum health and physical fitness. The importance of proper rest and good eating habits should be emphasized
- Develop athletic programs that result in unity, harmony, respect and success among the student athletes
- Instill in all athletes the desire and pride to represent their school and community in a manner that displays our Catholic faith

**FOCUS 5: The school provides additional services for students as needed.**

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

A. Describe any additional services that your school provides for the students (*e.g., school lunch and/or breakfast, transportation services, before school and/or after school, summer school care, summer school, etc.*).

► Before and after school care is available daily for an extra charge. This is an organized program, with scheduled time for homework, snacks, play, and reading. Catholic-Christian values are discussed and reinforced when appropriate.

Tutoring sessions are offered by faculty at scheduled times after school. Piano lessons are offered after school at an extra charge.

Hot lunches are available three days per week and are provided by a local restaurant. Parent volunteers assist with serving the pizza lunch one day per week, and a chicken strip lunch is provided once a week. The Student Council sponsors some special lunches, such as a Chick-Fil-A lunch or In-N-Out Burger Day. The Home and School Association sponsors the annual Thanksgiving Feast and Lenten Pancake Luncheon.

B. Explain how your school's mission and philosophy impacts the services offered to your students.

► Immaculate Conception School provides academic and extra-curricular opportunities, through classroom integration and special programs ranging from Home and School Association meetings to school plays, designed to promote the healthy spiritual, intellectual, creative, physical and social growth of the students. The school philosophy calls us, "To provide for the continued formation of the Christian person in a unique environment in which students, teachers, and parents experience the presence and divine guidance of the Holy Spirit. The environment stimulates and promotes a community of believers and learners in the spirit of Jesus Christ as experienced in the Catholic Church and lived out as active citizens in today's society." These services are a direct out-growth of the school's philosophy to build community as believers.

## **DOMAIN SUMMARY**

### **DOMAIN VI: STUDENT SERVICES, RESOURCES & ACTIVITIES**

After conducting an in-depth study of this domain, the school finds the following:

**1. Area(s) of strength:**

► Library acquisitions continue to increase as the library is extremely well managed and has a high use rate. Parents and school community are extremely supportive of the library as represented in their overwhelming support of the book fairs and volunteers who regularly assist the library manager in completing tasks such as shelving books and assisting with paperwork.

Health and safety is primarily overseen by the health representative and registered nurse volunteers. Health screenings, record-keeping, health teaching, and medication administration is directed and monitored by the health representative and is supported by the diocesan nurse. This strong partnership improves the overall health of the school community and greatly relieves faculty and staff of the burden of first aid and health care on a daily basis.

Immaculate Conception Catholic School is extremely grateful for its excellent offerings in extra-curricular activities which enrich the curriculum and develop life-long skills and a love of learning through real-life application.

**2. Area(s) needing improvement or strengthening:**

(An area that needs growth/strengthening is one which, while present, could be improved or one which does not meet TCCED standards/policies.)

► While there is strength in our emergency management procedures, in the light of our present society, school stakeholders are extremely dedicated to enhancing safety and security at the highest levels. The school will conduct an ongoing review of the diocesan safety assessment plan completed during the summer 2018 and will continue to partner with the parish and community at large to enhance safety in all areas of the campus.

**3. Action plan:**

(List what the school plans to do within the next 3 years to strengthen or enhance the area(s) mentioned above.)

► Goal 10 of the long-term Strategic Plan provides a roadmap that will allow the strengthening and enhancement of safety measures on the parish-school campus:

Goal 10: Maintain a secure and safe campus for our school community. (Benchmark 12.1)

Objectives:

Actively review and refine the emergency plan every year.

Work with parish staff located in the school building to prevent breaches in security.

Educate the entire school community on the security protocol.

Engage outside safety resources to continue to develop our safety plan.

## DOMAIN VII: PLANT AND FACILITIES

The physical plant and facilities of the school are adequate, safe, well designed for instruction, and conducive to learning. The indicators take into account the various groups served, i.e., early childhood, elementary, middle school, before/after school program.

### SUPPORTING DATA MAY INCLUDE:

- Facilities assessment
- Floor plans, blue prints, etc.
- Health laws
- Asbestos Management Plan
- Long term goals for improvement
- Maintenance schedule
- Safety drill records
- Safety procedures/regulations
- Short term and long term plans for maintenance and repairs
- Short term goals for improvement

### FOCUS 1: The physical facilities and outdoor area(s) are designed for their functions.

#### INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)

1.	The school's physical facilities are adequately designed for instructional purposes.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Outdoor space is provided for physical activity.	YES	X	NO	
3.	The school's physical facilities provide for additional needs, e.g., total school gatherings, physical education classes.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The school's facility includes parking.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Classroom space allows for various types of activities.	YES	X	NO	
6.	Areas for special classes are available, e.g., music, band, art, etc.	YES	X	NO	
7.	Areas for individualized instruction are available, including remediation and enrichment.	YES	X	NO	
8.	Furnishings are appropriate for the age and activities involved.	YES	X	NO	
9.	The library space meets the needs of the school.	YES	X	NO	
10.	Space is designated for serving student health needs.	YES	X	NO	
11.	Faculty/staff and administrative areas meet their needs.	YES	X	NO	
12.	The cafeteria size meets the needs of the student body.	YES	X	NO	
13.	Storage space is available for student and faculty/staff needs.	YES	X	NO	
14.	Space for science lab activities is provided.	YES	X	NO	
15.	Supplies for science lab activities are provided.	YES	X	NO	

16.	Space, resources and equipment are available to meet the technological needs of the school. Describe, if necessary.	YES	X	NO	
17.	Chapel and/or prayer space is available.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments: ►**

1, 5,6, 9, 14, 15, 16-- The school building was designed to provide optimum use of instructional areas. The science and art lab co-exist nicely together. This is accomplished through scheduling and cooperative use of space by the various instructors. This model also enhances our Catholic Identity visually through the awe and wonder of science and art as it relates to our faith. A specific example is the ceiling mural of the planets in the science and art lab. The computer lab and library were specifically designed with technology and research in mind. The physical space of that area provides optimum use for everything from reading groups to ready access to physical books while also having computers accessible. The glass panel provides dual-supervision capabilities as needed. The large physical space, known as the AE (Adult Education) rooms, located just south of the gym proper provides great flexibility that enhances instruction. The room has dividers for smaller groups or can provide one larger space. Stringed Orchestra classes are taught on a regular basis but many activities take place there, ranging from exercise space, mini-retreats, student council meetings, cheerleading, to name just a few.

There are four portable classrooms located on the north side of the building which provide space for a variety of activities. The two classrooms in the north portable are mainly used by the parish for Bible studies, religious formation, and other parish-related activities. The school has access to the classrooms when available for such things as meetings of the Home and School Association Executive Board, auction committee meetings, and activities when an additional room is needed, such as the annual North Texas Independent League writing competition which is held on site. The portable classrooms on the northwest side of the building are used for elective classes such as sewing and dyslexia instruction.

12. The school building was designed with the intent that all space be utilized as multi-purpose space by the parish and school. The lunch run is accomplished very efficiently through the utilization of space in the gym. Tables are pulled down so that the space can be utilized as a cafeteria. There is a catering kitchen which fulfills health standards for the lunch run. When the lunch run is finished, the tables are cleaned and stored so that the space can be utilized as needed.

17. With a beautiful 20-acre campus which houses the church and attached chapel, the school students, staff, and families have ready access to space that enhances the spiritual vitality of the school. The school community joins together for Mass on Thursdays, Holy Days, and other special occasions, such as a Mass to honor Veterans or a Mass to kick off Grandparents Day. The school comes together to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet and Stations of the Cross. The classes rotate in attending a chapel Mass once a week in the more intimate chapel setting. Opportunities for Reconciliation are offered in the church sanctuary four times a year to the students. The church sanctuary provides a reverent spiritual backdrop for the school's annual Christmas Program attended by as many as 1,000 people. The church provides a final recognition and farewell to our eighth graders annually during the Promotion Mass.

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Describe any additional features of the facility that were not addressed above.

► The building has a large mezzanine area above the ceiling that provides for additional storage of larger items and for archiving. Classrooms have windows that provide natural lighting. The building has a large gymnasium that is used as a multi-purpose space by the school and parish. There is computerized scheduling of activities managed by the parish which allows for an orderly progression of planned activities so that the facilities can be used efficiently. The school and parish have implemented a computerized program that controls thermostats. This allows for cost efficiency as rooms that are not in use can be programmed to have thermostats turned off or lowered automatically.



B. Does the facility meet Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements? If no, please explain.

► Yes. The facility meets ADA requirements for all newly-added construction. This includes handicap ramps to all portable classrooms, handicap access in the restrooms, and handicap off-ramps on all sides of the building.

**FOCUS 2: The school facility projects a positive image and environment for teaching and learning.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The school building and grounds demonstrate an aesthetic quality.	YES	X	NO	
2.	The general appearance of the exterior of the building encourages student cooperation in maintenance.	YES	X	NO	
3.	The general appearance of the interior of the building encourages student cooperation in maintenance.	YES	X	NO	
4.	Classrooms are well lighted.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Marker/chalk/bulletin/interactive boards are installed at an appropriate level.	YES	X	NO	
6.	The learning environment is positive and attractive to students.	YES	X	NO	
7.	Stairways, halls, and ramps are clean.	YES	X	NO	
8.	Stairways, halls, and ramps are well lighted.	YES	X	NO	
9.	Restrooms are clean and sanitary.	YES	X	NO	
10.	Restrooms are well lighted.	YES	X	NO	
11.	Classrooms, restrooms, cafeteria, etc. are properly ventilated.	YES	X	NO	
12.	Restroom facilities are provided for the needs of:				
	♦ Faculty/Staff	YES	X	NO	
	♦ Female Students	YES	X	NO	
	♦ Male Students	YES	X	NO	
	♦ Wheelchair/physically handicapped accessible	YES	X	NO	
13.	The cafeteria is clean and sanitary.	YES	X	NO	
14.	The cafeteria is well lighted.	YES	X	NO	
15.	The kitchen and food service areas are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis.	NA			
16.	The storage areas are maintained in an orderly and sanitary manner.	YES	X	NO	

**Comments:** ► Visitors to Immaculate Conception Catholic School frequently note that, upon coming to the school for the first time, they can “feel” the Catholic Identity. They elaborate by stating the entrance itself is welcoming through the school’s crest, religious statues, and portraits of our Catholic leaders. Visitors are visibly impressed with the beautiful niches etched into the columns showcasing various saints. The bulletin boards, paintings, and displays exude a pride in the faith that we proclaim.

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:**

A. Give examples of how the facility constitutes a positive environment for teaching and learning.

► Immaculate Conception Catholic School is very blessed to have an expansive facility which serves the needs of students, families, the parish community, and is available at times to the community at large. Those who utilize the facility are extremely grateful that they are able to have access to such a facility. The Parish and School have a wonderful cooperative relationship so that the facility can be protected and used efficiently, safely, and in an optimum manner. Classrooms were built to state space standards. They are adequate in size and are well insulated so there's a quiet atmosphere conducive for learning. The classrooms are equipped with age-appropriate desks, tables, and chairs. LED lighting has been installed to provide optimum lighting. The school has an intercom which allows for school-wide communication as needed and for communication to individual classrooms. While there is a desire to have additional restrooms for adults, restroom facilities are adequate.

Ceiling projectors are utilized in classrooms to enhance instruction through the use of technology. Teachers utilize Google Classrooms in the Upper School for optimum production and to help with conservation of resources. The building has WiFi throughout to facilitate daily instruction. All students in the Upper School, grades six through eight, are equipped with personal laptop computers to allow for ready access to research during the class periods, for attaining proficiency of technology skills ranging from keyboarding to computer application to some elective programming skills. The school made a conscious decision to utilize alternate technology rather than install interactive whiteboards due to the availability of laptop technology which allows for the same type of interaction. This technology planning has worked extremely well and has prepared students in an optimum manner for high school.

The gymnasium is an amazing blessing to the school, allowing for a host of activities ranging from assemblies and pep rallies, Living Rosary, One Act Play and Dinner Theater Productions, Fine Arts Night, and a host of competitive athletic activities along with regular physical education classes.

The school has two very large playground areas that include age-appropriate playground equipment. The playgrounds are safe and versatile with the west playground featuring a large field which is used for soccer, touch football, and other team activities. The playground on the west side of the school includes a large covered picnic area that is utilized for recess, aftercare activities, outdoor learning activities, family picnics, and retreats.

B. Give examples as to how students participate in the maintenance of the exterior and interior of buildings.

► The students of Immaculate Conception Catholic School are well trained in the call to Servant Leadership. The school has an award-winning stewardship program in coordination with the community organization Keep Denton Beautiful which resulted this past year in the top award in the state of Texas, the Sadie Ray Graff Education Award, for stewardship of the school's grounds and buildings. This all-encompassing program includes a school-wide recycling program, gardening program, and buddy program in teaching the techniques of gardening skills. The students are actively participating in the construction of a greenhouse on the campus. They have had past projects which included building benches and laying tile as part of the construction of an outdoor learning area. The eighth grade students raised money for a memorial statue to be placed in Our Lady's Garden. Another eighth grade class raised money to place a statue in the parish Columbarium. The school sponsors regular litter pickup to keep the grounds attractive. The maintenance of the exterior and interior buildings is supported by the formation in the four areas of Respect, Responsibility, Reverence, and Role Modeling.

The preK students buddy with the fifth grade students in getting seeds ready for the garden. The kindergarten and other classes utilize the outdoor learning center in the garden to carry out a variety of learning activities. First grade has a butterfly project which they take to Our Lady's Grotto for the annual butterfly release. Intermediate grades work in the garden, help with the compost pile, and make sure they spot their classroom, lockers, and other areas so that the building remains neat and clean. Upper School students have a community service requirement that includes service to the school, parish, and community. This includes assistance with the upkeep of the facilities. Students assist with setting up and putting away chairs, assist with bulletin boards, and are taught respect for the upkeep of our beautiful facility. Students are responsible for keeping their individual workspaces

organized and free of clutter. They are responsible for keeping lockers organized if they are assigned a locker. Since the facility is shared use, students are cognizant that they are responsible for keeping the classroom and their area orderly and clear at the end of the day so another group can use their classroom as needed.

**C. Describe the custodial and maintenance plan(s).**

► The school has a shared agreement with the parish for the custodial and maintenance of the school building which is incorporated into the parish-wise maintenance plan. There is an incredibly supportive working relationship between the parish and school. The school and parish share the cost for custodial and maintenance which is reviewed on an annual basis. The school pays a flat monthly fee to the parish for services for 18-19 of \$10,000 per month. Parish maintenance support team members meet on a regular basis to assess short-term and long-term needs. This team includes the Pastor, Principal, Parish Business Manager, Maintenance Coordinator, Maintenance Supervisor, School Executive Assistant, and Technology Director. Team members meet as needed to address specific items ranging from major capital replacements such as HVAC systems to building upkeep and enhancements to security. Action plans and timelines are put into place to accomplish the various tasks that are identified. The timelines generally revolve around the times the school building is available outside the school calendar for longer-term maintenance and upkeep such as painting, refurbishing, or needed repairs.

**FOCUS 3: The school plant and facilities are properly maintained.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	The grounds are satisfactorily landscaped and maintained.	YES	X	NO	
2.	Desirable standards of sanitation are maintained throughout all restrooms.	YES	X	NO	
3.	Exterior lighting is provided for night use of facilities and as safeguard against vandalism.	YES	X	NO	
4.	The school is kept in good repair and satisfactorily maintained.				
	♦ Painting	YES	X	NO	
	♦ Plastering	YES	X	NO	
	♦ General Repair	YES	X	NO	
	♦ Daily Cleaning	YES	X	NO	
5.	The school budget provides for maintenance personnel.	YES	X	NO	
6.	The school budget provides for building repairs.	YES	X	NO	
7.	The budget provides for depreciation cost.	NA	X	YES	
8.	The budget provides for capital improvements..	NA		YES	X

**Comments:** ► See Letter C in Focus 2 for information on parish-school shared use and facility maintenance.

**DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE:**

What improvements are needed in school plant maintenance to support the mission of the campus?

► The parish is in charge of making decisions about school plant maintenance with significant input from the school administrative team. Improvements include the incremental replacement of HVAC units due to aging and routine painting and upkeep, including landscaping.

**FOCUS 4: The school provides a safe and healthy environment.**

**INDICATORS: (Please comment on all “NO” answers including plans for future alignment.)**

1.	Facilities are organized to provide smooth and safe flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.	YES	X	NO	
2.	All building entrances are carefully monitored.	YES	X	NO	
3.	All building exit doors open outward and are equipped with panic hardware.	YES	X	NO	
4.	All exits are clearly marked and have exit lights as required by law/code.	YES	X	NO	
5.	Access to outdoor play area is secure, e.g. area is fenced.	YES	X	NO	
6.	An emergency exit plan is prominently displayed in each room.	YES	X	NO	
7.	Crisis management plans are on file, easily accessible and are reviewed periodically with faculty/staff and students.	YES	X	NO	
8.	Records are on file as to the type and frequency of safety drills and emergency evacuation drills, e.g., fire, tornado, chemical leaks or spills, suspicious person in the school vicinity, etc.	YES	X	NO	
9.	The heating unit/boiler room is properly maintained.		X		
10.	Electrical outlets are of safe design and are properly located.	YES	X	NO	
11.	Outlet covers are in place in the Early Childhood area.	YES	X	NO	
12.	All control switches (i.e. electrical, water, gas) are accessible and can be easily located by faculty/staff, including staff of the before/after school care program.	YES	X	NO	
13.	Fire and other emergency signals are distinctive.	YES	X	NO	
14.	Heating/cooling units provide for proper ventilation and clean air circulation.	YES	X	NO	
15.	Sanitary, lead-free drinking fountains are provided in sufficient numbers and locations to meet the needs of the students and faculty/staff.	YES	X	NO	
16.	An asbestos management plan is on file.	YES	X	NO	
17.	The requirements specified in the asbestos management plan have been implemented.	YES	X	NO	
18.	The school is inspected by qualified persons and at specified intervals as a precaution against fire and explosion.	YES	X	NO	
19.	The school is in compliance with city fire ordinances.	YES	X	NO	
20.	Fire extinguishers (appropriate to the area) and other fire fighting equipment are readily accessible with updated inspection stickers.	YES	X	NO	
21.	Personnel are trained in the use of fire extinguishers and fire safety equipment.	YES	X	NO	
22.	Science labs have necessary safety equipment:				
	♦ Goggles	YES	X	NO	

◆ Eyewash		YES	X	NO	
◆ Gas cut-off valve	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	X	NO
◆ Blankets		YES	X	NO	
23. First aid kits are present and accessible in appropriate areas.		YES	X	NO	
24. Bloodborne pathogen guidelines are observed in handling and disposing of waste materials.		YES	X	NO	
25. Provision is made for the care and safe storage of all combustible materials.		YES	X	NO	
26. The kitchen and service areas are furnished with equipment that meets local and state sanitation standards.	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	X	NO
27. Security devices are installed as needed.		YES	X	NO	
28. Safety hazards are removed from the premises.		YES	X	NO	
29. Students are supervised during arrival at school, including drop off areas.		YES	X	NO	
30. Students are supervised during dismissal from school, including pick up areas.		YES	X	NO	
31. Students are supervised in all areas, instructional and non-instructional.		YES	X	NO	
32. Students in the before/after school program are supervised in all of the above mentioned areas.	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	X	NO
33. The space provided for students in the before/after school program is appropriate and safe.	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	X	NO
<b>Comments: ►</b>					

### DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVES:

A. Briefly describe your school's plan regarding:

1) Inclement weather

Announcements of school closing and/or delayed opening due to inclement weather will be made on the school's emergency texting system NIXLE ([www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com)), the school answering machine when possible, on the school's website at [www.catholicschooldenton.org](http://www.catholicschooldenton.org), via school or other online options such as Facebook, and on local television channels between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. If in doubt about the advisability of driving in inclement weather, parents are asked to use their own judgment. A delayed opening (10:00 a.m. or so) will be the preference on bad weather days. On delayed opening days, parents of Pre-K3 and PreK-4 students have the option of keeping their children at home.

2) Safety procedures (*i.e., extent to which faculty and staff have been trained to handle fire extinguishers, emergencies and ensure the safety and protection of all students; precautions taken to protect students from outsiders/strangers before, during and after school*)

► The school has a Crisis Management Plan in place which is reviewed on a regular basis with staff. The school has adopted safety procedures as recommended by the Texas School Safety Center (TSSC) <https://txssc.txstate.edu/>. This includes implementation of the Standard Response Protocol for active shooter training by the I Love You Guys Organization <http://iloveguys.org/> as recommended by the TSSC. The school has handbook policies in place concerning the dismissal and pickup of children before, during and after school. The school's Extended Day Program has the same policies in place. In July 2018, Sabbath Shield Consultants <https://www.sabbathshield.com/> conducted a Security Assessment of the Parish and School as part of a diocesan-wide effort. A safety team is in place consisting of members of the parish and school for ongoing review of safety

procedures.

3) Crisis situations (i.e., suicide, sudden death of school member, weapon)

► The school's Crisis Management Plan provides for every perceived crisis situation, including active shooter, sudden death of a school member, suicide, weapon on campus, stranger on campus, campus lockdown, fire, tornado, earthquake, and medical emergencies. The school is extremely proactive in providing safe environment procedures such as “See, Say, Do”, internet safety, and annual age-appropriate safe environment training for preschool through eighth grade.

4) Monitoring of campus visitors

► Parents and visitors are welcome to visit the school, but strict screening procedures are in place. The front office has a buzz-in and camera system that allows personnel to screen visitors before entering the school. All visitors are required to sign in at the office. They obtain a color-coded visitor pass, based on whether they are safe environment certified, to ensure the safety of the students and to maintain an orderly classroom atmosphere. Upon leaving, visitors sign out and return the visitor pass. In order to visit a classroom, permission must be obtained from the administration. Parents and visitors are not to disrupt a class during class time. The school has policies in place related to visitors in all areas of the campus, including parking lots and grounds.

B. Does the school have a written school plant/capital improvement plan? If “No”, is one being developed? Explain.

► The Parish/School Facilities Use Agreement is the major document in place to maintain the Current facility. The Strategic Plan addresses the long-term needs of the facility. Since the school building is still relatively new, constructed and opened in 2002, a major capital improvement plan in place involves the replacement of HVAC systems on an incremental basis as needed. The building and grounds remain in excellent shape, and the school's Strategic Plan addresses the desire to join with the parish in creating a new master plan that explores future growth opportunities for the parish and school ministries.

C. Provide documentation of student supervision during:

1) Arrival/Dismissal Times

► All faculty and staff members are assigned daily duty schedules to maintain constant supervision during morning arrival, lunch, and during dismissal. Each morning, staff members are assigned to duty areas at entry points and outside classrooms when the doors open at 7:45 a.m. Students arriving between 7 and 7:45 a.m. go to After School Care. Students who are not picked up by 3:20 p.m. go to After School Care. The school would like to commend the Immaculate Conception Catholic School Dads Club for the implementation of a scheduled safety routine where volunteers assist with supervision of school access points at arrival, dismissal, and at the school Mass, and at special events.

2) Recess/Free Times

► Supervision at recess/break time is assigned to duty staff. When transitioning from one class or elective to another, students are accompanied by their teacher as is age-level appropriate. Due to research indicating that recess before lunch is more conducive for a more orderly environment and more productive lunch periods, most classes in lower elementary have a 10-minute recess before lunch. Per school policy, at no time is a student left unsupervised.

3) Lunch

► Students pray before lunch with their classroom teacher or in the lunchroom with their supervising teacher. Students are supervised at all times. Staff members are trained in safety procedures to watch for such signs as choking, eating properly, and monitoring food intake to encourage healthy eating habits.

4) Before/After School Programs

► Parents are required to escort their children to Before School Care which opens at 7 a.m. daily and buzz in at

the east entrance. There is a sign-in sheet for the parent to sign in the child with the supervisor present. Students are released to report to their classes at 7:45 a.m. while staff are at duty stations throughout the school. After School Care is offered from 3:20 p.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Students are released from their classrooms following dismissal. A minimum of two supervisors are available to sign in the students. The Dean of Student Services is the director of After School Care and oversees the overall operation of After School Care. Students do homework, have a snack, and planned activities in which they are supervised at all times.

## **DOMAIN SUMMARY**

### **DOMAIN VII: PLANT & FACILITIES**

**After conducting an in-depth study of this domain, the school finds the following:**

**1. Area(s) of strength:**

► Plant and facilities are a great strength of Immaculate Conception Catholic School. The facilities are built to appropriate classroom sizes and requirements. The facility fulfills the requirements for handicap access, has video and locked security, and is aesthetically pleasing. There is a Shared Use Facilities Agreement to optimize use between the parish, school, and community.

**2. Area(s) needing improvement or strengthening:**

(An area that needs growth/strengthening is one which, while present, could be improved or one which does not meet TCCED standards/policies.)

► While facilities are a great strength of the school, the Strategic Plan has set goals for enhancing facilities over the next three to five years.

**3. Action plan:**

(List what the school plans to do within the next 3 years to strengthen or enhance the area(s) mentioned above.)

► Goal 12: Develop and maintain a facilities, equipment, and technology management plan designed to continuously support the implementation of the educational mission of the school. (Standard 12)

Objectives:

1. Join with the parish in creating a new master plan that explores alternatives to alleviate space limitations for our school and parish ministries.
2. Annually review and update the facilities, equipment, emergency, and technology management plan.
3. Regularly maintain the outdoor recreational and physical education areas to promote the physical development of the child.
4. Annually review and update the infrastructure and resources needed to support school wide information technology and communication systems.
5. Allocate resources in support of the school's mission, philosophy, and strategic plan.

## CUMULATIVE SUMMARY

In order to give direction to the overall efforts of the school community for the next 3 to 5 years, use the information recorded in the seven Domain Summary forms to prioritize the areas needing improvement/strengthening. (In other words, what action(s) will be addressed first? What action(s) might be delayed dependent upon other factors?)

**The school's Strategic Plan will drive the direction of the overall school community over the next three to five years. This will be accomplished with the school staff, school advisory council, parishes, and community at large working collaboratively to achieve the goals of the plan. During the 2018-2019 school year, the advisory council has set three of the goals as the priority goals at this time.**

*Goal: Maintain a secure and safe campus for our school community. (Benchmark 12.1)*

Actions:

1. Actively review and refine the emergency plan every year.
2. Work with parish staff located in the school building to prevent breaches in security.
3. Educate the entire school community on the security protocol.
4. Engage outside safety resources to continue to develop our safety plan.

Potential Delays: Funding is the major factor in developing security through any types of hardware or software purchases. Funding is also a factor in any building changes that might be made that would enhance security.

*Goal: Position the school for future growth while maintaining maximum enrollment levels. (Benchmark 13.2)*

Actions:

1. Take steps to stabilize and then reverse increases in tuition and fees.
2. Further develop collaboration with area parishes and the wider community to attract students from parishes without schools in the local geographic area.
3. Expand financial resources to enhance the school's capacity to attract and retain a diverse base of qualified students regardless of family economic means.

Potential Delays: Demographic and Societal factors are expected to be a continued challenge to this goal.

*Goal: Pursue alternate funding options that will provide financial support for the school's short and long term operations and reserves. (Benchmark 13.3)*

Actions:

1. Explore, identify, and implement means to provide additional revenue growth.  
Emphasize endowment fund growth with a view toward a long-term target of \$1,250,000 by 2023 that ensures the school's permanence and affordability.

Potential Delays: The economy, enrollment, and cost of operations could deter this action based on need.