



2025-2028 MISSION RENEWAL PLAN

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC SCHOOL

"Preparing the way to Jesus!"



Introduction

St. John the Baptist Catholic School, a ministry of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, has been in operations for over 100 years, faithfully serving generations of families in Milwaukie, OR. Over the last 20 years though, the school has faced many challenges marked by fluctuating enrollment, financial hardships, deferred maintenance, and most recently, leadership instability. It is clear to the parish leadership that if something isn't done to commit to deep renewal of the parish school program, there is a very real possibility that the school ministry may no longer be able to operate, especially in light of the critical financial situation the school is currently in and the likelihood that maintaining the current program will deplete all reserves available to sustain the school.

On April 22, 2025, under the leadership of Fr. John Marshall, Pastor of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and School, and with the support of the parish finance council and the Office for the Mission of Catholic Education (OMCE), St. John the Baptist parish has determined to answer a call to commit its available resources to a three-year project of renewal to see through the necessary changes that will allow the parish to address the long-standing challenges, renew its commitment to its Catholic charter, and strengthen its work for years to come.

St. John the Baptist Renewal Plan Components

Priority 1: School Relaunch, May-August 2025

Goal: Relaunch the school in the 25-26 academic year as a multi-age classroom program.

- Investment from the parish school endowment to sustain operations.
- Professional development and training for faculty and staff to prepare for the relaunch. Will also be provided throughout the entire 25-26 academic year and into the future.
- Hiring a multiage classroom expert to consult with the school and offer instructional coaching work directly with the faculty and staff throughout the year.
- Hiring a learning support center expert to consult on the building of a top-tier learning support center for the school.
- OMCE support for the leadership of the school.

Priority 2: Leadership and Community Engagement, May 2025-January 2026

Goal: Find a transformational Catholic school leader to lead the strategic renewal effort and involve the community in supporting the renewal effort.

- Hiring a recruiting firm to assist Fr. John and a search committee to carry out a national search to find and hire the next head of school.



- Starting a School Mission Leadership Team composed of staff and parents that will assist us in continuing to discern how to strength our Catholic school ministry.
- Creating marketing and development subcommittees composed of parents and others from the St. John the Baptist parish and school community to intentionally focus on key areas of our school's renewal effort and long-term sustainability.
- Faculty and staff engaging in community building efforts and the restart of key school traditions.

Priority 3: Strengthen Quality and Build Enrollment, January 2026- May 2027

Goal: Strengthen the school multi-age program quality and increase enrollment, January 2026- May 2027

Priority 4: Strategic Plan for the Future, Summer 2027- Spring 2028

Goal: With new leadership, develop and deploy a multi-year strategic plan for the ongoing viability of the school.

What is the target for ongoing sustainability?

The school will be on a three-year plan to sustainability. The parish is committed to making a three-year investment to get to a point of long-term sustainability. The goal, thus, is to have 125 students by the Fall of 2028 for the school to reach a point of ongoing sustainability in a multi-aged classroom program. The St. John the Baptist team believes that this goal is achievable, especially with a multi-aged educational model that will provide superior academic experience for children. It is envisioned therefore, that the multi-aged educational program will continue well into the future. Having arrived at the target, it is further envisioned that the school will be able to invest in program enhancements to continue to increase the quality and excellence of Catholic education at St. John the Baptist.



Our Mission Playbook: “Preparing the way to Jesus!”

Timeless Mission, Century-Long Legacy, Renewed for the Future

Why does St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School exist?

Archdiocese of Portland Catholic Schools Playbook	St. John the Baptist Playbook
<i>To witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.</i>	<i>To prepare the way to Jesus.</i>

Catholic parishes and schools, as apostolates¹ in the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, all exist to **witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ**. They all share a common mission that flows from the heart of Jesus’ words to his disciples: “Go and make disciples of all nations,” (Mt. 28:19)². To spread the saving message of the Gospel³ and lead people to come to know and be transformed by an encounter with Jesus Christ who is “the way, the truth, and the life,” is why the Church was established by Our Lord, and it is the very reason for being of Catholic parishes and schools. This is **the Mission** of the Church, and therefore the mission of all parishes and schools.

As such, St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School exists **to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ** and, through its unique charism inspired by its patron saint, **to prepare the way to Jesus**. Everything the school does—how it operates, how it makes its decisions, how it engages in teaching and learning, how it interacts with parents and students, how it structures its day and prioritizes its time—must reflect this reality.

Additionally, the Church notes that Catholic schools exist to serve the family, which is the first school of the child, as institutions that are “subsidiary to the family.”⁴ The Church and the school are thus called to support the family in their God-given mission to educate their children and to assist parents in their work of forming their children to know and love God, know and love truth, and know and love the unique mission and vocation they have been created for.

¹ An *apostolate* is a work within the Church that carries out her evangelizing mission in the world.

² Also known as the Church’s “evangelizing mission.”

³ Also known as the *kerygma*, the saving message of the Gospel can be best summarized in the following way: We have been **created** out of love by God who is love itself, to live in a relationship of love with him. However, we have been **captured** by sin and the consequence of our sin is death—separation from God. As such, humanity lived subject to the tyranny of an enemy, Satan, who has a dominion over the world and seeks to undermine our relationship of love with God. We are incapable of saving or redeeming ourselves from the eternal consequence of our sin and Satan’s dominion. But God so loved us that he sent his Son, Jesus Christ to **rescue** us from our bondage to sin and death. The debt owed for our sin has been paid by Jesus Christ through his passion and death, and through his resurrection we now have access to live in relationship with God for eternity—heaven. While Jesus overcome sin, death, and Satan’s dominion on our behalf through his one sacrifice of calvary, we still have a choice: to **respond** to his gift of salvation and live in relationship with him as his followers and in relationship with his Church, who alone possesses the fullness of truth and is the means of salvation for the world. It is through our response to his invitation to follow him, follow his commandments to love God and neighbor, and “make disciples of all nations” that we can claim the salvation that Jesus has won for us.

⁴ *Divini Illius Magistri*. Pope Pius XI. 1929. Vatican City. #77



How is St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School called to behave and live?

Archdiocese of Portland Catholic Schools Playbook	St. John the Baptist Playbook
<i>Zeal and courage for the Mission. Fidelity to the Faith.</i>	<i>Mission Driven Devoted to Prayer</i>
<i>Team Player (Humble, Hungry, Smart, Prayerful)</i>	

The culture of the school is the most powerful means of education and formation that exists in the school. School culture can be defined as the guiding beliefs and values evident in the way a school operates, how adults and students behave, how students are taught, how the community worships, and how decisions are made. Culture is taught and reinforced through the messages we share, the words we use, the things we celebrate and encourage, what we correct, and what we allow to happen or not. School culture has the power to transmit critical beliefs that can shape and form the mind and heart of a person. School culture is what enables or deforms the labor of education of the human person.

At St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School, the faculty and staff are not merely instructors of knowledge and information, but ministers of the Church and purveyors of a unique Catholic culture that is to be marked by **Zeal and Courage for the Mission** and **Fidelity to the Catholic Faith**. As such, the faculty and staff are called to be **Mission Driven** people, **Devoted to Prayer**, and **Team Players** (humble, hungry, smart, and prayerful). This is what makes the institution of St. John the Baptist Parish School able to fulfill its Mission to “go and make disciples of all nations,” **witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ**, and **preparing the way of Jesus** in service of the family.

What does St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School do?

Archdiocese of Portland Catholic Schools Playbook	St. John the Baptist Playbook
<i>In the Catholic educational apostolate of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, we exercise Jesus’ mission to teach by providing Mission Passionate Catholic Education in support of the family.</i>	<i>We give people (students and their families) access to the sacraments, lead them in worship, teach them in a Catholic worldview, and help them to grow Christ-centered relationships so they can love God and neighbor.</i>

St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School is a parish school ministry of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, which exists to be an outpost of the church’s Mission to “go and make disciples of all nations,” (Mt. 28:19). St.



John the Baptist Catholic Church is tasked by the Church to minister the salvation of Jesus Christ by carrying out His mission to teach, sanctify, and shepherd his people. These three key defining features of Jesus' ministry are beautifully echoed in the St. John the Baptist parish playbook:

- 1) **Sanctify:** We give people access to the sacrament and lead them in worship.
- 2) **Teach:** We teach them in a Catholic worldview.
- 3) **Shepherd:** We help them to grow Christ-centered relationships so they can love God and neighbor.

Thus, as a ministry of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and as an educational apostolate in the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, the **parish school** takes on the Mission to "make disciples of all nations" through its distinctive **teaching work**. Called by the Church herself through the leadership of the Archbishop to provide *Mission Passionate Catholic Education*, St. John the Baptist Catholic School exercises Jesus' mission to teach by **bringing students to Jesus through the sacraments and right worship of God, teaching students in a Catholic worldview, and by helping students to grow Christ-centered relationships so that they can love God and neighbor.**

Its identity as a ministry of St. John the Baptist Church and an educational apostolate in the Archdiocese of Portland tasked with ministering Jesus' mission to teach is what gives meaning and purpose to the school's mission, reflected in the school's current mission statement and philosophy statement:

*St. John the Baptist Catholic School provides a Faith-centered Catholic education (**Mission Passionate Catholic Education**) that develops every child and their God-given gifts, forms life-long learners, promotes academic and moral excellence, and builds strong pillars and members of our community.*

In this faith-centered environment, rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we foster the development of every child. We give witness to the teachings and traditions of our Catholic Faith as we form disciples of Jesus.

This work, as the school philosophy statement notes, is a work that belongs to the entirety of the community:

At St. John the Baptist Catholic School, we believe the formation of our Catholic Faith is the shared responsibility of parents, the Parish Church, and the Parish School.

And it is a work that seeks to serve all the children whose families are seeking in good faith the benefits of this Catholic mission:

As facilitators of learning, we value the potential and the diverse needs of every child we serve.



What is Mission Passionate Catholic Education?

Over centuries the Church engaged in teaching as a means to bring men and women to encounter Jesus and, through a relationship with him and his Church, to discover the answer to life's greatest questions:

- Why do I exist?
- For what was I created?
- What defines my identity?
- Why is there something rather than nothing in the world?
- Why does evil exist?
- What, if anything, has God done about evil?
- How am I to live my life?
- What will bring me happiness and fulfillment?
- What is freedom?

Today, the educational labors of the Church continue to offer the answers to these questions in a special way through Catholic schools. The Church's charter for Catholic schools is not merely to instruct students that they may attain academic and career success. In fact, the Church holds these aims to be too low. Academic and career success alone do not fully honor those seeking the benefit of a Catholic education. Rather, the Church's timeless charter for education is to assist parents, the primary educators of children, in:

(1) leading their children to come to know and be transformed by Jesus Christ.

(2) assisting their children in growing in wisdom and virtue by acquiring the knowledge of that which is true, good, beautiful and just.

(3) preparing their children for the mission for which they have been uniquely created (sainthood) and that will allow them to attain the end for which they were created (heaven).

Mission Passionate Catholic Education is the phrase used in the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon to describe the universal standards, defining features, and essential characteristics of Catholic education and Catholic school institutions. It is meant to provide all Catholic schools - parish, archdiocesan, and independent - and their pastors, leadership, teachers, and parents with a clear unifying vision of what, in the heart and mind of the Catholic Church, must be true for a Catholic school to fulfill its mission.

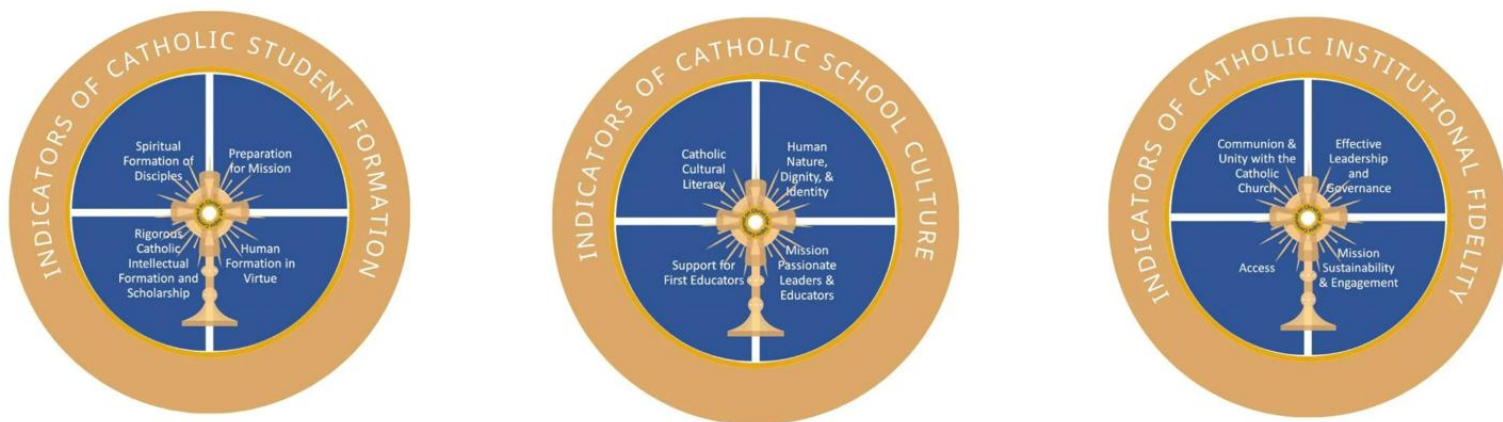
As the "father and pastor of the particular Church in its entirety,"⁵ the Archbishop of Portland in Oregon has a right and responsibility according to Church law to ensure that Catholic schools are delivering on the essential

⁵ John Paul II. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation. *Vita consecrata*, 25 March 1996, 49.



aims of the Church's charter for education. Divided into "Mission Indicators" and "Defining Characteristics," **Mission Passionate Catholic Education** sets to provide a clear set of unifying expectations for all Catholic schools in the territory of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, with special care and attention provided for those parish and archdiocesan schools that operate directly under the Archbishop's jurisdiction through his pastors.

What are the indicators and defining characteristics of Mission Passionate Catholic Education?



The Mission Indicators and Defining Characteristics address all aspects of the Catholic school enterprise, providing a renewed vision from the heart of the Church for what must be true of the formation, culture and institution of the Catholic school in order to accomplish its Mission and properly support families in their responsibility of forming their children to come to know, love, and serve God.

In short, it is a roadmap to assist Catholic schools in providing young men and women an invitation to participate in the integrating power of the Incarnation in both life and thought. Jesus Christ, the word made flesh, is the integrating power in education. It is why the entirety of the school program and enterprise must be fully and unmistakably oriented towards and centered on Jesus Christ, the logos. It is this conviction that undergirds the entirety of the vision for **Mission Passionate Catholic Education** and should animate the labors of a Catholic school that exists to **give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ** and **prepare the way to Jesus**.

Full details of each of the three indicators and the twelve defining characteristics can be accessed here:

<https://education.archdpdx.org/mission-passionate-catholic-education>



How will St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School succeed?

Archdiocese of Portland Catholic Schools Playbook	St. John the Baptist Playbook
<i>By forming leaders and teachers for the work of evangelization, education, and formation.</i> <i>By bringing leaders, faculty, staff, students, and families into a life-giving, ongoing, transformational encounter with Jesus Christ.</i> <i>By educating and forming students and families to embrace the true teachings of the Catholic Church.</i>	<i>By being bold and authentically Catholic.</i> <i>By being sourced and centered on the Eucharist.</i> <i>By healing spiritual wounds.</i>

St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School will succeed through a deep commitment to the most critical mission work. These six defining markers of success articulate the most critical mission work for all Catholic schools, and uniquely for St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish School according to its charism. These markers of success will drive all the school’s decisions, orient all the school’s labors, and will define what all employees will be expected to contribute to through their distinct work and roles.



The Future: Our Multi-aged Classroom Program

How will the multi-aged program be structured?

Department	Staffing Configuration
<u>ELC (Early Learning Center) and Kindergarten:</u> Cohorts ▪ Kinder ▪ 4-year olds ▪ 3-year olds	▪ Kathleen Whelan – Pre3, PreK, Kinder Director ▪ Joan Myrh – Preschool Aide ▪ Sr. Emily – Preschool Aide ▪ Lead 3's Teacher
<u>Primary and Intermediate School Program (1-4)</u> Cohorts ▪ Primary (1st-2nd) ▪ Intermediate (3rd -4th)	▪ Jack Taylor, 1st – 2nd Cohort ▪ Christina Simmons, 3rd – 4th Cohort ▪ Kelly Horton, K-4 Aide
<u>Middle School Program (5-8)</u> Cohorts ▪ 5th – 6th ▪ 7th – 8th	▪ Eric Lippi, 5th – 6th Homeroom, Theology Based ELA ▪ Amanda Flores, 7th- 8th Homeroom, History Based ELA ▪ Andrea Huset, Middle School Science and Math ▪ Megan Aguon, Middle School Math
<u>Specialists</u> ▪ Music ▪ Art ▪ K-4 Catechesis ▪ PE ▪ Learning Specialist	▪ Elijah Thompson, Music ▪ Paula Miller, Art ▪ Tiana Edwards, K-4 Catechesis (Religion) and PE ▪ Jennifer Cooper, Learning Specialist
<u>Administration and Office:</u>	▪ Fr. John Marshall, Pastor ▪ Jynelle Robinson, School Administrator- Operations and Business ▪ Megan Aguon, School Administrator, Academics ▪ Yesenia Zamora, Front Office



In 1st through 4th grade, students will have one main teacher and be divided into classrooms of 1st/2nd, and 3rd/4th. The main classroom teacher will be responsible for teaching all content. These grades will share a common time for literacy, and a common time for math. The teachers of grades kindergarten through 4th will meet frequently to be able to sort children into groups to receive instruction in literacy and numeracy according to individual student need. In 5th-8th grade we would have classroom rotations where disciplines are compartmentalized, to continue to have a similar middle school feel as is currently present.

Art and music will take place in students' multiage groupings.

What will happen to the ELC?

The ELC will remain in its current configuration but also adding Kindergarten under the directorship. ELC staffing is subject to enrollment and maintaining necessary teacher/student ratios. **Ms. Katheleen Whelan** will become the ELC director.

What will be the leadership structure and model for next year and beyond?

For the 25-26 academic year, it is expected that a dual leadership model would be maintained, with a full-time administrator overseeing the business operations and front office of the school, and another administrator that would split their time between overseeing the academic affairs of the school and assisting with instruction.

Consideration is being given to move into an innovative leadership model that would allow a similar configuration to exist in the future. The principal leadership model as it has been carried out traditionally, is not able to properly tend to all the realities and affairs of the school that require attention and dedicated work. As such, models are being looked at that would allow a primary administrator to still be hired, with additional support that would allow the business affairs and academic affairs to be tended to properly.

What is the envisioned academic plan?

At St. John the Baptist Catholic School, students from the ELC to 8th grade will experience a vibrant and engaging academic life, imbued with a rich **Catholic worldview**. An academic program at a Catholic school flourishes when it is enmeshed in the school's Catholic identity, and in that way, the whole school program is one lived Catholic culture. In this way, the school has the components to **prepare the way of the Lord**, as our patron announced, and the school is set up to form students' hearts, minds, and life toward the Lord.

- **ELC Summary**

The ELC academic plan includes a rich day, during which children explore and learn through their senses and play. A child's day at St. John the Baptist is an experience of an enjoyment of God, friends, and adults who love them. Children are taught how to engage friends and adults with grace and courtesy. ELC includes science discoveries by observing nature and getting plenty of time exploring outdoors, singing songs, making artwork, learning shapes and colors and numbers, sorting, classifying, pattern recognition, and handwriting. Most



importantly, through play, children experience Jesus the Good Shepherd, go to mass with the school, and learn about Mary and the saints. Children are taught by expert early-childhood teachers.

- **Primary School Program Summary**

In Kindergarten 1st and 2nd grade, students will receive instruction in reading, writing, grammar, math, history, catechesis, science, and art. Students' days are a rhythm pulsed by prayer, conversation about God, celebrations of saint feast days, and time in adoration and mass. Literature, science, history, and math are taught from a Catholic worldview, forming students to see creation and the stories of mankind as pointing to God the Creator. Children in kindergarten through second grade have a particular excitement in learning about God, a joy in being in relationship with Him, and an innate desire to understand how God created the world and the things there are to know. Additionally, students will have two recesses every day to honor their need to be active.

During these 3 grades, students are learning how to read, and how to understand numbers in math. We know from experience that not all children learn reading and math at the same rate as the other children in the class. Some students need more time to learn certain skills, and some students move more quickly through skills.

As such, a common literacy block will be scheduled at the same time for grades Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade. Because literacy occurs in the common block of time, students will be sorted into multiple groups for literacy instruction so that students can be taught directly at their skill level at the pace each student needs to learn. Student progress is tracked using teacher observation, early literacy assessments, and parent input. This will be different than a traditional single-grade school, but this set up allows students to meet their need in reading and math with far more attention than 1 teacher can give to every student in a traditional class of mixed abilities.

Over the 3 years of renewal, teachers in grades ELC through 4th grade will receive Orton-Gillingham training, which is the gold-standard in early literacy training to teach children how to read according to the *science of reading*, the best cognitive science and academic research on effective means of teaching reading.

Teachers in grades Kindergarten through 4th grade will have a common planning block regularly scheduled to identify literacy and numeracy progress for individual students and discuss student movement between reading levels and math levels.

Students will also be taught by the school catechist who will guide them in their understanding of and relationship with Jesus Christ, his church, his mother, and the saints.

Classroom grade band teachers teach students science, grammar, and history within their kindergarten, 1st/2nd, 3rd/4th classrooms.



- **Middle School Program Summary**

In grades 5th through 8th grade, students will receive instruction in reading, writing, grammar, math, history, catechesis, science, and art. Literature, science, history, and math will be taught from a Catholic worldview, forming students to see the truths of creation and the stories of mankind as pointing to God the Creator. Students' days are a rhythm pulsed by prayer, conversation about God, celebrations of saint feast days, and time in adoration and mass. Students will have two recesses to honor their need to be active.

Students will have a homebase teacher who will serve as the teacher who knows each student in the homebase well, the main teacher to supervise them while going in between places in the school, the main teacher to sit with them at mass, and a parent's main point of contact. Students are sorted into their homebase teachers by the following grade combinations: 5th/6th and 7th/8th.

Teachers in 5th through 8th grade will be content experts. One teacher will be an expert in English Language Arts and history, another teacher will be an expert in catechesis/theology, another teacher will be an expert in math, and another teacher will be an expert in science. Students will receive ongoing formation in their relationship with Jesus, their knowledge of God and the Church, and their understanding of who God created them as human people with a mission to be fully alive, to love Him, and to share the Good News with the world.

Being taught by a content expert means that the teacher only needs to focus on planning for one content area. This is a huge advantage as that teacher can really focus on teaching that content area well and is not bogged down by having to prepare multiple courses.

Another advantage to this model is that the teacher of the content area designs and knows intimately the span of that content from grades 5-8. This is important because in a multi-age set up, students are taught towards the highest-grade academic achievement at the end of each unit, and the teacher designs daily lessons for each child individually to move towards that highest achievement by the end of the unit. The class period is set up as a workshop style some days with students moving in their individual pace. The class period can also be set up as a discussion-model on the content. During discussions, a multi-age classroom is advantageous as multiple maturity levels raise the rigor for all the students.

Since science is a content-heavy course, students are taught content rotation over two years.

Is this structure of multi-age classes good for students?

According to research, multi-aged classrooms are as effective in academic outcomes as single-grade classrooms, and are more effective in social outcomes for students than the social outcomes for students in single-grade classrooms.⁶ This makes sense because in a multi-age classroom, students are learning to interact

⁶ Nicol, J. (2015). *A comprehensive look at multi-age education*. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 5(2), 285–292. <https://doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2015.v5n2p285>



with people of various ages, which requires better communication, knowing how to support others, and learning how to build friendships with different aged children at a variety of maturity and developmental levels. The academic outcomes depend on teacher preparation to teach multi-age groups of children, which is why St. John the Baptist administration, and the Office for the Mission of Catholic Education will provide substantial teacher preparation for teaching in a multiage classroom.

Grouping children in multi-age configurations is quite common in our lived human experiences, and a long-standing tradition in education in the United States and across the world. Children experience being grouped in multi-aged groups in many contexts, like their families with siblings and cousins, sports teams, choirs or bands, etc. In fact, until the 19th century, all American schools were multiage, and it came back in trend in schools in the 1990s when educational researchers began to realize the child-centered outcomes a multiage classroom could provide (focusing the teaching on the child's needs, as opposed to the average of the group's needs, which may not be beneficial for individual children in the classroom).

Given the research outcomes and commonness of grouping children in multiage classrooms, St. John the Baptist students will be academically prepared, social, mature, empathetic people who can communicate well with a variety of people.

What can we expect from the courses?

Course Content

Catechesis

Articulated in the St. John the Baptist parish mission playbook, the parish and the school exists to give people access to the sacraments, lead them in worship, teach them a Catholic worldview, and grow Christ-centered relationships so they can love God and neighbor. The parish and school apostolate succeeds by being bold and authentically Catholic. Time for catechesis, the passing on of the faith, will be grounded in prayer, a relationship with Jesus, and a personal relationship with His Church, His mother, and the saints. Students will learn how the preparing our hearts and minds for the way of the Lord, and a vocation to love, informs our very meaning as persons. As such, students learn in catechesis not just what the Church teaches, but why she teaches it, and the ways in which these teachings fulfill the greatest desires of the human heart.

Catechesis is not just one subject within the curriculum, but the key to its unity in teaching a Catholic worldview, since belief in God the Father means he created the beautiful world to be understood, and in turn for Him to be understood, which unites faith and reason.

Early Reading

Early reading courses are grounded in the science of reading, and develops students' deep proficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, executive function to fluent



reading, and reading motivation and engagement. Students are learning to fall in love with stories and poems, narrate them, and retell them. Stories and poems are chosen from texts which form the moral and sacramental imagination of students, helping them to see how God moves in the world, and how to live their lives excellently. Most literature selections will be set in the historical period being studied in history.

Research tells us that by 3rd grade students must master reading proficiency, or be at risk for reading deficits over the course of the rest of their academic lives. As such, early reading is one of most critical aspects of the St. John the Baptist academic program. Early reading programs at St. John the Baptist will be grounded in the *science of reading*.

Early reading skills are intimately linked to students' learning of beginning grammar (sentence writing, punctuation, capital letters, synonyms, and antonyms), spelling, and proper penmanship.

We also know that good readers don't simply know phonics, but that a good reader has deep and broad stores of content knowledge to understand what they are reading. As such, history, science, art, music, and catechesis all contribute to St. John the Baptist's formation of excellent readers.

History-Based Literature

History is a foundational aspect of the curriculum that forms a Catholic worldview. God himself entered history at the Incarnation, and so the Christian faith depends on history. We desire for our students to know the stories of the past, to see their role in history, and to develop deep stores of knowledge. As students read literature from or set in historical time periods, they learn the history of that time and place.

Students in grades kindergarten through 2nd grade will learn history through story, which is the most timeless way of passing on history generation to generation. Children in these grades will read and be read stories set in the history of civilizations from around the world, as well as stories from American history. Students also learn basic geography, and understand timelines.

In grades 3-5, students will read literature set in historical periods of ancient Rome, ancient civilizations in the Americas, and medieval times, as well as literature from early American history. Students will continue a study of geography, especially its relation to historical events. Students will also begin to learn about government, especially the US government.

Grades 6-8 will continue a study of history through literature set in the time periods of modern world history and modern American history.



Upper Language Arts

Students in grades 3-8 will be taught grammar, writing, and spelling. Language arts will also include seminar-based discussions on literature and primary texts, developing in students an ability to speak about that which they understand, learn from others, learn to communicate in discussion using basics of logical reasoning, and discuss ideas.

Early Math

The study of mathematics should instill in students a sense of wonder and awe at the profound way in which the world displays order, pattern and relation through number.

In early math, students are building proficiency in basic numeracy, basic geometrical shapes, basic place value, mastering counting, recognizing patterns and equivalency, solving simple replacement codes, beginning measurements, time, and currency.

Mathematics is studied because it is fun, and puzzles, codes, riddles, games, and the direct observation and experience of mathematics in our world are included in grades kindergarten through 2nd grade to build enjoyment with mathematics while building necessary skills.

Upper Math

As students progress in mathematical understanding, students learn rigorous mathematical knowledge and skills in numeracy, geometry, and algebra concepts. Students rigorously apply mathematical knowledge to word problems and classic mathematical problems and solutions grappled with through history.

Science

A study of science at St. John the Baptist is ordered toward knowing a lot about the created world, and most importantly, maintaining a wonder about the beauty of creation, and a joy in discovering its intricacies. Science at St. John the Baptist is experienced through the senses: observing, touching, listening to, and studying nature. Students will also learn the human body, botany, animals, ecosystems, water cycles, weather, astronomy, and space. Since science is content-based, and in a multi-aged structure, students will rotate through one topic of scientific study per year with their multi-aged group, and rotate through all content for that grade band every 2 years.

Art & Music

Critical to the Catholic school mission, and to educating for a Catholic worldview, is the study of art and music. The Catholic Church's history is rich with the most magnificent contributions to art and music. Art class at St. John the Baptist includes learning about Catholic artwork and master works of art, but it also especially includes the making of beautiful art. Students will master lots of technique for creating



art. In music, students learn not only the rich history of music, but learn how to sing, read notation, and instruments.

Physical Education

Physical education in a Catholic school is a necessary aspect of the school's educational project. The Catholic faith recognizes the body as deeply good and therefore worthy of care. Children in preschool through 8th grade also have great academic outcomes when they are allowed extensive time to be active. At St. John the Baptist, all students have two recess times for outdoor, physical play. One recess is free and active play. The second recess will be a sport, led by an adult, and rotate through basketball, kickball, soccer, volleyball, etc. Learning technique and playing a sport forms the student in confidence and teamwork.

Learning Support

Students learn and grow at different rates and come to St. John the Baptist with a variety of needs and diagnoses. Knowing this, learning support will be provided to students with needs so that all students can access the curriculum at St. John the Baptist. It is a critical aspect of the school to support learning needs.

What is going to happen with Spanish?

In year 1 of the restructured school program, a Spanish program will be put on pause. Looking into subsequent years, Spanish will be incorporated in a unique program structure. A strong consideration which will be formally explored in year 1 is a tracked Spanish program that will have different curriculum for native Spanish speakers and non-native Spanish speakers.