



Saint Joseph Catholic School

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

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A Message from Mr. Rickbeil



Saint Joseph Catholic School Families,

Our students learn quite a bit about study habits during their time in our school. From creating study guides to writing flash cards, reading chapters, or reviewing notes, there are several strategies that our students learn during their time with us that help prepare them for a test. For the past two years, our school has taken a page from our students' playbook, using this time as an opportunity to study ourselves so that we can make decisions today that will set up our school for the future. After two years of intensive study, I am pleased with where we stand!

Several different activities were part of our study efforts over the past two years. Beginning in August of 2023, we began a self-study report that was shared with our accreditation team for their on-site visit in November of 2024. Last fall, we revised our school mission statement, proclaiming our desire to continually form joyful disciples of Jesus Christ who pursue academic excellence and cultivate a life of virtue. During our site visit, our accrediting team had the opportunity to see all aspects of our school and give feedback on our recently completed self-study. Over the course of the school year, a new strategic plan was launched to guide our school objectives over the next five years. Additionally, a master plan study has taken a deeper look at our buildings and grounds, and as we conclude the school year we are in the beginning stages of reviewing proposals that will impact our site for the future. We even took time to study our logo and branding, working with a firm to rebrand our parish and school. I am pleased to announce that our new branding will be launching soon.

In all of these studies, we have learned quite a bit about our school, our traditions, and our practices that have led us successfully for the past 76 years. As we have studied our school, we have learned that we have much to celebrate and much to be grateful for in our beloved school. In this report, I hope that you are able to catch glimpses of the work that we have done as a school this year, and the things we are doing to live out our mission of forming joyful disciples of Jesus Christ. Thank you for all of your support and contributions to our cause, as we cannot do this great work without you.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle Rickbeil". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kyle Rickbeil, Principal

Our Mission Statement

One of the biggest gifts of our MNSAA Accreditation process was our updated Mission Statement. Our mission statement now reads:

“Saint Joseph Catholic School forms joyful disciples of Jesus Christ who pursue academic excellence and cultivate a life of virtue.”

While this statement is very similar to our previous statement, it emphasizes the importance of the things we treasure the most at our school. We want our students to be disciples equipped to live their lives following Christ, knowing that God loves them and has a great plan for their lives. We want our students to do their very best work academically, using the gifts and talents that God has given them to prepare themselves for excellence and life-long learning. We want our students to develop high moral character, embracing the virtues of our patron, Saint Joseph. And in the midst of this, we want our students to live with great joy, confident that they are loved by God.

With great pride, I share that Saint Joseph Catholic School has been accredited by MNSAA for the next seven years, which will help us as we continue our work of forming joyful disciples. I am grateful for the diligence of our teachers and staff, who helped us in our work of accreditation and who continually help us to form joyful disciples at school each day. In the next few pages, you will see some of the fruits of our efforts to continually live our mission to form joyful disciples of Jesus Christ who pursue academic excellence and cultivate a life of virtue.



Where We Are: Forming Joyful Disciples

Saint Joseph Catholic School was blessed once again with the presence and leadership of Father Luke, Father Kyle, and Sister Elizabeth Anne and Sister Mary Elizabeth from the Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus. Father Luke and Father Kyle preached at school Masses, led student retreats, made classroom visits, and led us in prayer and virtue formation at our virtue assemblies. Our Handmaids, Sister Elizabeth Anne and Sister Mary Elizabeth served as Level One Catechists in our preschool atriums, visited classrooms to lead prayer labs, led discipleship groups, and frequently spoke about our virtue of the month. They even supervised lunch and recess each Monday!

In conjunction with the parish, 70 students in second grade received the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion. Additionally, 33 eighth grade students are preparing to receive Confirmation this fall, while a new group of 27 seventh graders has begun their preparations for Confirmation.

Saint Joseph Catholic School continues to grow its efforts to enrich the spiritual formation of our students. Our seventh and eighth graders had the opportunity to attend a NET retreat last fall and hear internationally renowned speaker, Jason Evert, speak on Chastity this past winter. As a school, we hosted a day of Adoration on Holy Thursday, led two All School Rosaries, participated in forty Catechesis of the Good Shepherd atrium sessions every week, and celebrated thirty-eight masses over the course of the school year-including one in Spanish to celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe! During our worship, Mrs. Katherine Broberg, our new music teacher, formed a Mass Schola consisting of Middle School students to lead our worship.



Over sixty fourth through sixth graders joined the Prayer and Service Club, ministering to the Saint Joseph Catholic School community by focusing on prayer, service and fellowship. We also continued our tradition of community service as a school, including our layette collection for Guiding Star Wakota, our food collection for Neighbors Inc., and our 4th grade pen pal program.

In year two of our House Program, under the direction of MS Science teacher, Ms. Mary Carlson, we implemented a Buddy Program supporting acts of service and kindness within our community. In what has become our newest school tradition, Ms. Carlson, Anna Evans (Director of Youth Life & Formation at the Church of Saint Joseph), and Father Kyle led our 8th grade students on seven miles of the Walk to Mary Pilgrimage in Champion, Wisconsin at the beginning of May.

This past Advent, we offered a morning of reflection for parents to attend as they prepare for the Christmas season. We also partnered with Ignatius Press to host our first-ever Ignatius book fair near the end of the school year.

During the past school year, a Faith & Culture Committee was formed by staff members to plan how our school lives liturgically as a whole. We successfully implemented many ways to live and honor the seasons of Advent and Lent, as well as special Feast Days, such as St. Nicholas and St. Lucy. We look forward to continuing to celebrate our patron and our faith in big ways in the 2025-26 school year.



Where We Are: Pursuing Academic Excellence

In year 5 of our Groves Believe and Read Program, our youngest students continue to progress as scholars and readers. Our MAP Spring testing results listed below reflect a continued commitment to help our students learn to read at the earliest grades so that they may be successful in future years of school. In the MAP testing tables below, you can particularly notice how MAP scores increase significantly for students between kindergarten and fourth grade.

This year, we focused on providing enrichment opportunities for students in both math and reading, as students worked in small groups with Mrs. Chamberlain, Ms. Kocourek, and Mrs. Diedrick during the day. This helped to challenge our students and help them to reach their best potential in school. Additionally, we switched to Math Expressions as our new math curriculum, choosing Math Expressions for the rigorous curriculum that it presents to our students, coupled with its ease of implementation and opportunities for differentiation.

This year, a MatchCounts team was started in our middle school under the direction of Mrs. Kati Diedrick. Our students learned important skills in applying the math that they learned in class and competed at the annual MathCounts competition in Inver Grove Heights this past spring. Our Lego Robotics team also represented our school well competing with two teams in a local Lego robotics competition last December.

Our Fine Arts program developed in many ways this year under the direction of our new music teacher, Mrs. Katherine Broberg, and our new art teacher, Mr. Colin Blakley. The music program held several successful concerts, including a Christmas concert and Spring concert featuring songs from all over the world, with our students singing in many different languages. Additionally, our middle school students treated us all to a ball with their performance of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* this Spring. Our spring art show also featured art from all around the world, continuing our school tradition of featuring student works in the spring. Additionally, our band program showed significant growth under new band teacher Mrs. Bethany Doffing, offering a beginner and advanced band program this year.

Our 8th grade was able to take part in a unique learning experience this past February, where we partnered with Urban Wilderness to build a canoe during seven school days. Students learned valuable applications of math and had an experience of shop class in the STEM lab during the coldest days of our winter. We look forward to continuing this tradition next winter.

Our school continues to prepare our students for high school, and our twenty-five students in our class of 2025 are going to nine different schools for high school. Cretin-Durham Hall will be receiving the largest number of our graduates this year, although our graduates will be attending high school at six different private schools (Cretin Durham Hall, Hill-Murray, Saint Agnes, Saint Croix Lutheran, Unity Catholic, and Visitation) and three different public schools (Forest Lake, South Saint Paul, and Two Rivers). We are proud of our graduating class and know that they will do great things in high school.

NWEA-MAP TESTING

We have completed MAP Testing for the 2024-25 school year, and we are very pleased with our results. Below (and on the next page) you will see the comparison charts for our spring MAP test scores for the last several years for Math, Reading, and Science compared to the National Grade Level Average. The scores listed are the mean of all of our students taking the tests in each grade. The bolded RIT Score at the end of each column indicates the nationally normed achievement score for each grade level. Please note that scores denoted with an asterisk (*) may not be accurate due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and school shutdown.

Saint Joseph Catholic School - Math MAP Scores								
Grade Level	18-19	19-20*	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	Nat'l Grade Level
K	Not Tested				164	161	161	157
1	Not Tested				181	181	180	176
2	197	180*	193	192	196	195	197	189
3	209	198*	206	206	207	208	207	201
4	218	209*	217	213	216	216	216	211
5	226	215*	225	225	221	222	224	219
6	233	223*	226	225	229	229	230	223
7	232	230*	232	230	231	237	231	227
8	240	231*	240	238	234	236	237	230



Saint Joseph Catholic School - Reading MAP Scores

Grade Level	18-19	19-20*	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	Nat'l Grade Level
K	Not Tested				158	158	156	153
1					180	179	177	171
2	197	180*	194	194	197	194	195	186
3	210	197*	204	205	205	206	204	197
4	213	211*	212	210	212	213	214	205
5	220	214*	217	216	217	218	215	211
6	222	219*	219	219	219	219	223	215
7	222	222*	226	226	223	220	221	218
8	231	225*	230	230	226	227	223	222

Saint Joseph Catholic School - Science MAP Scores

Grade Level	22-23	23-24	24-25	Nat'l Grade Level
3	203	204	203	197
4	207	208	210	205
5	210	213	212	211
6	215	213	215	215
7	217	217	217	218
8	219	218	220	222

Where We Are: Cultivating Virtue

This year, our virtue of the month program was enhanced by our new virtue assemblies, which took place around the beginning of each month. After a prayer and a brief introduction to the virtue of the month, the middle school students modeled what the virtue of the month looks like, sounds like, and ultimately should feel like for our students. A Virtue of the Month newsletter was curated and sent to all classrooms, while the Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus often visited classrooms to speak about the monthly virtues.

Next year, we look forward to incorporating “at home” resources for our parents, such as movie and book recommendations that align with each virtue of the month. This year’s monthly virtues focused on love, as we reflected on the virtues of charity, friendship, courtesy, purity, fortitude, prudence, respect, forgiveness, and responsibility. Next year, we will enter into the year of faith with nine virtues that reflect this theme.

Our community was celebrated by many families that joined the school during this past year, praising our community for welcoming them to the school and making them feel at home. We were also complemented by our accrediting team, who thanked our teachers and community members for their participation in the site visit and the students for their hospitality.



Enrollment & Retention

Our school continued to grow this past year, as we experienced a modest 1.7% enrollment growth school-wide. This included several students who joined the school during the middle of the school year. This year's growth allowed us to open a third section of fourth grade, taught by Mrs. Cathy Wagner. While projections are still early, we are currently anticipating 4.9% enrollment growth headed into the 2025-26 school year, and will open a third section of 5th grade so that we will have three sections in all grades from kindergarten through fifth grade. Please see the table below to observe our school's enrollment growth for the past eight years and our current projection for the 2025-26 school year.

During the course of the school year, we were pleased to welcome Brandon Ocampo as our parish and school director of communications and marketing. Additionally, our new admissions and enrollment coordinator, Julie Kolbeck, will be joining our team this July. In a year in which we did not have an admissions and enrollment coordinator for the majority of the recruitment season, we are grateful for Lisa Wrobel's work in the office of running tours and staying in communication with the many families applying to our school.

Saint Joseph Catholic School Enrollment									
Grade Level	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26*
K	41	44	37	51	52	50	53	48	48
1	34	40	42	40	53	51	53	53	52
2	38	35	38	40	46	54	53	53	54
3	34	41	29	40	45	49	55	55	55
4	26	37	38	30	34	43	48	53	56
5	33	31	34	38	36	35	44	45	55
6	36	35	26	36	32	26	34	41	38
7	25	33	33	28	35	26	24	28	40
8	39	24	33	31	24	32	23	25	24
K-8 Total	306	320	310	334	357	366	387	401	422
PreK	71	68	75	56	65	57	73	67	69
PreK-8 Total	377	388	385	390	422	423	460	468	491

*- 2025-26 projections are based on current registrations and application data.

Strategic Planning

As part of the accreditation process, our school developed and began implementing our strategic plan this past school year. The plan was developed by principal Kyle Rickbeil in collaboration with the rest of the administrative team and the strategic planning committee of the School Advisory Council. The plan was initially proposed prior to the MNSAA accreditation site visit, and was finalized prior to Spring break.

Overall, the plan focuses on eight objectives, with action steps over the next five years to help Saint Joseph Catholic School meet its mission and reach its full potential. The eight objectives are as follows:

1. Saint Joseph Catholic School will promote our mission to form joyful disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. Saint Joseph Catholic School will improve our relationships and communications with the parish to form a shared vision.
3. Saint Joseph Catholic School will become financially sustainable.
4. Saint Joseph Catholic School will improve and update our facilities.
5. Saint Joseph Catholic School will improve our community health and wellness.
6. Saint Joseph Catholic School will improve our use of standards and academic data to better facilitate learning.
7. Saint Joseph Catholic School will improve our internal organization, formation, and evaluation processes.
8. Saint Joseph Catholic School will better formalize our policies and school procedures.



Our athletic programs continue to grow. This year, we added a hockey program for our middle school boys and girls, who competed in CAA games on outdoor rinks on cold winter evenings. Our new team was very successful, finishing the season with three wins, one loss, and two ties, and advancing to the CAA semifinals.

In all, we fielded two boys soccer teams, five volleyball teams (including two in fifth grade), four boys basketball teams, two girls basketball teams, a swim team, a hockey team, a track and field team, and two softball teams. Our teams competed well in CAA action, advancing to the semifinals in 5th and 6th grade volleyball, 8th grade boys basketball, and hockey. Additionally, three of our teams advanced to CAA championship games this year. Our 7th and 8th grade girls basketball team lost a close championship contest to Saint Ambrose. However, our Jaguars saved the best for last, as our 5th and 6th grade softball team won the CAA Championship over Immaculate Conception while our 7th and 8th grade softball team won over Saint Charles Borromeo. Thank you to all of our coaches for a very successful year in Jaguar sports!



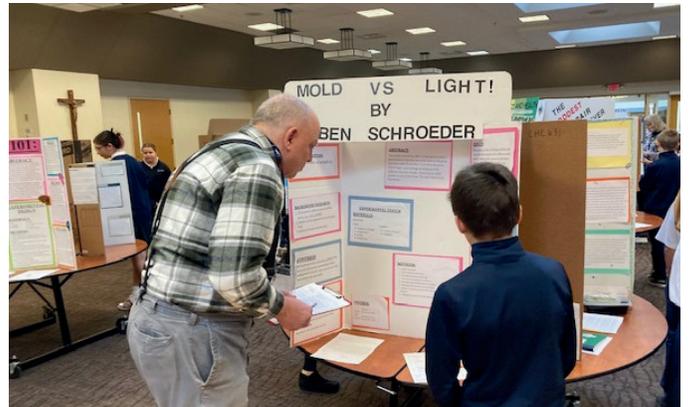
Community Engagement

At the beginning of the year, we started a new school tradition with the 9/11 Salute to First Responders. On September 11, we celebrated a Mass for our local first responders and invited them to circle the block at 10:00am while our students stood at attention to thank them for their service. In all, 21 emergency vehicles joined our heartfelt procession that honored their commitment to public safety and shared our respect and gratitude for their work.

This past fall, we expanded our grandparents day program to include a luncheon, activities, and Mass to end the afternoon. It was inspiring to see so many of our grandparents on campus, and we were moved to create two grandparents days in the calendar next year so that we can better accommodate everyone. Among our other events, our Donuts for Dads and Muffins for Moms events have expanded, with each taking place over two days to assure there is enough room for everyone.

Other notable community events this past school year include:

- Chalk the Walk
- Oktoberfest
- Trunk or Treat
- Mother-Son Event
- 4th Grade All Saints Day Wax Museum
- Grandparents Day
- Musical Concerts
- 4th Grade Pen Pals
- Science Fair
- Catholic Schools Week Pancake Breakfast
- Carnival
- Father-Daughter Dance
- Gala
- Donuts with Dads
- Muffins with Moms
- Spring Art Show
- *Cinderella Jr.*
- Ignatius Book Fair
- Pentecost Party



Middle School House System

Middle School enrollment growth continues, and we finished our 2nd year of the House Program under the leadership of Ms. Mary Carlson, our middle school science teacher. The goal of the House System is to create a cohesive middle school community centered on four of the virtues of our patron, Saint Joseph: fortitude, charity, joy, and integrity. Saint Joseph Middle Schoolers are courageously charitable, and joyful persons of integrity. The purpose of each house is to guide and support each student's academic, spiritual, social, and personal development during their time in middle school.

Through weekly House meetings, monthly House Convocation, and various House competitions, Saint Joseph Middle School made great strides in promoting the overall program, especially with the addition of the Buddy class Program within the House program. Our year ended with the 2nd annual house cup and lip sync battle, which was won by house Carita for the second year in a row.



Financial Report

For the 2024–25 school year, we remain on pace to be within range of our budgeted deficit of (\$132,079). While enrollment grew for the eighth consecutive year, our final numbers fell short of the ambitious targets set in the budget. Combined with mixed results in development, this prevented a reduction in deficit spending.

Despite these challenges, we remain committed to investing in our students, responding to their diverse needs, enriching our programs, and retaining top-quality faculty and staff. These priorities necessitate continued use of reserve funds in the near term. Looking ahead, the addition of a new Coordinator of Marketing and Enrollment and our active search for a Stewardship and Development Coordinator are key steps toward strengthening both enrollment and fundraising. This strategic growth is essential to reducing our reliance on supplemental financial support in the future.

The actual cost of educating a K–8 student in 2024–25 is approximately \$8,180, while tuition remains at \$6,475. To bridge this gap and ensure Catholic education remains accessible, the school provides over \$500,000 annually in financial assistance. Thanks to the generous support of our parish, alumni, and friends, we can offer a strong, affordable Catholic education to families across our community.

Development Highlights

Saint Joseph Catholic School depends on three major annual fundraisers to support operations:

- Give Day: \$55,046 (net)
- Student Raffle: \$51,816 (net)
- Gala: \$183,401 (net – our most successful event once again!)

We are deeply grateful to all who participate in and support these events.

Budget Oversight

The 2024–25 budget was developed in collaboration with the Parish Finance Council, school and parish leadership, and the School Advisory Council (SAC) Finance Subcommittee. While still reliant on post-pandemic relief funds, donations, and parish support, these collaborative efforts reflect a shared commitment to financial responsibility and long-term sustainability.

Facilities Report

Following last year's facilities audit of the parish by Kraus-Anderson, the parish and school partnered with a team from OPUS and Miller-Dunwiddie to create a master plan for the facility and campus. The master planning team received feedback from many school families through a survey that went out this past winter as well as a day of listening sessions on March 3rd. The team emerged from the survey and listening sessions with constructive feedback, and is currently working to finalize a master plan for our facility and grounds to prioritize needs for the future.

Over last summer, a new air conditioning system was installed in the cafeteria and preschool area of the building that kept our youngest students cool on the warmest days of school. At the very end of the school year, a new fan system was installed in the gym to better circulate air and allow for better heating and cooling of the facility. Additionally, the school partnered with a security company to identify places on campus where additional security cameras would be needed. At this time, the Church and school is finalizing a plan to purchase additional cameras and a new network video recorder to increase security surveillance throughout the school.



Thank You!

While this report is not comprehensive of everything that we have done as a school this past year, I hope you find this information helpful and encouraging. Our school is a very special community of parents, students, and teachers that work together to create a joyful place for students to encounter Christ and learn.

We wish everyone a wonderful summer vacation, and look forward to many good things in store for the 2025-26 school year.



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