



SS. Simon & Jude Cathedral School

STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

www.simonjudeschool.org

For the Academic years 2016/2017 through 2020/2021

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Dear Fr. Lankeit, Sr. Raphael, and SS. Simon & Jude Cathedral School families:

On behalf of all the members of the Strategic Plan Committee, we are pleased to present to you the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan for SS. Simon & Jude Cathedral School. Over the past year, the administration, faculty, staff and parents have thoughtfully evaluated the school's areas of strength and identified areas in need of improvement.

Beginning with a survey of all school parents, this comprehensive plan was created with the objective of growing enrollment, and continuing to provide a path of excellence for our students centered on furthering every student's relationship with Jesus Christ. It is our mission as a Catholic school to help students recognize their God-given potential, to guide and encourage students to achieve their potential, and to inspire them to live a life of faith and missionary discipleship.

We would like to thank all of the people that spent many hours building this plan that will lead our school into the future. We look forward to watching SS. Simon & Jude Cathedral School continue on the path of success while growing even stronger through the execution of our strategic planning initiatives.

Sincerely,

Chris Niezgodzki

Mr. Chris Niezgodzki
Strategic Plan Facilitator, School Parent, Parent of Alum

Summary

SS. Simon & Jude School's Strategic Plan Committee, in cooperation with School Principal, Sr. Raphael Quinn, and Rector, Fr. John Lankeit, developed this Plan 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, History, Philosophy, Critical Issues, Goals, and Action Plans.

The Strategic Plan identifies priorities in each of the following areas that will guide the school over the next five years:

- Catholic Identity
- Loreto Sisters Legacy
- Enrollment
- Marketing and Development
- Community Engagement
- Revenue Generating Electives
- Awards
- Accreditation
- Technology
- Campus Revitalization
- Safety
- Succession Planning

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 will provide a framework for ongoing accountability and ensure that the school manages its resources toward the realization of its vision over the next five years.

Strategic planning is a fluid process, and as such, this Plan will continue to be evaluated and updated.

Committee Members

The members of the **Strategic Plan Committee** devoted many hours of hard work to the process bringing valuable ideas, insights and commitment to the process.

These members are as follows:

Cathy Chrisman, School Parent, Faculty (Pre-K)
Enrollment & Marketing, Community Engagement

Lynn Dozeman, School Parent, Alumni Parent
Catholic Identity, Legacy of Loreto Sisters

Randy Harris, School Parent, School Board Member
Revenue Generating Electives

Keith Keebler, School Parent, Parish Finance Committee
Succession Planning

Kevin Markham, School Parent, Alumni Parent, School Board Member
Campus Revitalization & Safety

Sr. Donna McGahey, Faculty (4th Grade)
Awards & Accreditation, Technology

Teresita Mercado Feix, Alumni of SSJ, School Parent, School Board Member
Succession Planning

Chris Niezgodzki, School Parent, Alumni Parent
Awards & Accreditation

Dave Nilsen, School Parent, Alumni Parent, School Board Member
Campus Revitalization & Safety

Sandra Rice, Alumni Parent
Campus Revitalization & Safety

Jeff Saville, School Parent, Marketing Committee Member
Technology

Chris Tanner, Alumni of SSJ, School Parent, Summer Baseball
Enrollment & Marketing, Community Engagement

Mary Jo Wahlers, Alumni Parent, Staff Member (Development)
Enrollment & Marketing, Community Engagement, Catholic Identity, Legacy of Loreto Sisters

Karen Williams, Faculty (6th Grade)
Revenue Generating Electives



Our Mission Statement

Inspired by the Loreto Sisters and their charisms – FREEDOM, JUSTICE, SINCERITY, JOY & TRUTH – our mission is to promote intellectual and spiritual growth by providing a quality Catholic education in a safe, compassionate environment, challenging all to live according to the Gospel in a constantly changing world.

Our History

Ss. Simon & Jude Cathedral School was founded in 1954 at the request of Reverend Daniel J. Gercke, bishop of Tucson, and Reverend Paul P. Smith, pastor of Ss. Simon & Jude Parish. Staffed by five Loreto Sisters of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM), the first four grades were opened with 200 students. One grade was added each year, and in 1959, the first graduation ceremony was held. Under the direction of the Loreto Sisters, the school expanded and now serves 475 students in grades Pre-K through 8th.

Our Philosophy

We, the Catholic educators of Ss. Simon and Jude Cathedral School, recognize parents as the primary educators in the formation and education of their children. We will work in partnership with parents to build upon this foundation. We believe in our God-given mission to facilitate the growth of each child in this faith community as a whole person, with responsibilities to God, the global community, and all creation. We strive to provide each student with the opportunity to acquire a personal relationship with Jesus in an atmosphere alive with the Spirit of God. We emphasize the importance of individual potential, academic achievement, intellectual, and aesthetic growth. Believing in the uniqueness and dignity of each individual, we encourage each student to develop a strong, positive self-image by providing and expecting a Christian atmosphere characterized by understanding, respect, and acceptance of all people. We also believe every child is capable of developing moral values and self-discipline skills. We are committed to teach and model behavior, which will enable our students to develop the skills to become self-disciplined, reflective, discerning Catholic Christians. We will assist in the formation of children as they grow in Freedom, Sincerity, Truth, Justice and Joy. We expect our students will find God in each life experience and go into the future embracing the honor and service of God.

Profile of a Graduate

The school desires a graduate of SS. Simon & Jude School to be ...

A reflective, discerning, active Catholic who:

- demonstrates a working knowledge of Catholic doctrine, teachings, prayers, practices, traditions & sacred scripture
- participates in sacraments, liturgy & prayer, having the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with Christ
- demonstrates respect for self, others, diverse cultures & all of God's creation
- makes choices in light of Gospel values
- affirms God's presence in everyday experiences
- practices forgiveness, compassion, tolerance & acceptance of others
- serves others and responds to social justice issues in our world

A self-disciplined person who:

- understands, practices and models the 15 skills taught through the Discipline with Purpose program
- exhibits a sense of responsibility and accepts the consequences of his/her actions

An academically prepared person who:

- possesses fundamental skills in core academic areas
- practices oral and written communication skills effectively
- enhances learning by applying technological resources
- demonstrates effective learning strategies

A critical thinker who:

- applies acquired knowledge through critical thinking and problem solving
- interprets, analyzes, synthesizes, and evaluates information

A well-rounded person who:

- develops an aesthetic appreciation for visual, musical and performing arts
- promotes emotional and physical well-being through proper rest, good hygiene, balanced nutrition, and exercise

Catholic Identity /Loreto Sister Legacy

SS. Simon & Jude School is a Christ-centered environment where each child is encouraged to follow the example and teachings of Jesus in all aspects of life. Students seek knowledge through the teachings of the gospel, and the charisms of Mary Ward and then apply those teachings to daily life. Catholic Identity should proclaim the gospel, build community, and serve our brothers and sisters. SSJ is an effective vehicle of evangelization and ongoing faith formation for students, their parents and the faculty and staff. Staff members are role models who integrate faith with daily living and focus on the whole child (attend their sporting events, attend play, etc...)

- Goal 1: Increase percentage of school families' attendance at weekly Mass**
- Goal 2: Improve link between parish and school**
- Goal 3: Continue the legacy of the Loreto Sisters**
- Goal 4: Create visible symbols outside the classroom to show that the school is Catholic.**

Enrollment & Marketing/Community Engagement

SS. Simon & Jude School devotes resources to growing school enrollment and continually sets goals and analyzes enrollment results. The school will continue to communicate the SSJ Brand through guidance from the school's Marketing Committee, as well as committed, personal & visionary leadership and will be guided by a comprehensive Enrollment & Marketing Plan. Additionally, the school encourages parental involvement in the school's programs and activities. We work to foster an active volunteer base, striving for creating relationships that benefit each student, family and the wider community.

- Goal 1: Increased enrollment to 550 students by 2021.**
- Goal 2: All families will actively and meaningfully participate in the school community**
- Goal 3: Have every school family know SSJ's "elevator speech"**

Revenue-Generating Electives

SS. Simon & Jude School generates revenue, other than tuition, through fundraising and select appeals. Offering after school/evening/weekend electives is an additional source of revenue for the school and will help to create liaisons, build community and promote awareness of the school.

- Goal: Identify and create after school offerings to generate additional revenue**

Awards/Accreditation

SS. Simon & Jude provides students with a well-rounded education focusing on the spiritual, developmental, emotional, cognitive and physical well-being of each child and thus, we strive for recognition of our efforts.

Goal: **Create and Implement National Catholic Educational Association and or State of Arizona or City of Phoenix Recognition Awards to draw media attention to Ss. Simon & Jude Cathedral School.**

Technology

SSJ's commitment to teaching its students about technology and teaching with technology is quite impressive. Leadership's commitment to a long-term strategic focus when it comes to teaching with technology will continue to provide an excellent academic *Catholic* education with solid comprehensive curriculum for high school preparation including relevance with the use of technology. This will promote teamwork, leadership, social development and physical well-being. Teaching with technology will prepare SSJ students with the skills necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century and for leadership in a global (connected) world.

Goal 1: **Annual review and update of SSJ's "Teaching with Technology" plan and budget.**

Goal 2: **Provide teachers with the current and most up-to-date technological tools and the training necessary to fully utilize them to allow for classroom instruction to enhance the learning environment.**

Goal 3: **Engage and empower the higher grade students to become more involved in the learning experiences that are relevant to their lives and real world experiences.**

Campus Revitalization / Safety

SS. Simon & Jude assures the longevity, safety, security suitability and aesthetics of the school buildings and grounds in cooperation with the parish community.

New Building

1. Secure front entry – this is accomplished with new building facilities planned
2. Address main and secondary entrances to campus. Research any available grant opportunities for security personnel.
3. Wayfinding

Security and Branding

1. Add masonry wall, including new landscape, lighting and SSJ sign at 27th/Maryland
2. Secure playground and front of school sidewalk area with seat wall and view fencing along breezeway.
3. Provide entry monumentation into campus from 27th Ave and relocate entrance to the north drive area near the Parish and school office. Perimeter signage.
4. Friday Mass Security – continue to make sure safety is a high priority.

Beautification

1. Campus landscape replacement or enhancement
2. Landscape lighting

Playground

1. New outdoor basketball courts behind north baseball field,
2. Address all recreational play areas to make them functional and fun
3. Look into developing a program with the Diamondbacks for the baseball field

Succession Planning

The Loreto Sisters and Sr. Raphael are integral to the identity of SSJ Cathedral School and its continued success as a parochial institution. The Loreto Sisters founded SSJ Cathedral School in 1954, and their leadership and guidance has helped to form the school's character and reputation within the community. School parent surveys note the importance of the Loreto Sisters tradition as part of their decision to choose SSJ Cathedral School. Thus, it is vital that any successor (and any Succession Plan) understand and incorporate this rich history of the Loreto Sisters and their leadership role in forming the mission and identity of the school.

The Strategic Plan Committee recognizes that the ultimate successor to Sr. Raphael, as Principal, will be decided by the Cathedral Rector, currently Rev. John Lankeit, at the time of her retirement. To assist the Cathedral Rector with this decision as we anticipate the eventual retirement of Sr. Raphael, the Committee seeks to develop a Succession Plan recommendation that ensures a leadership continuity for SSJ's Principal and other key administrative positions that aligns with the history and spirit of the Loreto Sisters, as Founders of SSJ Cathedral School, and that also promotes the development of future leaders within the school.

The Strategic Plan Committee is a body of invested school parents and faculty as well as SSJ parishioners, who have been tasked with evaluating our current leadership structure, identifying issues for future succession and contingency planning, and investigating options for planned succession. To assist with this task, the Succession Plan Subcommittee will research best practices among other Diocesan schools and within the greater Phoenix academic community. The Committee will then prepare a final recommendation for consideration by the SSJ Cathedral Rector, who will make the ultimate decision as to succession.