

St. Margaret Mary Deanery Future of Catholic Elementary Schools Steering Committee Report

May 26, 2005

St. Margaret Mary Deanery Future of Catholic Education Steering Committee

- Fr. Tim Kallaher, Chair
St. John's Dry Ridge
- Vince Weseli
Parishioner, St. Bart's
- Bill Walborn
Principal, Assumption
- Ray Harrigan
Parishioner, St. John's White Oak
- Maureen Schomaker
Parishioner, St. Bart's
- Scott Beck
Parishioner, St. John's
- Jim Brown
Consultant
- Jean Margello
Principal, St. Vivian's
- Judy Hoferkamp
Principal, O.L.R.
- Jim Krause
Parishioner, Little Flower
- Mike Schweitzer
Parishioner, O.L.R.
- Pam Vollman
Teacher, St. Clare's

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Tonight's Presentation Will Be Divided into Three Parts:

- Part I
 - Presentation of Results of Data Collected by Steering Committee and Possible Scenarios
 - Questions for Clarification
- Part II
 - Recommendations of Steering Committee
 - Discussion
- Part III
 - Deanery Steering Committee: Next Steps

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St. Margaret Mary Deanery Parishes

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Pastoral Regions

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    graph TD
      A[St. Margaret Mary Deanery] --> B[Pastoral Region I]
      A --> C[Pastoral Region II]
      A --> D[Pastoral Region III]
      A --> E[Pastoral Region IV]
      B --> B1[St. James the Greater]
      B --> B2[St. Ignatius]
      C --> C1[St. Ann]
      C --> C2[Assumption*]
      C --> C3[St. Clare*]
      C --> C4[St. Clement]
      C --> C5[St. Margaret Mary*]
      C --> C6[Little Flower]
      D --> D1[Corpus Christi]
      D --> D2[St. John Baptist]
      D --> D3[St. John Neumann]
      E --> E1[St. Bartholomew]
      E --> E2[Our Lady of Rosary*]
      E --> E3[St. James of the Valley*]
      E --> E4[St. Matthias]
      E --> E5[St. Vivian]
  
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Background

- Since June of 2002, laity, pastors, and principals have had informal discussions regarding the future of Catholic elementary education
- May, 2004 all parishes invited to attend first ever deanery wide meeting on future of Catholic elementary education

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Background

The steering committee focused on the following areas:

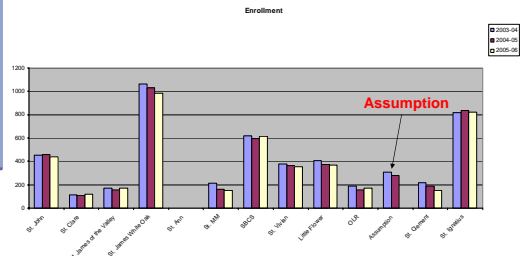
- Demographics
- Enrollment
- Financial Status
- Facilities
- Parent Participation
- Educational Models

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Current Issues and Trends

- General total enrollment of Catholic Elementary Schools in the deanery is decreasing in a slow, steady pace



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Current Issues and Trends

- Enrollment decline appears to be greatest in the lower grades, indicating that schools are graduating a higher number of students each year than they are attracting and enrolling

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Current Issues and Trends

- The trend of decreasing enrollment is not likely to reverse itself
- The percentage of Catholic and non-Catholic students attending Catholic elementary schools in the deanery is decreasing at the same rate



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Baptismal Trends

- Baptismal trends show patterns of significant decrease across the deanery



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Demographic Trends

Based on study by Percepts, April 2005

- Limited growth is projected particularly in the northern region (Pastoral Regions 3 & 4) and the western region (Pastoral Region 1) of the deanery (Note: Assumption – Region 2)
- While the population of the Deanery will decline over the next 5 years from 230,073 to 227,482 (or just over 1%) the population of children ages 0-14 will decline 6% during that same period (50,242 to 47,216)

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St. Margaret Mary Deanery Parishes



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Financial Realities

- All reporting schools in the deanery are operating at a deficit
- Deficits vary from between \$25,000 to \$560,000 per year. The vast majority of our schools (9 of 13) operate with significant annual deficits of \$200,000 or more



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Financial Realities

- With declining church collections many parishes have reached the point that it is a significant financial burden to operate a parish school
- Areas of *declining, aging population with a prognosis of limited growth in the next five years is projected for the southern region (Pastoral Region Two - Assumption)*

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Financial Realities

- Tuition increases can no longer cover the combined forces of expense increases and declining enrollments and still remain affordable to Catholic families



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Financial Realities

- Some schools operate with very small class sizes (as low as 5 students) particularly in lower grades
- As enrollment decreases, cost increases, as cost increases, tuition increases and enrollment drops, creating a downward spiral of enrollment and tuition increases
- Teachers are underpaid (Some voluntarily not accepting raises in order to keep the school open)



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Facility Realities

- Facilities range from 42 to 91 years of age. However, most schools have had additions and significant renovations since initial construction.
- A number of buildings will require major capital improvements, including infrastructures such as boilers, roofs and asbestos management.



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Facility Realities

- Most facilities are operating well below capacity. Six of thirteen schools are operating at between 34% to 47% capacity. These schools include:

St. Ann	St. Clare
Our Lady of the Rosary	St. Margaret Mary
St. Clement	Assumption



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Parent Participation

- Archdiocesan Parent Satisfaction Survey Fall, 2004 (utilized aggregate results for the Archdiocese)
- Parent Focus Groups
 - May 2005



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Archdiocese of Cincinnati Parent Satisfaction 2004 Survey Results

- Strengths**
 - Availability and competency of staff
 - Catholic Christian atmosphere, of trust, openness and respect, where religious values are taught in a meaningful way
 - The quality of the education



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Archdiocese of Cincinnati Survey Results

- Weaknesses**
 - Limited number of extracurricular programs
 - Not as much individual attention



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Five most important reasons parents choose Catholic school education for their child(ren):

- Morality and values taught in Catholic schools
- Overall academic excellence
- Good discipline
- Small class/school size
- Family tradition



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Archdiocesan Parent Survey

- The most significant reason given by the parents who indicated they did not intend to have their child return to their Catholic school next year
 - Difficulty in paying tuition



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Parent Focus Group Results

- Confirmed the results of the Archdiocesan parent satisfaction 2004 survey
- Make tuition affordable
- Looking for greater leadership and support from Archdiocese
- Parents want to be involved in shaping the future of their schools

Realities Impacting Future of Catholic Elementary Schools in Deanery

- There is no uniform tuition among the Catholic Elementary Schools in the deanery.
- Class sizes vary among the schools from less than 10 to over 30 pupils.
- No uniform salary scale applied for teachers across the deanery.



Realities Impacting Future of Catholic Elementary Schools in Deanery

- Cost of advanced technology and teacher training is expensive.
- Some parishes are subsidizing the school by over 50% of school budget.
- Financial constraints have caused some schools to cut staff and programs.



A Vision for the Future of Catholic Elementary Schools in the Deanery

A Catholic School opportunity for the families in the deanery who seek:

- outstanding education for their children
- grounded in Catholic Christian values
- prepares their children to meet the challenges of our diverse society
- affordable

Values

- Planning for the future of Catholic elementary schools in the deanery should have as its primary focus the educational benefits of the children whose parents seek a Catholic education



Values

Choices for the most advantageous model for Catholic elementary school will maintain:

- strong Catholic identity, which includes morality and values
- academic excellence
- strong discipline
- tradition



Values

- Implement fair and just compensation for all educators and support staff
- Encourage cooperation among parishes to ensure Catholic elementary school education
- Utilize this opportunity to broaden our view of church and school communities in a positive manner

Parameters as directed by Archdiocese of Cincinnati

- Any proposed school model or structure must maintain connection to the Archdiocese.
- Each parish must recognize and act on its responsibility to provide to the children of the parish a quality Catholic education that is affordable.



At Risk School Ranking **Most at Risk*

School	Highest Deficit Per Pupil	Lowest Enrollment	At Risk Score
St. Clare*	1	1	2
OLR*	3	2	5
St. Margaret Mary*	2	4	6
St. James of the Valley*	4	3	7
Assumption*	5	6	11
St. Clement	6	5	11
Little Flower	7	9	16
St. John	10	10	20
St. Anne	13	7	20
St. Vivian	12	8	20
St. Ignatius	9	12	21
St. James the Greater	8	13	21
St. Bartholomew Consolidated School	11	11	22

Possible Scenarios

- Scenario I – Status Quo
- Scenario II – Pastoral Regions
- Scenario III – Geographic
- Scenario IV – Phased Approach

Scenario I – Status Quo

- Keep elementary education as it is, under the direction of each individual parish.

Scenario I Status Quo Benefits

- School maintains individuality of parish
- Strong attachment to parish
- Possible potential for small class size and more individual attention

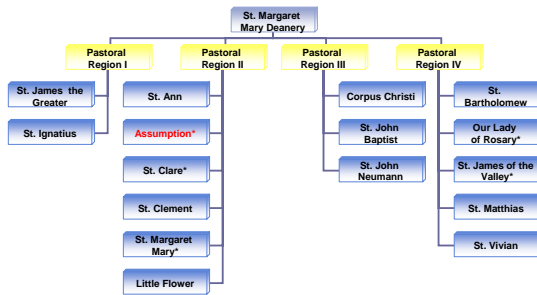
Scenario I Status Quo Risks

- Difficult to initiate new programs
- Lack of funds
- Difficult to meet teacher salaries and benefits
- Expensive to maintain or improve technology
- Classes may consolidate if enrollment too low
- Financial burden for parish and parents is too great and may force school closing
- Promotes competition among parishes
- At risk schools still in crisis situation

Scenario II - Pastoral Region Approach

- Unify schools solely according to the Pastoral Regions defined by the deanery.

Pastoral Regions



Pastoral Region I



Pastoral Region II



Pastoral Region III



Pastoral Region IV



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Benefits Pastoral Regions

- Honors/consistent with pastoral regions
- Parishes already collaborating
- Unused facilities could be a possible revenue generator or other parish/community use
- Multiple facilities to choose from in Pastoral Region II and IV
- As school enrollment grows through unification the cost per student tends to decrease
- Eases some responsibility for school from pastor

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Risks Pastoral Regions

- Number of schools and students in pastoral regions not evenly distributed (especially Pastoral Region III)
- No one school building would be large enough to accommodate the student population at this time
- Reconfigures St. Bartholomew Consolidated School which is already modeling unification of parish schools
- Unused facilities may be a revenue drain
- Public school transportation may be an issue due to state mandated time limits on bus

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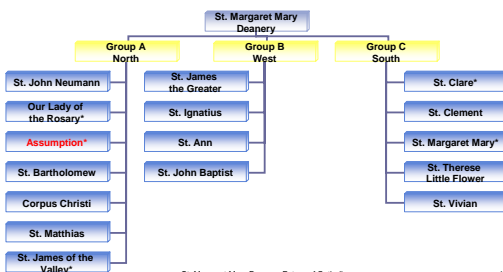
Scenario III - Geographic Approach

- Unify schools solely according to closest geographic location of schools

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Scenario III Geographic



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Scenario III Geographic Benefits

- Aligned well geographically
- No foreseen transportation issues
- Unused facilities could be a possible revenue generator or other parish/community use
- Maintains integrity of existing unified school

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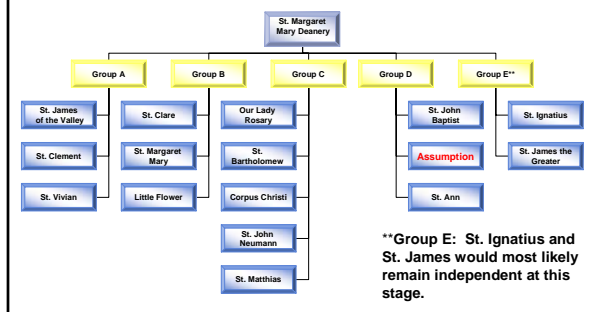
Scenario III Geographic Risks

- Places at risk schools in only Groups A and C
- Does not align with pastoral regions
- No one school building would be large enough to accommodate the student population at this time
- Number of schools and students are not evenly distributed
- Unused facilities may be a revenue drain

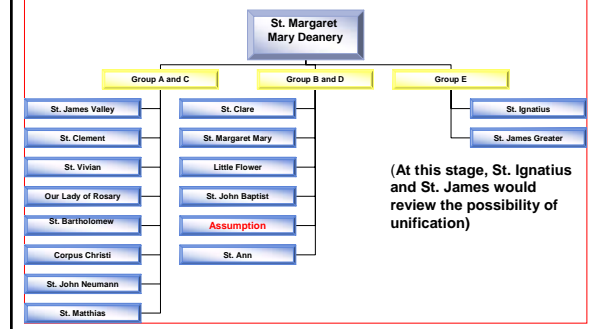
Scenario IV – Phased Approach

- Schools would unify in a gradual manner based on enrollment, diversity, location, finances and at risk ranking

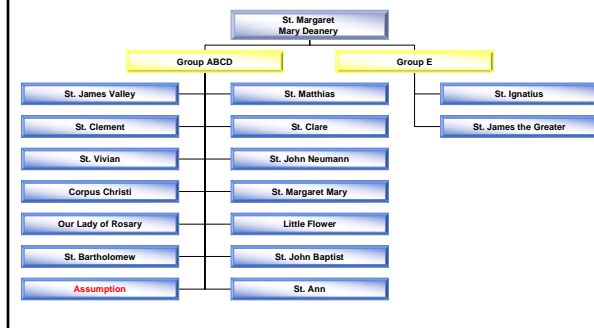
Scenario IV - Phase 1



Scenario IV - Phase 2



Scenario IV - Phase 3



Scenario IV Phased Approach Benefits

- Makes sense financially since more "at risk" schools may be helped immediately
- Diversity of student population factored in groupings
- Makes more efficient use of facilities
- As school enrollment grows through unification, the cost per student tends to decrease
- Relieves pastors of some of the responsibilities of running school

Scenario IV Phased Approach Benefits

Continued

- Possibility of smaller class size
- Unused facilities could be possible revenue generator or other parish/community use
- Maintains integrity of existing unified school
- Broadens school community
- Expands parish school concept

Scenario IV Phased Approach Risks

- Loss of traditional parish school
- Unused facilities may be a revenue drain
- Does not align with Pastoral Regions
- Public school transportation may be an issue due to state mandated time limits on bus

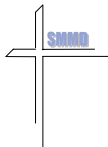
Educational Models

- Incorporated
 - Operated independently by an elected school board
- Consolidated (e.g., St. Bart's)
 - Parishes create an agreement to educate their students jointly including: detailing its operations, defining its relationship to the parishes involved and making provision for its administration
- Charter
 - Usually created to address an alternative vision for public education. Funded by the state, but no integration of religious values, teachings or symbols may be used during the school day
- Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Conceptual Draft, One School with Multiple Campuses
 - All schools in a geographic area could combine into one interdependent elementary school organization with multiple campuses
- K-8
 - Recent research has indicated the K-8 model provides greater academic stability

School Issues Which Need to be Addressed

- Governance
- Personnel
- Administration
- Curriculum
- Finance
- Facilities

Questions for Clarification



Opportunity

- The crisis facing Catholic elementary education in the St. Margaret Mary deanery today, offers us an opportunity to realize our vision...

A Vision for the Future of Catholic Elementary Schools in the Deanery

- A **Catholic School opportunity for the families in the deanery who seek:**
- **outstanding education for their children**
- **grounded in Catholic Christian values**
- **prepares their children to meet the challenges of our diverse society**
- **affordable**

Recommendations

- Institute **uniform tuition** throughout the deanery.
- Implement **consistent salary scale** throughout the deanery.
- **Cap class size** consistently in all the schools of the deanery.

Recommendations

- Initiate an **Endowment fund** for the Deanery to be used by all deanery schools for the purpose of providing a quality education for students that is grounded in Catholic Christian values, meets the challenges of our diverse society and is affordable. (It would be advantageous to have a fund for the entire Archdiocese.)



Recommendations

- As a social justice issue we recommend, **tuition assistance for children of full time employees** of the deanery schools.



Recommended Scenario

- In light of the vision being proposed, the realities and issues facing the Catholic elementary schools in the deanery, the demographic trends, and an analysis of the benefits and risks of the four scenarios presented above, we propose:

Scenario IV – Phased Approach

1. **New Entity** – no longer a parish school, but a parish connected school with a new name and identity (neutral name with no parish connections)
2. **Phased approach** allows time for parents to adjust to change
3. **Financial safety net** for schools that are at risk

Scenario IV – Phased Approach

4. Reduces parochialism and emphasizes elementary education as deanery priority
5. Transition easier with fewer schools at one time
6. Declining demographic and enrollment trends correlate to phased approach
7. Keeps existing unified model together

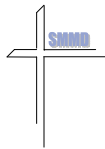
Phase 1 ... for Assumption



Recommendations

- Learn pros and pitfalls from existing models
- Initiate periodic, detailed and ongoing communications with parishioners to insure a clear understanding of the process; any and all progress on this front and any impact on Assumption School
- Secure professional expertise to assist in implementation
- Involve the corporate community

Part III Deanery Steering Committee:



Next Steps

Projected Time Line

Deanery Wide Meeting Future of Catholic Elementary Education	Pastoral Councils and Education Commissions make recommendations to Pastors	Deanery Recommendation presented to the Cincinnati Area Education Commission and then to the Archdiocesan Education Commission
Summer - 05	September-05	January-06
May-05	August 15, 2005	Fall - 05
Individual Parish sessions with Pastoral Councils, Staffs, Education Commissions, Finance Councils (FC's) and <u>interested parishioners</u> (P'rs)	Pastors meet to arrive at a consensus decision on a direction for Catholic Elementary Education in the Deanery	St. Margaret Mary Deanery Education Plan presented to Archbishop