

UNAPOLOGETICALLY CATHOLIC

*A Strategic Vision for the Future of
Catholic Education in the Diocese of Columbus*

August 2026

our
Catholic
Schools

THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

“The participation of our students in the life of the Church is the marker of the success of our schools.”

— Bishop Earl K. Fernandes



SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends in Christ,

At its best, Catholic education is not a private school with a religion class; it is an integrated formation in truth, goodness, and beauty rooted in Jesus Christ. It seeks to form the whole person - mind, body, and soul - in light of the Gospel. Yet in recent decades, many Catholic schools have adopted secular educational models that elevate worldly metrics over this deeper formation. In too many places, Catholic identity has been reduced to an accessory of institutional branding rather than serving as the animating principle of culture.

This document, *Unapologetically Catholic: A Strategic Vision for the Future of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Columbus*, emerged from a fundamental question: What would a fully renewed Catholic school look like? It is offered as a shared vision and a pathway for to help educators, families, and parishes reclaim our educational mission and renew Catholic culture together. Across the diocese, parishes and schools have already begun enacting this vision. Unapologetically Catholic schools that embrace the fullness of our faith and the teaching mission of the Church provide an education that not only forms students, but also upholds parents and strengthens families in their vocation as the primary educators of their children. Renewal will succeed only to the extent that schools and families become true partners in evangelization, accompanying one another in the work of forming young people for holiness.



To illustrate this idea, consider the Parable of the Sower, in which seeds are scattered on several types of terrain, including on a path with no soil, on rocky ground, and on good soil, all of which represent possible responses of people to the Gospel message. Only on the good soil does the seed, or message, grow and produce a bountiful harvest. Vincent van Gogh portrayed this parable in his 1888 masterpiece, *The Sower at Sunset*. The artist painted the sower walking through a field, scattering seed on what appears to be rocky soil. Behind him, tall grain is visible, suggesting that, at some point in time, some of the seed had landed in good soil and grown. Pope Leo XIV spoke about this painting during his first general address in Rome, seeing it as a symbol of hope. He noted that, “behind the sower, van Gogh painted the grain already ripe. It seems to me an image of hope: one way or another, the seed has borne fruit”. We are seeing signs of hope in the Diocese of Columbus. Much like van Gogh’s thriving grain, renewing Catholic schools requires patience, perseverance, and faithful labor.



The Sower at Sunset, Vincent van Gogh, 1888. Image from Wikimedia Commons (Public Domain).

The starting point for this renewal is the recovery of the Church’s vision for education. As *Gravissimum Educationis* teaches, “a true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end.” Catholic schools, therefore, must be missionary in nature, not simply sustaining institutions, but evangelizing and forming disciples. This requires a different way of thinking: moving from Catholic identity as a compliance metric or branding opportunity to an authentic Catholic culture as an incarnational reality that permeates every aspect of school life.

At the heart of renewal is remembering why Catholic schools exist. A fully renewed Catholic school understands itself as a work of the Church, rooted in Christ and ordered toward the salvation of souls. This purpose is given to us in the Great Commission: to “go...and make disciples...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Mt 28:18-20). This mission must animate every dimension of school life, including curriculum, discipline, staffing, family partnership, parish collaboration, and even financial planning. When a community is united around this mission, the school becomes unmistakably Catholic.

Too often, terms such as “faith-based,” “values-oriented,” or “safe” are used in place of a robust articulation of Catholic culture. While well-intentioned, these phrases fail to capture the depth and richness of our tradition. A renewed Catholic worldview can be described by several essential principles: it is incarnational, seeing Christ present in all things; sacramental, recognizing creation as imbued with meaning and oriented toward the divine; ordered, affirming that truth has structure and purpose; hierarchical, acknowledging God-given roles that establish unity and flourishing; and joyful, embracing the pursuit of truth as a participation in the life of God. These are not slogans, but enduring realities that shape how we teach, lead, and live and that will run consistently throughout this document.

Finally, renewal requires a clear roadmap that integrates Catholic worldview, curriculum and pedagogy, culture and community, and mission-driven operations into a unified whole. Catholic education is not something added on; it is a way of life. When faithfully lived, it forms fertile soil in which the Gospel can take root, grow, and bear fruit for generations to come. This great work is the goal in the Diocese of Columbus, and this document will outline our vision for continued achievement in the coming years.

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Superintendent of Catholic Schools

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Foundation of Catholic Education

Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, a previous Secretary for the Congregation for Catholic Education at the Vatican, spoke about the importance of education to the evangelizing mission of the Church and the great responsibility schools have to bring children and their families to a knowledge of and love for Jesus Christ. In a speech that has been adapted into a small yet powerful booklet, Archbishop Miller defined the “Five Marks of a Catholic School,” which serve as the cornerstone for authentic Catholic education in the Diocese of Columbus. The marks are listed below with descriptions from Dr. Rebecca Rook at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Inspired by a Supernatural Vision – Education should orient students toward eternity, cultivating virtue and fostering a relationship with Christ. Beyond college and career readiness, the aim is sanctity.

Founded on Christian Anthropology – Catholic education must recognize the dignity of the human person made in the image of God, integrating formation of body, mind, and soul. Anthropology drives pedagogy.

Animated by Communion and Community – Learning unfolds within community. Relationships among students, teachers, and families should mirror the love and communion of the Trinity.

Imbued with a Catholic Worldview Across the Curriculum – The faith can and should illumine all content areas in both content and context. The integration of both faith and reason is at the heart of integrating a Catholic worldview across the curriculum.

Sustained by Gospel Witness – Educators must model Christ in word and action. Personal holiness and a visible faith witness are indispensable. As Pope Leo XIV wrote in *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, “Educators are called to a responsibility that goes beyond the work contract: their witness has the same value as their lessons.”

“*The mission of schools and teachers is to develop an understanding of all that is true, good, and beautiful.*”

— *Pope Francis*

Rook, R. (2025, July 14). Preparing Catholic Educators for Flourishing in a Secularized Society. [Conference Presentation]. Catholic School Leaders Summit, Franciscan University, Steubenville, Ohio, United States.

Pope Leo XIV. (2025, October 28). Drawing new maps of hope: Apostolic letter on the 60th anniversary of Gravissimum educationis. Vatican.

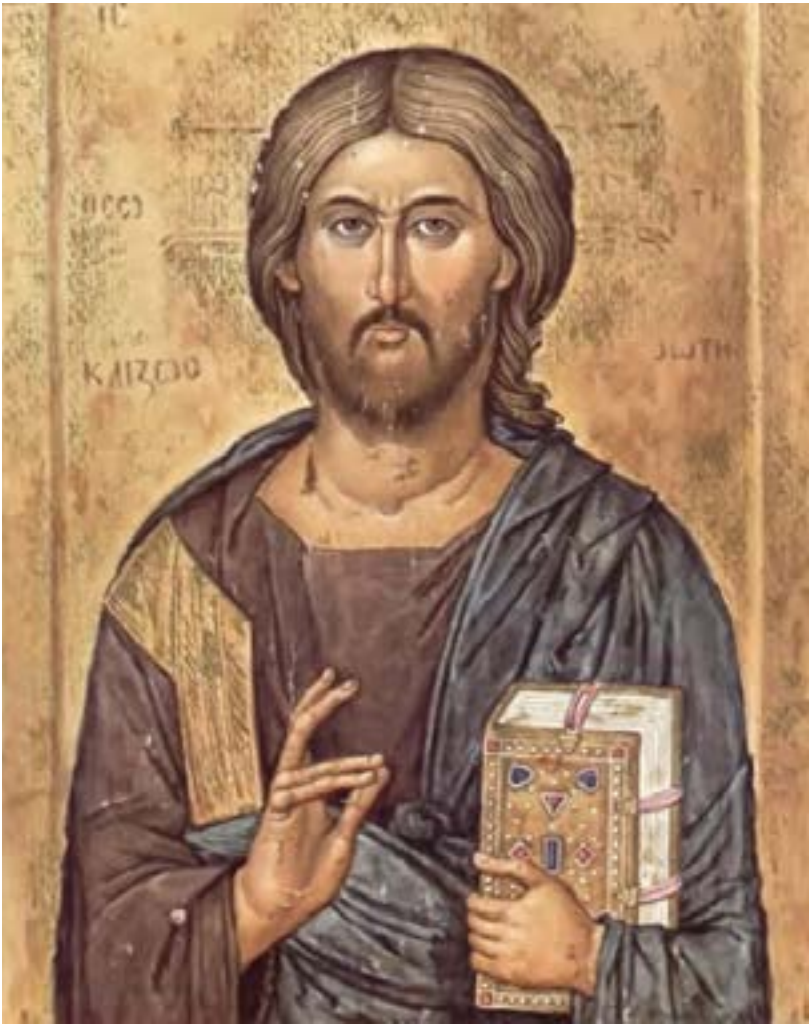
The Office of Catholic Schools

The Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) serves the Bishop by administering the Church’s teaching mission in accordance with Canon Law. Under the superintendent’s leadership, OCS provides diocesan-wide support to pastors, administrators, and educators. It promotes excellence in Catholic education with a strong emphasis on faith formation, fostering love for Jesus Christ, fidelity to the Church, respect for human dignity, service, and evangelization, while coordinating communication and collaboration across all schools.

The mission of OCS is:

Led by Christ the Teacher, the Office of Catholic Schools engages the evangelizing mission of the Church in Catholic education by serving school communities in subsidiarity and communion.

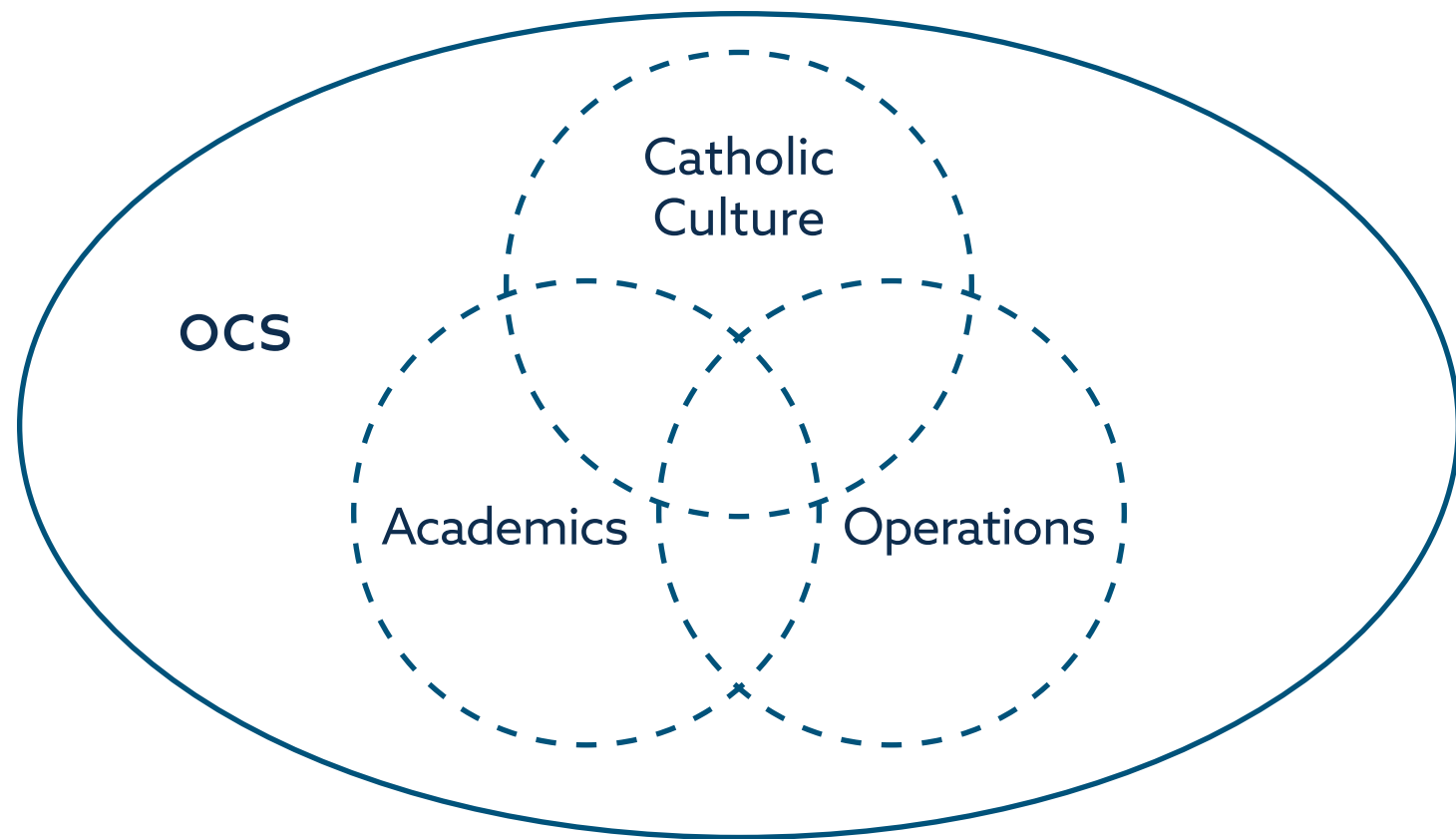
Rooted in the Gospel and the teaching mission of the Church, the Office of Catholic Schools envisions communities of faith and learning in which schools, families, and parishes work together so that every student is formed in mind, body, and spirit and invited to the fullness of life in Christ. Our Catholic schools are inspired by Pope Benedict XVI’s call that Catholic schools help students become saints and guided by Bishop Fernandes’ priorities of vocations, evangelization,



Christ the Pantocrator Jovan Zograf, 1384.
Image from Wikimedia Commons (Public Domain).

Catholic education and formation, and social outreach. OCS joins in solidarity with schools by deepening the five essential marks in its own work. In practice, this includes a commitment to ongoing formation and collaboration as members of the Body of Christ, committed to the mission of the Church.

The model for OCS is Christ the Teacher. His Word from the Gospel of John guides the mission of service for OCS: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (Jn 8:12).



In order to best serve this mission and vision, OCS is organized into three inter-related and inter-connected teams – the Catholic Culture team, the Academics team, and the Operations team. Each team specializes in a particular area for all schools while working in collaboration with the others to develop a vision of Catholic education in our diocese.

Growth in Catholic Culture

The Catholic Culture team helps schools become unmistakably Catholic. This work seeks to ensure that Catholic schools are not only academically strong, but deeply rooted in a vibrant, lived faith that shapes every dimension of school life.

Recent Accomplishments

Over the past five years, the Catholic Culture team has led several significant initiatives that have grown the culture and mission of Catholic schools across the Diocese. Central among these is the implementation of the diocesan Evangelization Plan, highlighted by the inaugural Evangelization Day, which gathered 1,500 educators for prayer, formation, and reflection on the vocation of Catholic education.

Faith formation for educators has been expanded by a strong partnership with the Catechetical Institute at Franciscan University, offering structured courses tailored to administrators, new teachers, and veteran educators. The team also developed and promulgated a comprehensive PK–12 Religion Course of Study aligned with USCCB doctrinal standards. This curriculum,

now used in more than 25 dioceses nationwide, integrates Catholic anthropology through collaboration with Ruah Woods, emphasizing the truth of our human story as God’s beloved sons and daughters.

To assess effectiveness, the Diocese administers the Assessment of Religious Knowledge (ARK) annually to students in grades 2 to 12 and to educators, aiding schools in identifying strengths and areas for growth. Additionally, the Catholic Culture team has strengthened the witness of Catholic high schools through an annual visitation process, engaging school leaders in assessing Catholic culture and setting goals for growth.

Goals

The work of the Catholic Culture team is organized around three primary areas:

Centrality of the Eucharist:

Schools will create vibrant liturgical and sacramental lives centered on the Eucharist, leading students and staff to a deeper conversion. Formation includes Scripture, Adoration, retreats, and devotion to the Church’s patrimony with an emphasis on sacred music and sacred art, while faculty are formed in retreats, pilgrimages, and intentional prayer for the school community.

“So as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, rooted in Him, and built upon Him and established in the faith as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

– Colossians 2:6-7

Education and Catechesis:

Students will receive a doctrinally sound religious education grounded in the USCCB framework that emphasizes evangelization, Catholic anthropology, and virtuous living. Schools will actively evangelize both Catholic and non-Catholic members of the community, while faculty and staff engage in ongoing catechetical formation to improve both knowledge and witness. Schools will work alongside parishes to equip parents to lead the domestic church through family formation, catechesis, and evangelization.

Life in Christ:

Catholic Culture will be expressed by a culture of charity, rooted in a Christocentric and Trinitarian vision. The Works of Mercy will be lived within and beyond the school community, and students will encounter a strong culture of vocations through engagement with clergy, religious, and diocesan events, fostering an understanding of the personal call to holiness.

Measuring Growth

Progress will be measured by clear indicators of growth in faith and practice. These include participation in the sacramental life, with regular opportunities for Mass, Adoration, and Confession; visible integration of Catholic anthropology throughout school culture; and increased engagement in faith formation, family catechesis, and sacramental preparation among students, staff, and families, together with growing participation in parish life and Sunday worship.

Growth in knowledge and belief will be tracked in ARK data and observed by school and parish leaders, particularly as expressed in personal and communal prayer. Faculty and administrators will demonstrate a sustained commitment to catechetical formation, and alumni will show lasting signs of formation through participation in parish life, Catholic communities, and, where called, vocations to priesthood or religious life. OCS will begin processes to gather and measure this data.

Growth in Academics

Thanks to the dedicated work of faithful educators, the schools of the Diocese of Columbus are now positioned to renew a Catholic approach to instruction and academics. This work responds to the call of the Gospel by ensuring that a Catholic worldview permeates every subject and every classroom. Drawing from the rich intellectual tradition of the Church, and collaborating with partners such as the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education (ICLE), this renewal is driven by fidelity to the Church’s understanding of the human person and the nature of truth. It rests on three essential convictions: that truth exists and can be known; that the human person is ordered toward truth, beauty, and goodness; and that education is fundamentally a moral and spiritual enterprise.

Recent Accomplishments

In recent years, the Diocese has made great strides in advancing Catholic Academic Integration (CAI) across the curricula. Inspired in part by Brett Salkeld’s *Educating for Eternity*, educators are embracing the principle that every subject should be taught from a Catholic perspective. Curriculum teams have begun revising academic content to reflect this vision, including a renewed emphasis on literature-rich English Language Arts that immerses students in the great works of human experience and expression.

At the same time, schools have undertaken a careful review of instructional resources to ensure alignment with the Catholic faith. In partnership with guidance from the Cardinal Newman Society, schools review all materials, including books, media, and curricular resources, to verify that they reflect truth, beauty, and goodness. This effort requires vigilance and sustained attention but is essential to forming an authentically Catholic environment. In the classroom, schools are moving away from purely utilitarian models and to an approach more focused on wonder and beauty, rooted in Christian anthropology and drawing on the Church’s longstanding educational tradition. Classrooms are increasingly marked by meaningful texts, Socratic dialogue, seminar-style discussions, and contemplative engagement with content. Additionally, the Diocese has invested in recruiting mission-aligned educators and building partnerships with Catholic universities that share this vision and prepare educators for success in Catholic classrooms.

Goals

The next phase of this work will focus on three primary areas:

Educators as Missionary Disciples:

The Diocese will cultivate educators who not only teach the faith but live it enthusiastically. This includes supporting teachers in their spiritual lives, developing long-term commitment to Catholic education, building a strong pipeline of future school leaders, and prioritizing mission-aligned hiring practices.



Catholic Academic Integration:

Schools will fully implement CAI across all grades and subjects through alignment of curriculum, instructional resources, and teaching methodology. Regional trainings and professional development opportunities will equip educators with best practices for consistent and faithful implementation. Schools will help parents understand this renewed approach so that faith and learning are reinforced both in the classroom and at home.

Data Informed Educational Decisions:

Effective instruction is guided by and responsive to relevant data on student learning. Teachers use assessments to identify gaps, adjust strategies, and target needs. In this way, data becomes a practical tool for improving daily classroom practice and student outcomes. Rather than seeking to achieve just high scores, data analysis will be directed toward improved proficiency and growth over time.

Measuring Growth

Progress will be measured by academic and formational indicators. Growth in student achievement data will reflect the effectiveness of integrated instruction, while an increase in the number of faith-filled, mission-driven educators will signal success in recruitment and formation. Additional indicators will include the consistent implementation of CAI across classrooms, participation in professional development aligned with ICLE principles, and the use of vetted, mission-aligned resources informed by the Cardinal Newman Society.

“No algorithm can replace what makes education human: poetry, irony, love, art, imagination, the joy of discovery.”

– Pope Leo XIV

Growth in Operations

The Operations team ensures that Catholic schools are financially sustainable and effectively resourced in service of their mission. By fortifying systems, planning responsibly for growth, and supporting school leadership, this work enables schools to thrive not only today but for generations to come.

Recent Accomplishments

In recent years, the Diocese has made significant progress in strengthening operational capacity across its schools. Efforts to stabilize finances have included expanding participation in the Emmaus Road Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO), expanding utilization of state-provided funding, making Catholic education affordable to all families in the diocese and advocating for parental choice in education. Schools have adopted more transparent and sustainable tuition models that better reflect the true cost of education while maintaining accessibility. This has allowed almost all schools to generate operational surpluses, which, in turn have helped to manage capital repairs and establish endowments.

The Emmaus Road Scholarship Fund has grown by 8,600% since its inception in 2021. In 2025-26 alone, the Fund raised more than \$5.5 million for student tuition aid. The diocese has invested in growing our SGO with full-time staff and highly visible advertising campaigns to encourage Ohioans to earn a tax credit through their contribution to Catholic education.

At the same time, increased attention has been given to facilities stewardship. Schools have initiated assessments of deferred maintenance needs and begun prioritizing critical repairs. Major steps have also been taken toward long-term planning for capital improvements, including expansion to accommodate more students, renovation to modernize older structures, and new construction to allow for additional educational resources.

Additionally, there has been a growing emphasis on building school leadership structures. Many schools have begun to develop administrative leadership teams, increasing the number of assistant principals and empowering those roles with new responsibilities. This distributive leadership model encourages collaboration, promotes strategic planning, and provides real-time training to future principals. This model recognizes that strong, mission-aligned leadership is essential for long-term success.

Goals

The Operations team will focus on four key priorities:

Sustainability for the Future:

Schools will build long-term financial stability by growing endowments and the implementation of tuition models that move from a basis on the cost to educate to the total cost to operate, inclusive of depreciation and all activities, and that are supported by strategic use of all funding sources. Operational decisions will be evaluated according to their ability to accompany strong Catholic families and make authentic Catholic education accessible across the Diocese.



Growth of the Emmaus Road Scholarship Fund:
Developing the Emmaus Road Scholarship Fund will remain a priority to allow broad access to Catholic education. In addition, schools will establish planned giving programs to secure future resources and build a culture of stewardship. As plans for a new federal SGO materialize, the Emmaus Road Scholarship Fund will be able to scale up to take advantage of the opportunity for federal tax credits.

Facilities Stewardship and Planning:
Schools will address deferred maintenance needs in a systematic and responsible manner, ensuring that facilities remain safe, functional, and reflective of the dignity of the educational mission. Long-term plans will be developed for future upkeep. Schools will also engage in strategic planning for growth, renovation, and expansion where demographic trends indicate increasing demand.

School Leadership Teams:
Every school will develop strong, collaborative leadership teams capable of advancing both mission and operations. This includes ensuring sufficient administrative resources at all schools and providing formation and training in effective leadership team models. Clear roles, shared responsibility, and professional development will be emphasized to build cohesive and effective leadership structures.

Measuring Growth

An annual diocesan report will communicate key data across Catholic culture, academics, and operations, including SGO participation and financial health. Each school will maintain a comprehensive facilities plan that includes a schedule for the replacement of major systems, identification of critical repair projects, and planning for future investments or expansion.

Additional indicators of success will include growth in endowment funds and planned giving participation, increased utilization of the Emmaus Road Scholarship Fund, and the establishment of a new tuition model. Schools will also demonstrate increased leadership capacity through the presence of well-defined leadership teams, adequate administrative staffing, and continued participation in leadership formation programs.

“As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

— 1 Peter 4:10

Growth Outside the Classroom

Catholic education extends far beyond the classroom. The formation of the whole person requires opportunities for students to develop virtue, discover gifts, pursue excellence, and encounter Christ. Athletics, fine arts, sacred music, clubs, service, and extracurricular activities are not peripheral to our mission; they are important avenues that teach discipline, friendship, perseverance, sacrifice, wonder, and joyful self-gift.

In our schools, athletics at both the elementary and high school levels are understood not merely as competition, but as formation. Students learn to strive for excellence while recognizing that their talents are gifts from God to be developed in humility and offered for His glory. Coaches serve as mentors and witnesses. Success is measured not only in wins and championships, but in the formation of young men and women who compete with integrity and understand that every victory and defeat can become an opportunity for growth in virtue and holiness.

Likewise, the Diocese of Columbus is committed to renewing the tradition of sacred music within Catholic schools. Through formation in sacred music, chant, hymnody, and the musical treasury of the Church, students encounter beauty as a path to God. Sacred music forms the imagination, deepens participation in the liturgy, and connects young people to the rich spiritual inheritance of the Catholic faith. A renewed emphasis on sacred music will help schools to remain places where beauty evangelizes and where worship is marked by reverence and joy.

The arts and extracurricular life also play an essential role in integral formation. Theater programs invite students to encounter great stories, wrestle with the human condition, and develop confidence, creativity, and empathy. Clubs, service opportunities, leadership experiences, and co-curricular activities should reflect and reinforce Catholic values, helping students discover their vocation and understand their responsibility to use their gifts in service of others.

The rhythms of Catholic school life themselves should be ordered according to the life of the Church. School calendars and schedules should honor the liturgical year, recognizing that our deepest identity is found in Christ. Schools will strive to protect time for liturgies, especially on feast days, solemnities, during the Sacred Triduum, and meaningful observance of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, while also creating opportunities for parents and children to pray, worship, serve, and celebrate together. In an age of increasing busyness, Catholic schools should preserve time for family life, parish life, and Sunday worship, recognizing these as foundational to human flourishing and authentic discipleship.

Our schools should be places where every aspect of education becomes another field in which seeds of faith are planted and cultivated. Formation does not end when the final bell rings. Rather, Catholic education seeks to shape young people whose entire lives become an offering to God. Athletic events, concerts, service projects, and school traditions should strengthen the bonds among students, families, and parish communities.

“Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”

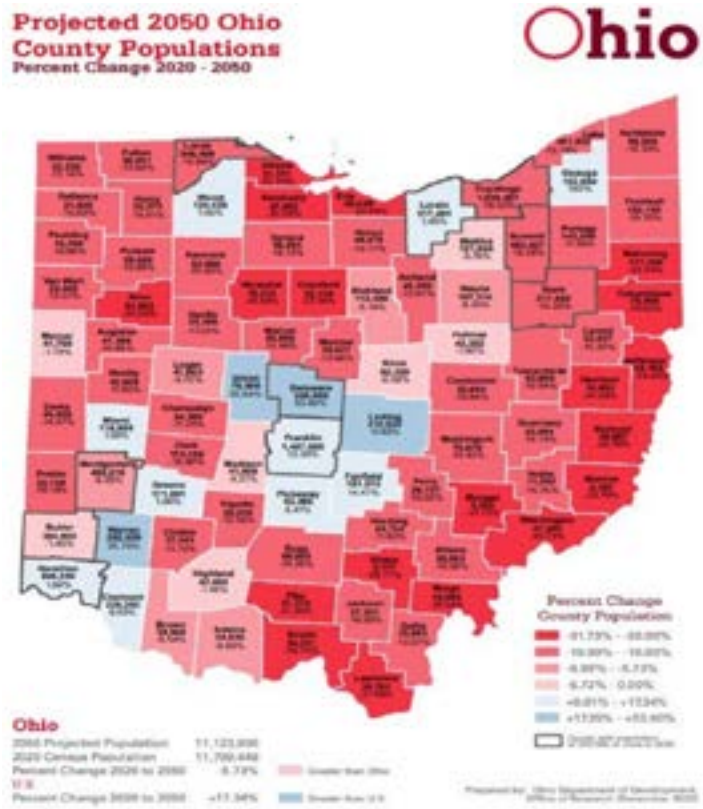
– 1 Corinthians 10:31

Growth in Catholic Schools

The Diocese of Columbus is experiencing a period of remarkable population growth. Central Ohio is forecast to grow continuously over the next 25 years, extending a trend that began more than 20 years ago. In just the past 4 years, the Diocese of Columbus has seen its Catholic population nearly double, now approaching 500,000 people. Catholic schools are operating at approximately 90% of functional capacity, with many maintaining waitlists at numerous grade levels.

In response, the diocese is actively planning for new schools to meet this demand and to provide access to Catholic education to all families. Several promising developments are already underway. A new school will open for the 2026–27 academic year at St. Peter–St. Joan of Arc Parish in Columbus and Powell. Ave Maria Academy will welcome early childhood students as the first new elementary school in nearly 30 years, with plans to grow into a full PK–8 program. On the west side of Columbus, the reopening of the St. Agnes school building as part of St. Mary Magdalene School is expanding much-needed early childhood capacity. In addition, a planning process is underway to explore a new high school at St. John Neumann Parish in Sunbury, potentially the first new diocesan high school in more than 50 years.

Looking ahead, diocesan staff will study, discuss, and pray to discern how best to serve a growing population. Areas of particular focus for new schools include southeastern Delaware and northwestern Licking Counties, where economic and residential growth is accelerating; Union County, as technology-driven expansion moves northwest along the US 33 corridor; and southeastern Franklin and northwestern Fairfield County, where development between Columbus and Lancaster continues to increase population density. Additionally, the diocese is committed to studying the feasibility of opening an all-girls’ high school, which has been missing from our educational landscape for decades. A great deal of time and donor support will be necessary for these projects, but we believe that these are worthy goals.



Growth in Our Students

The strongest evidence of a Catholic school is the kind of adult that it forms. Beyond academic achievement, the true measure of our schools is the witness of our graduates - men and women shaped by an encounter with Jesus Christ and equipped to live as His disciples in the world. Rooted in faith and formed in a vibrant Catholic culture, they are prepared not only for the future, but for a life of holiness, purpose, and service.

A graduate of our diocesan Catholic schools is:

Deeply rooted in faith – a man or woman whose life is grounded in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and active participation in the life of the Church.

Virtuous – striving to live according to the Gospel with integrity, discipline, and a commitment to moral excellence, making decisions rooted in truth and the dignity of the human person.

Filled with wonder – seeing the world with awe and reverence, recognizing the beauty of creation and the presence of God in all things.

Reverent and steadfast – confident in the truth, ordered in thought and life, and resilient in the face of a culture that often challenges or rejects the faith.

Joyful – embracing life as an adventure in Christ, marked by hope, gratitude, and a deep sense of purpose.

Living a self-gift – seeking opportunities to live as a gift of self to others, knowing that this imitation of the Trinity’s own life-giving Love brings lasting happiness and holiness.



Persevering in faith – remaining faithful in times of challenge, trusting in God’s providence, and continuing to grow in holiness over a lifetime.

This portrait reflects our deepest hope: that each graduate leaves our schools not only well-educated, but transformed, ready to live as a witness to Christ in whatever vocation they are called to pursue. These qualities are cultivated most fruitfully when schools, parishes, and families work together in a

shared mission of formation.

Growth in Our Educators

Catholic educators do far more than teach academic content. They introduce young people to reality, accompany them toward holiness, and help them discover the vocation God has prepared for them. Every lesson becomes part of that sacred work. The Catholic educator serves not only as an instructor but as a witness to the faith, forming students within a coherent vision of the human person.

Teaching and learning are guided by our Four Domains of Teaching:

1. Planning and Preparation. Catholic educators design instruction that is intentional, coherent, and aligned with diocesan academic and faith-based expectations.

- Establish clear, measurable instructional outcomes rooted in the Diocesan Course of Study
- Select and utilize high-quality curricular materials that reflect academic rigor and Catholic worldview integration
- Design sequenced, purposeful instruction that builds conceptual understanding and skill development over time
- Develop valid and reliable assessments aligned to learning goals
- Analyze student data to inform instruction, differentiation, remediation, and enrichment

2. Classroom Environment. Catholic educators cultivate classrooms that are ordered, faith-filled, and conducive to learning.

- Establish and sustain a Catholic culture of learning grounded in prayer and respect
- Begin each class with prayer and foster awareness of Christ’s presence in the learning environment
- Build Christ-like relationships with students characterized by dignity, care, and appropriate authority
- Maintain clear expectations and consistently manage student behavior in a manner aligned with Catholic virtue
- Design physical learning spaces that are visually Catholic, beautiful, ordered, and supportive of engagement
- Create safe, welcoming, and structured environments where students can flourish academically and spiritually

3. Instruction. Catholic educators deliver vigorous, responsive, and engaging instruction that promotes mastery and intellectual growth.

- Demonstrate deep knowledge of content and effective pedagogical practice
- Implement well-sequenced lessons aligned with diocesan academic standards
- Engage students actively in learning by utilizing clear instruction and purposeful learning experiences
- Employ effective questioning strategies that develop clear thinking and reflection
- Differentiate instruction using scaffolding, varied materials, and adaptive strategies

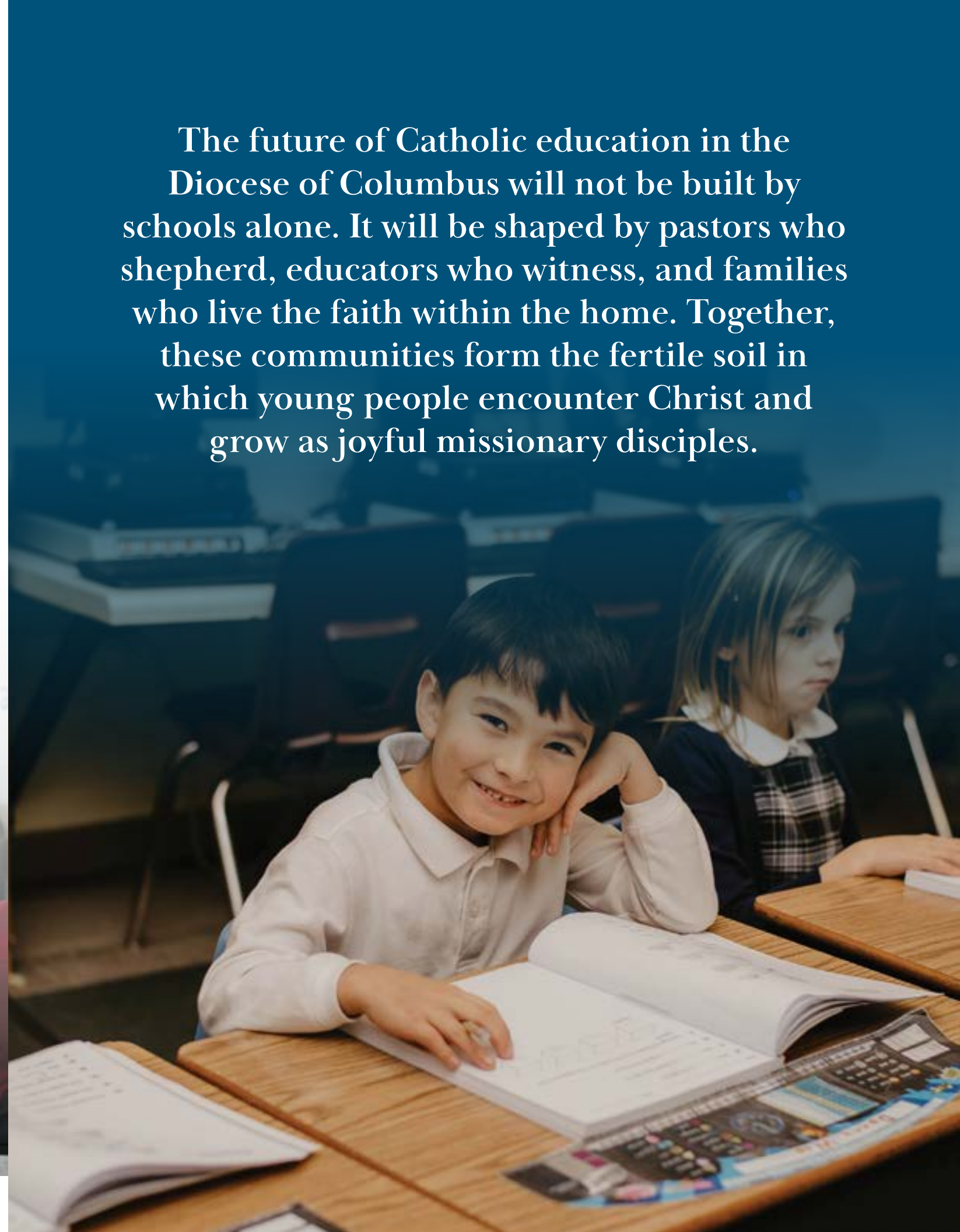
- Use formative and summative assessments to guide instruction and measure student comprehension and growth
- Provide timely, specific, and actionable feedback to support student growth
- Maintain appropriate academic rigor while responding flexibly to student needs

4. Professional Responsibilities. Catholic educators serve as collaborative, accountable, and mission-driven formators within the Catholic school community.

- Witness to the faith through professional integrity and personal example as Catholic educators
- Maintain accurate records
- Cultivate authentic partnerships with families, recognizing parents as the primary educators of their children
- Participate actively in ongoing professional development and continuous improvement
- Collaborate constructively with colleagues to strengthen instructional practice and school culture
- Uphold diocesan policies, Faculty Handbook expectations, and Student/Family Handbook standards
- Supervise students responsibly at all times, ensuring safety and order are maintained

In all four domains, the Catholic educator is fundamentally a steward of formation—integrating academic excellence with spiritual development, and ensuring that every classroom contributes to the broader mission of forming disciples, thinkers, and virtuous leaders.

The future of Catholic education in the Diocese of Columbus will not be built by schools alone. It will be shaped by pastors who shepherd, educators who witness, and families who live the faith within the home. Together, these communities form the fertile soil in which young people encounter Christ and grow as joyful missionary disciples.





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