Deacons on the Way

“All the way to heaven is heaven, because Jesus said, ‘I am the Way.’”

– St. Catherine of Siena

St. John Paul II Catholic Schools Strategic Plan
2023-2028
A Message From President Hagstrom

“See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!” (2 Cor. 6:2b)

Dear Stakeholders,

Now is our time. The Lord Jesus has led us to this time and place, and we have accepted His call to embrace the challenge and delight of offering a vibrant Catholic education to this generation. My deep and sincere thanks for your support and engagement in this noble effort.

This new five-year strategic plan is of great import for the immediate future of St. John Paul II Catholic Schools. We begin our 141st year of Catholic education in Fargo, and our schools are poised to grow even stronger. But for that to happen, we must work together in aligning a strategic plan with our vision and mission. The new plan will provide a clear road map by which the board, administration, teachers, staff, students, and parents are able to navigate the next five to ten years on our way to establishing a more vigorous and valuable Catholic school system to serve God and His children entrusted to us here in the metro area. I ask and will pray for your continued support as we take the next steps together and seek resources to help implement our plan.

Bishop John Folda, Executive Director of our board, always emphasizes that Catholic schools are one of the Church’s most important Apostolates, so it is our responsibility, with the help of God’s Grace, to fulfill that vision of Catholic education to the greatest extent possible in this time and place, for “now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!”

Path to Institutional Vitality

Anyone who has been involved with Catholic education over the decades understands that Catholic schools have had to respond to unforeseen changes due to both internal and external challenges. The educational, social, religious, and economic landscapes have changed in many ways since the Presentation Sisters established our first school in 1882. Since assuming the office of President on July 1, 2016, I consistently emphasized that my “approach would be that of stewardship of the great gift of Catholic Schools. With the help of God’s Grace and all our stakeholders we can be good stewards together, seeing that our schools not only merely survive, but also thrive. For they are designed for human flourishing, forming as we do the whole person, each and every student, made in God’s image and likeness, endowed with a transcendent dignity and destiny.”

With our board of directors, advisory council, and administrative team, I have sought to
provide leadership that creates a more vibrant, responsive, and sustainable school culture as you will see in each of the domains of this Strategic Plan: academics and technology, advancement, Catholic identity, enrollment and marketing, facilities and technology infrastructure, finance, governance, and student life. In light of our mission and vision, the plan has the potential to elevate and transform our schools in order to serve the next generation better.

**Catholic Education that Makes a Difference**

Bishop Folda is fond of saying that our Catholic schools prepare our students to be good citizens both of this world and the next. We are calling, teaching, and forming saints—with a God-given dignity and heavenly destination.

In all dimensions of the human person—body, mind, spirit—we call our students to excellence and have created a robust program of education and formation to that end. All our learning outcomes and formation goals flow from that “total person” conviction and commitment in our mission and vision statements.

In his message for Catholic Schools Week 2023, Bishop Folda noted that “your support and gift can change the future for our young people.” I echo that invitation to change the future for our young people by investing your time, talent, and treasure in our Catholic schools. Your investment will bear fruit in the lives of students in St. John Paul II Catholic Schools for years to come!

A final word of deep and sincere thanks to our Strategic Planning committee members for their expertise and labors in crafting this new plan. May you be blessed for all the blessings you brought to this process!

With humble trust in Our Lord Jesus Christ and with my ardent prayers that He will be glorified in our schools through our new Strategic Plan,

Mike Hagstrom
President

"Graduates, congratulations once again. Everyone in this gym is proud of you and we look forward to seeing wonderful things in your lives unfold as you go forth. In your time at JPII Schools you may have heard this quote from Catherine of Siena. 'If you are what you are meant to be you will set the world on fire. You will set the world ablaze.' And so, I will simply send you forth with that challenge. 'Go out and set the world ablaze. Ablaze with the light of your wisdom, ablaze with the warmth of your love, ablaze with the zeal of your enthusiasm to make a difference in the world and in other people's lives.'"

- Bishop Folda's parting words to the Class of 2023 on May 25 at commencement
Strategic Planning Committee

"Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed." Prov. 15:22

Paul O'Donnell
Co-Chair Steering Committee, JP II
Council, Parent

Brenda Craft
Co-Chair Steering Committee, JP II
Council, Parent

Heidi Eukel '02
Academic Domain Chair, Parent

Mark Olsonowski
Advancement Domain Chair, Parent

Paul Wilburn
Catholic Identity Domain Chair, Parent

Shar Vetter
Enrollment & Marketing Domain Chair, Parent

Dan Dunn
Facilities & Infrastructure Domain Chair, Parent

Joni Keller
Finance Domain Chair, Parent

Dale Kadlec
Governance Domain Chair, Parent

Kent Wanner
Student Life Domain Chair, Parent

Madeline Abbott '24
Student

Randy Abbott
Parent

Fr. Phil Ackerman
Board of Directors

Becca Bakke
Parent

Dan Beauchamp
Parent

Michelle Biver
Staff, Parent

Tracy Boehm
Staff, Parent

Corinne Busek
Board of Directors, Parent

Quinn Carroll '26
Student

Brian Carroll '88
Parent

Jeff Collins
Parent

Jon Dahl '01
Parent

Chris Dalton
Staff Liaison, Parent

Shawn DeKeyser
JP II Council, Parent

Mark Dubord '75
Parent

Connor Dunn '13
Staff

Angie Edinger '98
Karissa Flieth
Staff Liaison, Parent

Fr. William Gerlach
Board of Directors

Masha Gitau
Parent

Ann Guerrero
Parent

Kara Hagemeister
JP II Council, Parent

Lori Hager
Staff Liaison, Parent

Mike Hofer '96
Parent

Reggie Jackson
Staff Liaison

John Klocke
Staff Liaison

Leon Knodel
Staff Liaison, Parent

Travis Koch
Parent

Jason Kotrba
Staff Liaison, Parent

Fr. Ross Laframboise
Board of Directors

Troy Mattern
Staff, Parent

Noah McBroome
JP II Council, Parent

Tiffany McShane '02
Parent

Chris Meier '91
Parent

Fr. Kyle Metzger '00
Staff Liaison

Fr. Luke Meyer
Board of Directors

Ed Mitchell
Parent

Gio Nasello '23
Student

Sarah Nasello '88
Parent

Paul Noah '80
Parent

Susan Noah
Parent

Joe Paul
Board of Directors, Parent

Stacy Roney
Staff Liaison, Parent

Brandon Schott '14
Staff

Joelle Shewey
Staff, Parent

Gene Simon '84
Board of Directors, Parent

Fr. William Slattery
Chaplain SHS/SHMS

Shantelle Smith
Board of Directors, Parent

Jack Traynor '23
Student

Mariah Vink
Staff, Parent

Corie Walker '97
Parent

Charlie Wilson '01
Parent

Keith Wilson
Parent

Kristen Wirth '08
Staff Liaison, Parent

Katie Yablonski
Parent

Most Reverend John T. Folda
Executive Director of the Board

Fr. Andrew Jasinski
Chairman of Board

Mike Hagstrom
President, Parent

Mary Beth Traynor
Vice President, Parent

Sherri Simon
Staff, Parent

Chris Stiles
Partners in Mission

Bob Tift
Partners in Mission
Strategic Planning Process & Timeline

MAY – SEPTEMBER 2022
Pre-Planning Phase,
Assessment of JPII
Catholic Schools,
Information gathering

SEPTEMBER 21, 2022
Strategic Planning
Kick-Off

SEPTEMBER 2022-
JANUARY 2023
Domain group work
on Narrative

FEBRUARY 2023
Steering Committee
report finalized and sent
to Strategic Plan Retreat
participants

AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2023
Publication of new
Strategic Plan,
Implementation begins

JUNE 21, 2023
Board of Directors
review and
approval

APRIL – MAY 2023
Admin Team, Board of
Directors, JPII Council,
teachers, staff, and
parent feedback

MARCH 14 and 18,
2023
Strategic
Plan Retreat,
Drafting of plan

8 Domains
9 Goals
39 Objectives
In July of 2022, we celebrated 140 years of Catholic Education in Fargo, ND. The first Catholic School in Fargo opened on July 26, 1882 under the auspices of the Presentation Sisters from Ireland. The sisters opened a high school, Sacred Heart Academy, on September 8, 1897. Sacred Heart Academy became Shanley High School with the 1950-51 school year. Parish elementary schools, staffed largely by the Presentation Sisters operated at St. Mary’s Cathedral, St. Anthony’s Parish, Holy Spirit Parish, and Nativity Parish with K-8 configurations. In 1987 the “Fargo Catholic Schools Network” was established as a collaborative network of schools. Later, a middle school configuration (grades 6-8) was adopted which eventually became Sacred Heart Middle School. Holy Spirit School and Nativity School continued as elementary schools. Trinity Elementary School opened in the 2015-16 school year in West Fargo.

We became “Bl. John Paul II Catholic Schools” from the previous “Fargo Catholic Schools Network” name shortly after the Pope John

Paul II’s beatification on Divine Mercy Sunday (May 1, 2011). Then Bishop Samuel Aquila wrote “Knowing Bl. John Paul II’s love for youth and Catholic education, we place our Catholic schools, youth, faculty, and administration under his patronage and intercession” (Pastoral Letter, May 3, 2011). We became “St. John Paul II Catholic Schools” shortly after Pope John Paul II’s canonization (April 27, 2014).

Today we are a system of five Catholic Schools: Holy Spirit Elementary School, Nativity Elementary School, Trinity Elementary School, Sacred Heart Middle School, and Shanley High School. Eight sponsoring parishes provide oversight and support for our schools: Blessed Sacrament Parish (West Fargo), Holy Cross Parish (West Fargo), Holy Spirit Parish (Fargo), Nativity Parish (Fargo), Sts. Anne and Joachim Parish (Fargo), St. Anthony’s Parish (Fargo), St. Benedict’s Parish (Wild Rice), and St. Mary’s Cathedral Parish (Fargo).

As we plan for the future of St. John Paul II Catholic Schools, we continue to build on the legacy of the Presentation Sisters and our patron saint, St. John Paul II. He had a vision for Catholic education that is still relevant for today, “The mission of the Catholic school is the integral formation of students, so that they may be true to their condition as Christ’s disciples and as such work effectively for the evangelization of culture and for the common good of society.”
Strategic Goal 1: JPII Catholic Schools will enhance curriculum and academic support to inspire excellence and respond to the needs of all students as we prepare them for the future.

Objectives:

- Establish a system-wide structure for documentation, staffing, and transparency to support diverse learning needs.

- Expand and implement challenging courses, projects, and experiential learning which inspire students at all levels to develop and utilize their God-given talents and abilities.

- Develop a system-wide, well-documented curriculum within and across all content areas and grade levels to facilitate a consistent learning experience.

“Catholic Education aims not only to communicate facts but also transmit a coherent, comprehensive vision of life, in the conviction that the truths contained in that vision liberate students in the most profound meaning of human freedom.”

- St. John Paul II
Academics & Technology

Strategic Goal 2: JPII Catholic Schools will attract, nurture, support, and retain highly skilled and mission-driven teachers and staff.

Objectives:
- Enhance support and learning opportunities for teachers by implementing professional development which aligns with evidence-based, level-specific academic topics.
- Develop marketing focused on teacher and staff recruitment that highlights the advantages of working at JPII Catholic Schools.
- Develop a system-wide feedback structure for teachers and staff.

“We so appreciate how the St. John Paul II Catholic Schools reinforce the faith we teach our kids at home. The virtue-based curriculum and learning about the Saints is wonderful.”

- JPII Parents Chris & Mary DeCock
Strategic Goal: *JPII Catholic Schools will create a unified culture of philanthropy by cultivating and engaging the entire community to inspire transformational funding, promoting the vitality and viability of our schools for generations to come.*

Objectives:

- Identify strategies to enhance our stewardship of donors and increase constituent opportunities for engagement to strengthen JPII Catholic Schools affinity.

- Assess and quantify the capital needs of JPII Catholic Schools to create and implement a compelling campaign plan focusing on debt, school expansion, and teacher salaries with appropriate specific revenue goals and timetable.

- Create and implement a comprehensive planned giving program.

- Build and retain an effective advancement and communications staff (including volunteers) with the necessary resources to support the goals and mission of JPII Catholic Schools.

- Further engage and collaborate with the school and supporting parishes to promote the state and vision of JPII Catholic Schools, and demonstrate the impact of parish financial support, and use of the funds.

“The high academic challenge and family-like atmosphere Shanley offered me as a student paid off in my college educational pursuits. I can’t say enough about the edge it gave me.”

- Heidi Fritz Eukel ‘02
Strategic Goal: JPII Catholic Schools will provide a Catholic environment that fosters a relationship with Jesus Christ, spiritually develops all members through moral, intellectual, and religious formation, and sends forth missionary disciples who practice and share their faith.

Objectives:

- Explore new ways of addressing secularization to provide intellectual and moral formation, encourage spiritual development among students and families, and prepare life-long disciples.

- Identify, articulate, and instill the virtues embodied in the Deacon Way among all members of the JPII Community (staff, students, parents, etc.).

- Explore ways to enhance the human, philosophical, and religious formation of our teachers and staff so that they can model Christian discipleship and pedagogy.

- Strengthen the relationship between the school community and local parishes so that students and families can become more active in their parishes.

- Increase interaction with religious, seminarians, and priests in our schools and community.

“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”

— St. Catherine of Siena
Enrollment & Marketing

Strategic Goal: JPII Catholic Schools will engage the community to attract, seek out, and retain students to achieve optimal enrollment to grow our community of excellence, faith, learning, and service.

Objectives:

- Develop an intentional marketing and recruitment plan to reach out to non-enrolled parish families.
- Educate and communicate with potential families about tuition assistance and scholarship opportunities.
- Increase promotion and marketing of the unique benefits of JPII Catholic Schools experience.
- Engage enrollment opportunities and capacity limitations with area growth in West Fargo and Horace.
- Collaborate to develop and implement strategies to bolster enrollment in Fargo with a focus on north and central Fargo neighborhoods.
- Explore new or emerging markets to expand enrollment both locally and regionally.
Facilities & Technology Infrastructure

Strategic Goal: JPII Catholic Schools will invest in current and future facilities to provide environments that are safe, secure, and beautiful, respond to evolving needs, and amplify our mission and core values of community, excellence, faith, learning, and service.

Objectives:

- Conduct a periodic system-wide security audit in order to establish and implement safe and secure premises for all buildings and grounds operated by JPII Catholic Schools.

- Develop and implement a preventative maintenance plan for all facilities operated by JPII Catholic Schools.

- Develop a master facilities capital improvement plan for all premises operated by JPII Catholic Schools that will identify strategies to enhance the student experience.

- Hire qualified personnel to develop, implement, and manage a comprehensive plan for the facilities operated by JPII Catholic Schools, including a collaborative plan for facilities owned by parishes.

“Let us remember the past with gratitude, live the present with enthusiasm, and look forward to the future with confidence.”

- St. John Paul II
Finance

Strategic Goal: JPII Catholic Schools will review, update, and implement a long-term financial strategy to increase its strength, visibility, and vitality.

Objectives:

- Develop a long-range, comprehensive, mission-driven financial forecast to assess the fiscal impact of key performance indicators such as enrollment, tuition, advancement, financial assistance, compensation, and facilities expansion.

- Evaluate the existing tuition model, then explore and develop enhancements that balance affordability with the actual cost of education.

- Provide and promote a competitive compensation and benefits package to attract and retain mission-driven teachers and staff.

- Identify, research, and secure alternative revenue sources to enhance the overall financial strength of JPII Catholic Schools.

“Our family is thankful for generous scholarship support to help our children receive a Catholic Education! JPII Schools works hard to find a way to help every family find a way to enroll their children. We are so grateful and our children are blessed.”

- A Grateful JPII Family
Governance

Strategic Goal: *JPII Catholic Schools will build a community of excellence through the use of communication structures that ensure the Board of Directors, Council, administration, sponsoring parishes, families, teachers, and staff are fully aligned and working collaboratively to meet and exceed the “Deacons on the Way” strategic plan and beyond.*

Objectives:

- Create and implement a comprehensive mission-based communication strategy that includes regular updates and feedback loops among the Board of Directors, Council, administration, sponsoring parishes, families, teachers, and staff.

- Clarify and educate stakeholders of roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes that are clearly defined for the Board of Directors, Council, and administration.

- Develop and implement a mechanism to ensure the Board of Directors, Council, and administration are aligned in support of the strategic plan.

- Develop and implement a strategy for the Board of Directors, Council, and administration to collaborate with the sponsoring parishes and the entire JPII Community.
Strategic Goal: *JPII Catholic Schools will create a premier student-life experience to develop the total person by offering exceptional and diverse academic and co-curricular opportunities at all levels and send forth graduates who are faithful followers of Christ, virtuous citizens, and servant leaders.*

Objectives:

- Identify and implement strategies to better integrate academic and co-curricular activities to monitor student well-being with increased awareness from staff, coaches, and advisors on the need for balance in student life.
- Conduct a thorough review of all clubs and activities at each school, and develop a plan for adding co-curricular opportunities, including during the school day, as well as program funding.
- Develop and fund additional faith-centered student clubs and activities at all schools to enhance student faith and fellowship while also strengthening current frameworks to ensure the Deacon Way in all activities and clubs.
- Develop and fund age-appropriate service and outreach opportunities for students at each school, including during the school day, and incentives for service learners.
- Increase recognition of student achievement in all academic, service, and co-curricular activities both within JPII Catholic Schools and in the community and provide information to parishes and local media about these achievements.

“Real greatness is found in living for others, in being a servant to others. We call that ‘The Deacon Way.’”

- Bishop John Folda
“Have no fear of moving into the unknown. Simply step out fearlessly knowing that He is with you, therefore no harm can befall you; all is very, very well. Do this in complete faith and confidence.” - St. John Paul II

MISSION

“As followers of Christ, the mission of St. John Paul II Catholic Schools is to teach the total person by inspiring virtue and excellence, as taught by the Catholic Church.”

VISION

“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”
- St. Catherine of Siena

St. John Paul II Catholic Schools sends forth students who will set the world ablaze by:

- their reverence for the truth,
- their commitment to virtue,
- their zeal to serve,
- their devotion to Jesus Christ.

CORE VALUES

St. John Paul II Catholic Schools is a community inspiring excellence through faith, learning, and service.

St. John Paul II Catholic Schools
Strategic Plan 2023-2028