

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
WESTERN CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR**

SANTA MARGARITA CATHOLIC

HIGH SCHOOL

**22062 Antonio Parkway
Rancho Santa Margarita, 92688**

Diocese of Orange

November 6 – 9, 2011

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Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

Briefly summarize the most critical information from the student/community profile that impacts the school. Include the following:

- **Brief description of the students and community served by the school**
- **School's analysis of student achievement data**
- **Other pertinent data**

Discovered in the Santa Margarita Student Community profile are many significant initiatives and programs for guiding, enhancing, and impacting student learning. The first is evident throughout the entire school community of students, parents, faculty, alumni, and administration; Caritas Christi. Although Caritas Christi had been included in the school's crest as a motto, during the period since the previous accreditation the motto became a charism to guide the Catholic identity and mission of the school.

SMCHS has approached the development of its Student/Community Profile for the self-study by dividing the section into the following categories.

School Community: The school resides in Orange County, California. Approximately 52% of the student population at the time of the Self-Study, resides in three communities close to the school. These communities are described as feeder communities. Within these communities the median housing value and median income is higher than the rest of Orange County. Throughout Orange County, the unemployment rate of 9.8% has somewhat mirrored the national average but is significantly lower than the State of California unemployment average. The Catholic elementary schools of Orange County that are considered feeder schools are experiencing declining enrollment with one exception, the Catholic elementary school closest in proximity that has retained a stable enrollment. Although SMCHS has shown a declining enrollment, prior to the 2009-2010 school year, the student population has recently indicated an increase. The school's administration believes this to be an accurate view of the future. Enrollment is currently at 1592 students in grades 9 – 12.

Health and Safety: The school prides itself on providing a safe and healthy environment for the students. There are two half-time registered nurses assisted by parent volunteers that address health issues during the school day. There are two full-time athletic trainers who support the health issues of student-athletes. Included in the life of the school are active programs such as Red Ribbon Week, Safe Homes, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Students Against Drunk Driving, and County Safe Rides that address social issues, bringing awareness to teenagers making decisions that may impact their emotional and physical health. In addition, SMCHS provides campus security throughout the school year.

Student Inclusion: In the 2010-2011 school year, 8.3% of the students had documented learning disabilities and participated in the Auxiliary Studies Program (ASP). The program has grown in the current year to 9.2% of the student population. A full-time director, four full-time learning specialists, two part-time learning specialists, and four full-time teachers staff the program. The program identifies, tests, and provides academic support to students by providing tutoring services, proctors for untimed tests, organizational strategy instruction, and assisting classroom

teachers in providing mainstreaming strategies for the learning challenged student.

Financial Support: For the 2010-2011, the school allocated \$600,000 of its operating budget in financial aid to families who met demonstrated need. The Diocese of Orange contributed over \$100,000 in additional aid and there are also donations restricted exclusively for financial aid. This represents approximately 4% of the school's operating budget. SMCHS has completed three of the four phases of its facilities master plan. The most recent phase has been funded by a \$19 million bond issuance. The following physical improvements have been made since the last accreditation: a three story athletic center and training facility and a two-story, 10 classroom, academic services center. Through financial reserves and fundraising the school also completed a 50-meter Olympic sized pool and aquatics center.

Community and Parent Partnerships: The school collaborates with local organizations, agencies, and businesses to provide an enhancement of the school program through the fields of law, technology, medicine, world affairs, and professional development. Most specifically, SMCHS includes parents and community partners in its Consultative School Board (CSB). The CSB is designed to provide policy formation, evaluation, and consultation to the school's administration. Parents are additionally involved in the school through the Parent Teacher Guild (PTG) and Mother's Club. Both groups serve in a support role to parents, administration, faculty, and staff by promoting a mechanism for collaborative relationships and fundraising.

Faculty and Staff: There are 97 classroom teachers, 6 counselors, and 65 full-time classified support staff. Based on surveys used in this self-study, 43% of the faculty members are male and 57% are female. The surveys indicate that 76.5% of the faculty identifies as Catholic with 93% of the staff self-identifying as Catholic. The school has reduced its teacher turnover rate since the most recent accreditation from 16% to 8.5%. Factors that have impacted the reduction are the Teacher Retention Fund (TRF), an improved salary scale that brings salaries closer to the local public schools, and funding for faculty professional development encouraging the attainment of master's degrees. Approximately 55% of the faculty has a master's degree or higher. Teachers are required to have either a California teaching credential and/or a master's degree, and/or a master catechist certificate. Within each three-year period from the point of hiring, each faculty member must earn 75 hours of professional growth to be eligible for continuation on the pay scale.

Student Profile, Academic Programs, and Performance Data: SMCHS has students from different races, religions, and ethnicities in its population. In the survey used for gathering student demographic data in the self-study, 64% of the students self-identified themselves as Roman Catholic. From the parent survey, students come from families with an average size of four and income of more than \$100,000 per year. Student enrollment reached a low of 1577 in the 2009-2010 school-year but has shown increases in the past two years to a current enrollment of 1592. As cited in the school's profile, "the ethnic composition of the SMCHS student body generally reflects the composition of the communities that feed into the school, with an underrepresentation of non-white ethnicities, particularly as it pertains to the Hispanic community."

The academic program attempts to reach all levels of student academic interests and capabilities and utilizes Optional Academic Track programming to meet those needs. The Optional Academic Track programs are the International Baccalaureate Diploma and Certificate Program, Advanced Placement courses, Interdisciplinary (Triad) Program, and the Auxiliary Studies Program. In addition, the standard college preparatory academic program serves as the baseline for all academic studies at the school. The current school year identifies 62% of the students in one of the four Optional Academic Tracks listed above.

The cumulative grade point average has increased from 3.32 in 2006-2007 to 3.57 in 2010-2011. College board results annually show scores above the state and national levels. Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate pass rates in most subject areas are annually in a range of 80% to 100%. Identified in the data provided for the student profile, 86.6% of the 2011 graduation class matriculated to a 4-year college or university and 12.7% advanced to a community college. The graduates of the class of 2011 received \$21,102,912 in merit and need based scholarships as they entered their colleges or universities.

The activities program of the school identifies that 75% of the current student population participate in either extracurricular and/or co-curricular programs. The school provides multiple opportunities to be involved in these programs, which includes athletics, clubs, Campus Ministry, Model United Nations, orchestra, band, drama, choir, Eagle TV, and journalism. It is evident throughout the school's program that students have the opportunity to participate in activities outside of the academic program that mirror the school's belief in developing the "whole child."

In providing an analysis of the profile data it appears that the school reflects academic programming seeking to reach all learners admitted to the school. Admissions requirements are not based purely on previous academic achievement or potential. Significant to the school's interest in educating the "whole child," SMCHS provides extra and co-curricular programs that attract students because they believe there is something for everyone at the school. As a result, the students reflect in the profile an active population of learners, dedicated to academic excellence. SMCHS has dedicated significant financial resources since the last accreditation period to improving its facilities in order to provide the desired space for spiritual, academic, athletic, and support programs. To fund this facilities improvement effort, the school used reserves, fundraising, and a \$19 million bond issuance. The financial challenges that lie ahead for SMCHS will be directed to paying off the bond. The school has determined that future facilities objectives, such as a performing arts center, will wait until the debt has been retired.

Chapter II: Progress Report

- **Briefly comment on the school's major changes and follow-up process since the last self-study.**
- **Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.**

In the words of the self-study, "significant events that had a major impact on the school can be broken down into areas of organization, school purpose and ESLRs, learning and assessment,

physical plant, and campus spiritual formation.” The first of these events was the hiring of a new principal who started in the fall of 2007 and a new president who started in the fall of 2009. The President, as the chief executive officer has the primary responsibility for implementing the school’s mission and philosophy. The President’s task is to ensure the present and future financial viability of the school. The principal is the chief academic officer of the school with primary responsibilities for daily operations. In addition to these two chief administrators is a support administrative team of vice-presidents and assistant principals. The advancement and business officers were re-organized with the addition of a vice-president of finance, a director of business services, and a director of advancement. Additions in academic support staff occurred in the hiring of a director of learning and assessment, which became the director of assessment and online learning. A faculty support initiative in the form of a master teacher mentor program was introduced and implemented. To provide support for freshman, a counselor was hired to focus on the needs of transition to SMCHS. In doing so, the Freshman Link Crew Program was developed.

Significant time was dedicated to the review and revision of the school’s mission statement, philosophy, and the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results. The work resulted in a reduced set of ESLRs and a more measurable set of indicators. Of serious impact to the revision process was the enhancement of the school’s charism of *Caritas Christi*. The school decided to make this charism more prominent in the mission and philosophy statements resulting in a more visible presence in the life of the entire school community.

A significant improvement to the school’s program is the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLC). The program was introduced in response to the action plan from the previous accreditation in 2006. The PLC initiative is now in its sixth year. The first three years were dedicated to the development of concept knowledge and training in the program’s philosophy and strategies. PLCs were implemented in the 2008 – 2009 school year. Additional learning improvements have occurred by expanding the ASP program, improving the online grade book program, developing an online learning environment, and increasing fine arts curricular and co-curricular offerings.

As noted in the previous chapter, significant facilities improvements have been made since the last accreditation addressing the needs of the academic, spiritual, and athletic programs. A focal point on the campus was the remodeling of the Sacred Heart Chapel. In concert with the effort to strengthening the Catholic Identity of the SMCHS community, several programs and initiatives have become prominent in the life of the school. They include an expanded Peer Ministry program, a revised and enlarged retreat program, increased Christian service opportunities, the addition of a campus ministry assistant, the hiring of a faith formation assistant, more all-school masses, faculty and staff faith formation morning presentations, and liturgical shelving in all classrooms.

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Action Plan from the previous accreditation was assigned to the school’s Leadership Team in conjunction with the school’s Curriculum Council, Department Chairs, and Administrative Board. The Consultative School Board, the Principal, and the Assistant Principals contributed to the third-year progress report. In

general, the President, the Principal, the Administrative Board, the Assistant Principals, the Curriculum Council and various directors share in the ongoing monitoring of the Action Plan.

Action Plan item three from the last accreditation indicated a desire of the school to implement a capital campaign to finish the build-out of the school. The capital campaign was attempted but halted due to a lack of fundraising capacity. To address the desire to make the facilities improvements in academic, athletic, and co-curricular programs the school relied on reserves and the issuance of a \$19 million bond to pay for the improvements.

Chapter III: Self-Study Process

Include a copy of the school's expected schoolwide learning results.

Comment on the school's self-study process with respect to the expected outcomes of the self-study.

- 1. The involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders in the self study.**
- 2. The clarification of the school's philosophy and mission and the expected schoolwide learning results.**
- 3. The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning in relation to the criteria and the expected schoolwide learning results.**
- 4. The development of a schoolwide action plan that integrates subject area/program and support plans to address identified growth needs.**
- 5. The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan.**

The school self-study process used to accomplish the parameters of the self-study is best described by the Leadership Team from the report document. The following is that process:

In the spring of 2006, Santa Margarita Catholic High School (SMCHS) completed its last accreditation report and visitation following the *Focus on Learning* protocol of the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). As in the 2000 visit, SMCHS received the maximum term of six years accreditation with a mid-term written Progress Report.

The self-improvement accreditation process became more focused, using the WCEA/WASC protocol, in the fall of 2009. At this time, invitations were sent to people who might potentially be interested in re-visiting the school mission and philosophy statements, as well as the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs). A representative committee clarified the wording of SMCHS core values through a process that helped to focus on depth of growth since the statements had last been modified. The identity and values were reviewed for clarity of language to reflect shared wisdom of experience. The acknowledgment of *Caritas Christi* as the charism of the school was especially highlighted. This new language was presented to all stakeholders and finalized to reflect their feedback.

Using the same process, the school began updating the School and Community Profile. The update was completed using information gathered from the appropriate campus contacts and

from university or agency data reports. From analyzing the data, the school predicted that the Self-Study would find three primary reasons for our success: 1) stakeholder perception of the quality of an SMCHS education, 2) the school's commitment to a safe and nurturing environment, and 3) the promotion of a spiritually as well as morally balanced individual.

In the late spring and over the summer of 2010, the school created the SMCHS Leadership Team to spearhead the efforts of the accreditation process. At the team meetings, the Leadership Team members determined the timeline for the remainder of the process, reviewed protocol documents, and discussed how to assure representation and participation in the Focus Groups. The Leadership Team met periodically to continue to update the process to address concerns expressed in minutes or meetings, to invite and appoint the parent and student members of the Focus Groups, and to continue evolving concepts that were encountered.

The members of the Leadership Team participated in two WCEA trainings held in Los Angeles and taught by Brother William Carriere, FSC, Executive Director of WCEA. In August 2010 at the faculty/staff meetings prior to the beginning of instruction, the Leadership Team presented an overview of the self-study process and timeline, distributing informational materials on the process as well as establishing the shared network drive as the vehicle for information to be disseminated in common. At the first meeting, faculty and staff indicated their preference of focus group to serve on during the self-study process. The Leadership Team subsequently appointed the faculty to a focus group based on their preference but also factored in a need to balance representation. Parent and student representatives were also assigned to the focus groups based on an invitation to serve. Each Focus Group was chaired by a member of the Leadership Team and co-chaired by a member of the group at-large. Each focus group was then subdivided into sub-category groups to address the needs of the accreditation protocol in examining the school's program.

The schedule for the Focus and Home Group meetings was sent to participants by email. The schedule incorporated some of the late start days on the calendar as meeting times for Focus Groups to gather, collect, examine, analyze and compile their findings and evidence. Additionally, Home Groups used some of the late start days to respond to Focus Group concerns, organize the gathering of evidence, and collect other information as needed for the process.

The Focus Groups and the Leadership Team collaborated in developing a set of questions to be used as a survey to be administered to faculty, students, parents, staff, and alumni. To ease in the accessibility to the stakeholders, the survey was published on Survey Monkey. After an initial meeting of the Focus Group they broke into the sub-category groups for data discussion, data analysis and evaluation based on the results of the surveys. The data was analyzed reflecting on school documents, department documentation, and student work.

By April 2011 there was sufficient feedback from the Focus Groups to prepare a draft report. The entire Focus Group met to review and comment on its own draft prepared from the notes of the sub-category groups. These meetings resulted in further revision, until the unified draft was presented in summary form to all stakeholders, stressing areas of strength and areas of growth in each criterion. The Leadership Team wrote a draft of the Action Plan based on the feedback from

the Focus Groups to be presented to all stakeholders. Over the summer of 2011, the Leadership Team met several times to incorporate the feedback from the stakeholders into the Action Plan. The final Action Plan was presented to all stakeholders at the first August meeting of the 2011-2012 academic year.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

Part A: What Currently Exists (10 pages)

Based on the self-study and visiting committee findings, for each category:

A. Organization for Student Learning

B. Curriculum and Instruction

C. Support for Student Spiritual, Personal, and Academic Growth

D. Resource Management and Development

- **Summarize an analysis of what currently exists and its impact on student learning.**
- **Highlight areas of strength (*if any*).**
- **Highlight the key issues (*if any*).**
- **List important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues.**

CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

What currently exists

A1. To what extent has the school established a clear statement of philosophy that reflects the beliefs and philosophies of the institution, a commitment to Catholic identity, thoroughness of instruction, focus on the needs of the whole person, and recognizes the dignity of all members of the school community?

To what extent does the philosophy and mission reflect parents as primary educators and teachers as facilitators of learning?

To what extent is the mission defined further by adopted Expected Schoolwide Learning Results that form the basis of the educational program for every student?

The SMCHS philosophy statement refers to *Caritas Christi*, which connects to a church document *To Teach as Jesus Did*. The school's philosophy carries an expectation consistent with the Magisterium of the Catholic Church that fundamental to SMCHS is teaching that must focus on "mutual respect for all" and a "positive sense of self-worth." Additionally, the school expects a high level of "effective college preparatory" learning experiences.

Through focused instruction on the "guiding principles of Gospel values and service to the community," as well as "responsible decision-making and moral development," Santa Margarita Catholic High School is committed to providing a learning environment that respects and supports the development of the "whole person."

A number of surveys of staff, students, and parents indicate that the members of the broader school community support the school's expectations, which are also captured in the school's

Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs).

It is clear that the school embraces the importance of parent involvement, particularly as the parental role supports the school's interest in meeting the comprehensive needs of all students at SMCHS. It is an important school operational expectation that teachers and members of the school's administrative team respond quickly and appropriately to requests from parents to both be better aware of and then to support each student's learning. Communications with parents are thorough and electronic access to student academic progress is available online.

The school's report included a chart that provided a crosswalk comparison of the school's Mission Statement, Philosophy Statement, and ESLRs. The school's fundamental purpose, mission, and ESLRs are well understood by teachers, students, and parents, and are published in handbooks and course policy statements, and are found on the school's website.

A2. To what extent does the governing authority committed to sharing the Catholic vision adopt policies which are consistent with the school's philosophy and mission and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school?

To what extent does the governing authority delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?

To what extent does the governing authority monitor results?

The school is owned and operated by the Diocese of Orange. As such, the President and Principal of the school work jointly with the Administrative Board and Assistant Principals, the Consultative School Board, and the Parent Teacher Guild to carry out the specific expectations of the school's mission, purpose, and ESLRs.

The Bishop of Orange, the Vicar of Faith Formation, and the Superintendent of the Diocese of Orange regularly review and monitor the school's progress in meeting their collective goals and expectations. The school reports that both the Principal and the President regularly attend meetings hosted by the Superintendent, which are purposed to review policy implementation and general school progress and effectiveness. The SMCHS Administrative Board is expected to similarly support and monitor the expectations of Catholic Church leadership in the Diocese of Orange.

Specific job descriptions and expectations for all SMCHS employees are aligned to the Catholic identity, and also help support achievement of the school's purpose. The school's report indicates that the "President consults with members of the school community relating to development and advancement, budget and finance, including capital campaign, project construction, Campus Ministry, and Catholic Identity."

A3. To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic values and the spiritual formation of the school community?

To what extent does the school leadership make decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?

To what extent does the school leadership empower the staff?

To what extent does the school leadership ensure shared accountability for student learning?

The school leadership encourages the cultivation of Catholic values and spiritual formation of the school community by the environment it provides. The example seen in members of the school's leadership team sets a positive tone and emphasizes the importance of living Catholic values. All school activities, including athletic events and individual classes, begin with prayer. The school reports that, "this same approach exists in focusing the energies of the school on student achievement of the ESLRs."

Members of the school's leadership team meet regularly with Campus Ministry staff to plan programs and activities that support spiritual growth. The Campus Ministry is well staffed and sufficient resources are provided to ensure that Catholic values are actively cultivated at SMCHS. The school's leadership provides a great deal more than lip service in support of the school's religious objectives. The Principal and other members of the staff emphasize the charism of *Caritas Christi* at virtually all school events, Masses, and other school activities.

The school's leadership also supports the participation of teachers in school religious and extra-curricular activities and programs, including giving release time for instructors to chaperone, give talks, or facilitate small groups on school retreats.

There exists positive alignment at SMCHS between instruction and activities and the school's ESLRs. The school's self-study determined that the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and moral expectations are being addressed in highly supportive ways.

Instructional responsibilities and procedural expectations are fully defined in job descriptions and are consistently supportive of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops' Framework. The school's curriculum fully supports state standards as well as national content standards "prescribed by the College Board and the International Baccalaureate Organization." Teachers are empowered to be an active source of support for achievement of the school's broader expectations. In addition to providing multiple opportunities for teachers to provide leadership outside of the classrooms, the school has been diligent in providing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to thoughtfully discuss and plan best practices in teaching and learning. The school also provides continuing education funding support for teachers interested in post-graduate work.

Finally, the SMCHS Administrative Board actively participates in classroom visits in order to monitor the fulfillment of curricular expectations. The school has also developed a well-defined process for the evaluation of individual teacher classroom performance. The self-study report highlights coordination between administration, faculty, the Dean's office, the counseling center, the Auxiliary Studies Program, coaches, directors, parents, and students regarding individual student progress in meeting both personal and academic needs that relate to the ESLRs.

A4. To what extent are the school administration and staff qualified for their assigned responsibilities?

To what extent are the school administration and staff committed to the school's philosophy and mission?

To what extent does the school administration and staff engage in ongoing spiritual and professional development that promotes student learning?

To what extent do the administration and staff lead by example and work to create a community of faith?

SMCHS has developed a thorough application and interview process for all prospective employees and job descriptions are available for each administrative or staff/faculty position. An impressive feature of the SMCHS vetting process involves the requirement of "demo lessons," which are reviewed by a number of administrators and staff as appropriate hires are made. And, as was mentioned previously, the school provides targeted professional development opportunities for staff, as well as tuition support for continued education. BTSA support is available for new teaching staff.

All teachers have at least a bachelor's degree and more than half of the faculty (54 of 97 teachers) currently possess a Master's Degree -- three have achieved Doctoral status.

The school has made concerted efforts to encourage an environment that fosters respect for differences, builds trust, inspires caring, develops professionalism, and provides support for meeting the high expectations the school has developed for its students.

School administrative leadership and teachers consistently demonstrate their support for the school's mission and purpose through their active collaboration in its development and through the examples they set in creating a caring and nurturing environment for students of SMCHS. As the school report indicates, "SMCHS presents a coherent example of an administration and faculty/staff who lead by word and action to exemplify *Caritas Christi*." Following are some specific ways in which school administration and teachers lead by example: prayer before each school activity and class; display of inspirational posters; service of school staff at school Mass celebrations; advising campus clubs; and seeking frequent opportunities to honor students for their Christian service.

A5. To what extent does the school have a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's philosophy and mission?

To what extent does the school environment foster community and the achievement of religious and educational goals?

To what extent is the school environment characterized by a respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism, support, and high expectations for each student?

SMCHS provides a safe, healthy, nurturing environment. Planning for potential emergencies is thorough and the school maintains sufficient staff to support campus security and health services. Evidence of the school's commitment to safety is found in the operation of a Crisis Management Team and an Executive Safety Committee. And, surveys of parents, staff, and students support

Visiting Committee observations that the school is, indeed, a safe and healthy learning environment.

SMCHS supports a strong policy regarding drugs and alcohol through a variety of programs and activities, including a mandatory random drug-testing program, in which 10 boys and 10 girls are randomly selected each week for testing. The school also shows the program “Every 15 Minutes” every other year to reinforce the potential tragedies that are often associated with teenage drinking.

SMCHS has coordinated a number of programs and activities that support education of the whole child. Guidance from the Campus Ministry office, focused instruction from the Religion Department, and direction from caring counselors ensure that students are supported in achievement of both religious and educational goals.

Students starting their first year and others new to SMCHS are supported as they transition to an understanding of the expectations of the school. Through Link Crew, upper classmen offer an opportunity for freshmen in groups of 8-10 students to fully appreciate the school’s mission and philosophy. Link Crew also provides guidelines and strategies for being successful at SMCHS.

As reported in other sections of this report, the school has engaged the services of several programs that are focused on helping students respect and embrace social and cultural differences. The activities of an “Anti-Bullying Week,” the play *The Laramie Project*, and the services of “Encompass” are but three of the school’s efforts to understand differences.

Regarding the fostering of self-esteem, SMCHS frequently seeks opportunities to recognize student achievement in areas of both academic performance and student behavior. The school’s website and a variety of banquets and special recognition events are intended to support and recognize behavior and achievements consistent with the school’s mission and philosophy. “Dunne a Good Job,” is one of those programs.

A6. To what extent does the school administration and staff regularly assess student progress toward accomplishing the school’s Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?

To what extent does the school administration and staff report student progress to the rest of the school community?

Santa Margarita Catholic High School has established a variety of methods for reporting and monitoring student progress, as well as how well students accomplish elements of the school’s ESLRs. Administration and staff frequently review student achievement relative to schoolwide expectations, including a focus on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that have been created at the school.

The aforementioned PLCs in each department have developed common formative and summative assessments. Other standardized assessments are also being utilized at SMCHS. Classroom teachers employ a number of methodologies to track student learning, including achievement of ESLR goals. Students who fall significantly below academic expectations are

provided additional support, and are occasionally placed on academic probation, during which time regular meetings with counselors are provided.

Student progress related to Christian Service Learning is available for all members of the school community to review, including parents. Achievement of goals associated with CSL is tracked by the Christian Service Coordinator, in conjunction with members of the Religion Department.

Students with special learning needs are identified and provided enhanced academic support through the school's ASP program. Those teachers and administrators within the ASP program provide frequent diagnostic testing to determine appropriate accommodations for ASP students. The ASP Director regularly conducts meetings with parents in this program to review student progress and determine whether or not placement at SMCHS is fully meeting their needs.

As to reporting positive student progress, the names of students who achieve "honor roll" status are reported in the school's e-newsletter and are included on the school's website. Additionally, lists of senior awards, college acceptances, a list of graduating seniors, and other achievements are regularly included in school and student publications. As indicated previously, students can track academic progress through Aeries/ABI.

A7. To what extent does the school leadership facilitate school improvement which is driven by plans of action that embody faith formation and enhance quality learning for all students?

To what extent does the school leadership have school community support and involvement?

To what extent does the school leadership effectively guide the work of the school?

To what extent does the school leadership provide for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan?

The SMCHS leadership supports school improvement efforts during weekly meetings of the Administrative Board, as well as frequent meetings with other committees, including the Curriculum Council and Educational Technology Committee. Under the direction of school leadership, teachers, parents, and other community members are similarly asked to participate in efforts designed to improve the quality of the learning experiences for all students at SMCHS. As reported in the school's self-study, "the Administrative Board evaluates the work of each area of the school on an ongoing basis, and develops plans for the improvement of the school in areas of school mission and philosophy, achievement of the ESLRs, and Catholic Identity as well as faith formation."

There are a number of programs and special activities at SMCHS that are utilized to achieve higher levels of quality in academic and spiritual learning at the school. Some of those include the Campus Ministry, a wide variety of retreat and Christian service opportunities, and regularly scheduled schoolwide liturgies and prayer services. The Catholic Identity is undeniable as the symbols, signs, and actions of Catholic Identity are seen throughout the campus.

The Principal and the Leadership Team members make every effort to carry out the schoolwide Action Plan. Assessments of the plan occur during regular meetings of the Administrative Board

and the Curriculum Council, and access for staff and administration to the specific elements of the SMCHS action plan is provided on the school's website.

The broader SMCHS community is active in support of the school, including the WASC process and other efforts designed to sustain and improve the quality of all programs at the school. The school's report listed a number of internal and external support programs that support school improvement, including the following:

- Administrative Board
- PTG, CSB, and the Facilities Board
- Mothers Club and Moms-in-Touch
- Library/Health Office/Retreat parent volunteers
- Booster Groups
- CHOC
- American Red Cross
- Next Step
- Parent volunteers for school fund-raising events

The school's survey of parents indicates that the school seems open to suggestions from parents and the broader community related to school improvement options. The Principal shared a recent progress report from the Director of Learning with the entire SMCHS community.

Areas of Strength for Organization for Student Learning Category

- SMCHS leadership is committed and effective in implementing Catholic vision and values in policies, procedures, symbols that support Catholic Identity, and in the examples they set.
- The school's campus is a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment.
- SMCHS leadership promotes an active sense of community among school stakeholders, including opportunities for partnering with the school, and supports community connections through frequent communications.
- SMCHS provides professional staff with strong support for continued learning through PLCs and continuing education tuition support.
- Mechanisms are in place to effectively monitor and evaluate learning and student support systems.

Key Issues for Organization for Student Learning that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

- School leadership needs to explore with the broader community avenues for providing enhanced resources to help retire the school's municipal bond debt, and to assist more students with tuition support, who are in need of financial assistance.

- The school leadership should address perceptions of faculty and staff regarding openness of school leadership to suggestions that can lead to school improvement.
- The school's leadership needs to ensure that the WASC Action Plan effectively serves the school's strategic plans for the future.

CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

What currently exists

- B1.** To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's philosophy and mission, strengthens Catholic Identity, and results in student achievement of the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results through successful completion of any course of study offered?

Santa Margarita Catholic High School provides students with a college-preparatory curriculum firmly rooted in the school's mission, philosophy, and Expected Schoolwide Learning Results. The focus is clearly holistic, and the curricular program is committed to supporting students' spiritual, moral, academic, emotional, social, physical, and cultural development, as they follow the charism of *Caritas Christi*.

The curriculum follows national, state, and diocesan frameworks and standards, and it is aligned with both UC and Cal State requirements. Courses reflect the vast and varying needs of the student body including comprehensive college-preparatory classes along with numerous Honors, Advanced Placement, and IB courses offered for higher-level students. Students are also provided with the opportunity to select from many options of elective courses in each department. In addition, the growing Auxiliary Studies Program creates support for students with diagnosed learning differences.

The school offers a curricular program that seeks to develop respectful, motivated young men and women of integrity and depth, who are people of character and who show respect for themselves and others. Critical thinking and reasoning skills, as well as real-world connections, are emphasized in all courses.

- B2.** To what extent does the professional staff use research-based knowledge about teaching and learning?

To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school's philosophy and mission and Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?

The professional staff at Santa Margarita Catholic High School takes part in professional growth opportunities on a regular basis. All teachers are required to complete 75 hours every three years and have been significantly involved in the training and implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The knowledge gained through these professional growth experiences allows for the development of research-based instructional strategies that meet students' learning needs.

PLCs have helped redefine the focus of teaching to be more student-centered. Increased

collaboration within and across departments has led to growing consistency among teachers with common objectives, assessments, and projects, as well as improved student learning at various levels. Also, as a result of these meetings, an Intervention Program has been incorporated to assist students who struggle academically. Furthermore, PLCs provide a platform for regular re-evaluation and evolution of effective teaching strategies.

Teachers make an effort to design and implement a variety of learning experiences to challenge their students to a higher level of learning. Teachers use a range of instructional strategies, which address different learning modalities and develop critical thinking skills. Teachers strive to create respectful classroom environments in which students feel safe to engage in open dialogue, listen to and express diverse opinions, explore pertinent social issues, and make universal connections.

B3. To what extent is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?

Assessment is regularly and consistently incorporated into the teaching and learning process. Students' progress toward the ESLRs is assessed through a variety of methods, including written responses, objective tests, group work, research projects, portfolios, dramatic and musical performances, math diagnostic tests, oral presentations, artwork, laboratory work, science demonstrations, and peer- and self-assessments. Both curriculum and instructional methodologies are evaluated and revised based on student assessment results and needs.

Through PLCs, the faculty meets to evaluate the accuracy and validity of assessments and rubrics. Each department and each level collaborate to refine assessments and devise intervention plans for students who are struggling based on their assessment results.

Ultimately, based on results of assessments, resources are allocated by updating textbooks and media resources, as well as redesigning curriculum and instruction for improvement.

Areas of Strength for Curriculum and Instruction Category

- SMCHS offers a comprehensive college preparatory curriculum with a wide variety of choices and electives for learning.
- The curriculum addresses a wide variety of learners (AP/IB, Interdisciplinary Program, ASP, "Academic") consistent with student needs as evidenced by student placement analysis.

- There is consistent use of common department and subject level rubrics across the curriculum.
- Moral and ethical education, along with spirituality and Catholic Identity, are integrated across the curriculum.
- The school has implemented revised ESLRs as the foundation of all curriculum and instruction.
- The school has implemented PLCs to foster collaboration among departments and levels as well as to create consistent curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- The school has expanded its ASP to further assist students with a wide range of learning differences.

Key Issues for Curriculum and Instruction that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

- Improve access and incorporation of technology across all departments for both students and teachers.
- Develop and implement online classes that meet standards, as well as the scheduling and learning needs of students.
- Design more effective intervention programs across all departments based on student assessment and teacher collaboration.
- Evolve PLCs to meet student needs and to foster collaboration.

C. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

What currently exists

- C1.** To what extent do students grow as persons of faith through appropriate and meaningful experiences of prayer, liturgy, and community-based services learning?

Students at Santa Margarita Catholic High School are provided with numerous opportunities to grow as persons of faith. The charism of *Caritas Christi* is present throughout all aspects of student development and involvement. All classes begin with student- or teacher-led prayer. Students also attend a variety of Masses, including class Masses, monthly schoolwide Masses in the gym, Lenten Masses, Baccalaureate Mass, and sport team Masses.

Santa Margarita has a vibrant retreat program for each grade level. Retreats are attended by a majority of students. All students are encouraged to participate in these retreats, which are planned and organized by a leadership team composed of staff members of the Campus Ministry program and by the Peer Ministry class. Teachers and parents are increasingly involved in retreats throughout the year.

The mandatory Christian Service program challenges students to serve the larger community. Beyond the 20 hours required annually of each student, Santa Margarita

Catholic High School students also participate in a number of community outreach projects, ranging from Special Olympics, to Catholic Worker in Santa Ana and service trips to New Orleans.

Catholic and non-Catholic students alike are encouraged to live out Catholic values by living a sacramental life. These values are integrated in all aspects of curricular and extra-curricular life.

- C2.** To what extent are students connected to a system of support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the school's community of faith that meets the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?

Students are offered support services, activities, and opportunities to help them meet the challenges of the curricular and co-curricular programs at Santa Margarita. Six academic counselors are available to track students' academic progress and assist them with college applications. Workshops and college nights are frequently provided to further help students and their parents in the process.

In particular, freshmen are provided with tremendous support as they transition to high school with the assignment of a Freshmen Counselor and a well-developed student Link Crew, both dedicated to fostering friendships, directing academics, and encouraging school spirit among the class.

As a primary system of student support, an upgraded library facility provides a rich research center and multiple computer workstations for individual students and teacher-led classes.

An activities department and thriving co-curricular program, overseen by a full-time director, include vast opportunities for students to be involved in various programs, clubs, and events. There is a strong desire on the students' part to be involved in the numerous clubs and activities the school has to offer. There is significant teacher involvement in the various clubs and sport programs as moderators and as coaches. In addition, Campus Ministry is a driving force contributing to a thriving campus life.

Student discipline procedures and personal counseling support both clearly reflect the mission and philosophy of the school as students are provided with continuous opportunities for improvement through intervention programs and counseling. Deans, counselors, Campus Ministry staff, and parents are integrated throughout the disciplinary process, providing a truly holistic approach in student development. Communication among the various groups is extremely fluid and cooperative.

The ASP program works cooperatively with teachers, department chairs, counselors, parents, and students to develop specified programs for intervention and support for students with learning differences. Weekly meetings between the ASP teaching staff and students ensure constant communication and development throughout the process.

Student withdrawals are minimal, and exit interviews are conducted by counselors for those students who left for non-academic or non-discipline issues. Measures are often taken to resolve issues that cause student withdrawals and increase student retention.

- C3.** To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?

A number of strategies have been implemented to encourage parent and community involvement in the school. The Parent Teacher Guild, the Consultative School Board, Safe Environment, and the Mothers Club are all examples of the types of programs used to create partnership among families, students, and the community.

Santa Margarita Catholic High School's philosophy acknowledges parents as primary educators of their children, and the school works to partner with parents in the educational process. Regular communication takes place through ABI/Aeries portal, teacher websites, Back to School Nights, the school handbook, course syllabi, parent-teacher conferences, as well as periodic Town Hall meetings. Furthermore, the process of intervention, counseling, and discipline is well communicated to the parents and students.

Through 8th grade visitation day and visits with various elementary and middle schools throughout the community, Santa Margarita builds ties with the surrounding neighborhoods and families. Partnerships with Children's Hospital of OC and various summer and youth camps further their bond with the surrounding community. The school's Christian Service program also challenges students to serve the wider community.

Areas of Strength for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category

- The charism, *Caritas Christi*, is well embraced and embodies the Santa Margarita Catholic High School community.
- Students are provided with many opportunities to grow as persons of faith. Daily prayer and regular celebration of the sacraments are part of school life.
- The school has a vibrant and well-supported retreat program.
- The school has a well-structured Christian Service program in place.
- Students participate in a number of community outreach projects.
- Parental involvement in the school is valued and encouraged.
- Low attrition rates reflect the commitment to the mission and philosophy of the school.
- Fluidity of communication among faculty and staff ensures collaboration.
- Discipline reflects the charism and mission of the school.

Key Issues for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

- Encourage greater participation of students in retreat programs and Campus Ministry, including the consideration for alternate means of scheduling.
- Consider policies and practices that encourage higher levels of faculty participation in student retreats.

D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

What currently exists

D1. To what extent does the school demonstrate responsible stewardship?

To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program and effectively used to carry out the school's philosophy and mission and student achievement of the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?

The President, Principal, administrators, and staff members effectively plan and allocate resources so as to provide the personnel, facilities, material, and financial aid to help the school achieve its mission. There is a strong relationship between the decisions about resource allocations -- as made by school leadership -- and the school's purpose, mission, and vision. Allocation decisions are made in close partnership with diocesan leaders and align effectively with the school's ability to assess student learning. Both the ESLRs and curricular objectives are upheld and strengthened by this decision-making process. The school needs to engage stakeholders to make them more aware of their role in allocation decisions, and to offer realistic scenarios by which particular voices can be heard.

The Vice President of Finance handles day-to-day financial operations and works closely with the Director of Advancement, in consultation with the President, with regards to strategic planning of finances. The administrators from the operations side are consulted to help determine priorities for expenditures. Efforts are made to ensure that revenues, primarily from tuition, meet the school's financial obligations, including the construction bond. Good financial practices are the norm in all areas and are effectively supervised by the administration. The finance department works under diocesan guidelines to produce an annual budget and undergoes an annual audit. School leadership ensures that the department conducts quality business and accounting practices that align with school and diocesan educational objectives. The school has safeguards in place to protect against the mishandling or misappropriation of institutional funds. Financial checks and balances are utilized throughout all departments and activities of the school.

The school is providing the resources necessary to sustain effective and engaging curricular and co-curricular programs. Student Services are many and support the needs of SMCHS students. The staff necessary for maintaining this status of a safe, supportive and efficient campus, including security, IT, librarians, and other staff, are sufficient to carrying out the school's mission. School leadership has adequately addressed academic priorities in regards to resource management.

There is a strong and obvious connection between community needs and what has been planned and provided. The existing facilities and those being planned for have been designed to align

with the school's philosophy and the ESLRs. The school insures that the facilities are safe, functional, and well maintained.

The school has used its financial resources to allow teachers and coaches to have more than adequate access to textbooks, other printed materials, audio-visual technology, support technology, laboratory materials, and library/media resources. The school has also provided for the training necessary to make the teachers and staff proficient in utilizing their instructional or support materials. The course offerings are many, as are the extracurricular offerings. Resources such as a library, computers and appropriate software, modern classrooms, and a bookstore all contribute to improve the overall experience for the individual student.

Resources are available to hire and retain qualified teachers, counselors, coaches, administrators, and support personnel. The school retains healthy numbers of veteran and qualified staff. Finances are sufficient to allow tuition assistance, professional development, and other career-building enhancements.

D2. To what extent do the governing authority and the school execute responsible resource planning for the future?

The governing authority comports itself appropriately for long-term financial planning by establishing different groups to advise the administration in areas of finance and by creating strategic financial plans that meet the norms for general accounting practices. The Consultative School Board, Construction Committee, Administrative Board, and Facilities Board, along with other leaders, help establish, supervise, and execute plans regarding the physical plant, admissions, and use of technology. The President and his team oversee the creation and management of the annual operating plan and work with the various boards on long-term building projects. Appropriate stakeholders have been informed of recent and future construction projects and the management of payment of the bond. The general community appears to have limited knowledge of the management of debt and the timeline for future projects.

The school has a master resource plan that includes current progress on a master plan for building that has completed three of four phases. The school administration -- especially the office of the President -- has a process for regular examination of the master resource plan to ensure the continual availability of resources that support the school's purpose and achievement of the ESLRs. One of the school's primary concerns is finding ways to achieve early resolution of their 30-year bond debt, in order to allow for economic freedom to complete the master plan.

The school excels in statistical gathering and analysis in the area of supporting the aims and goals of the master resource plan. The school is aware of statistical anomalies regarding the composition of its student body and desires to direct financial aid resources towards students who would bring the composition of the student body to become more Catholic, and potentially more ethnically representative.

Appropriate stakeholders are involved in key areas on resource planning, primarily as advisors, but not every stakeholder has a voice on every decision. The school is attempting to strike a balance

between soliciting input and making group decisions. Strides are being made in giving stakeholders a voice and assuring them that their views are respected and considered.

The school leadership members are involved in making sure that their constituents, the diocese, and appropriate governmental agencies are informed about the financial needs of the organization. These groups have all been involved in the decision to take on the \$19.1 million, 30-year bond for construction. They also recognize the need for past, current, and future Santa Margarita stakeholders to share in the obligation and vision inherent in such an undertaking.

D3. To what extent are the school's financial resources adequate to fulfill its mission and programs?

To what extent are the school's financial operations conducted with integrity and in accordance with acceptable accounting practices?

Annual audits, internal oversight, and proper governance have made sure that the school is meeting its ability to execute its mission while maintaining a balanced budget. Although there is the long-term debt of the bond, there is a plan in place to manage it. Reports to the appropriate administrators and boards show good communications regarding financial matters, and that consultation is appropriate regarding creating and reviewing budgets. Financial aid decisions and accounts in arrears are handled to retain students but address situations where financial accountability is not possible. The Teacher Retention Fund and special scholarships assist in meeting the mission.

The appropriate checks and balances are in place to meet GAAP standards. The documentation for managing money and the required authorizations for payment are in place and multiple people are used for oversight of operations. The annual audit and diocesan review also help to see that finances are handled in a professional and ethical manner. In all areas the operations are sound and supportive of the school's mission and ability to support achievement of the ESLRs.

D4. To what extent are the school's admission policies and procedures consistent with its philosophy?

To what extent are the school's marketing, recruitment, and public relations efforts effective in attracting qualified students?

To what extent is enrollment targeted to maintain effective and meaningful curricular and co-curricular programs that meet the philosophy and goal expectations of the school?

The school's admissions policies reflect its own mission and the expectations of the Diocese of Orange, and are in harmony with its charism of *Caritas Christi*. A diverse and well-rounded student body is sought in support of the openness of the admissions policy.

Qualified students, seeking a Catholic education, are actively recruited using all forms of media and marketing to portray a positive and attractive image of SMCHS to the community at large. Personal connection with the Catholic feeder schools is important and prioritized. There has been an increase in visits to Catholic elementary schools and opportunities for visits by school groups or by individuals are offered. Meetings, an open house, and other events serve to attract new students. The Advancement Office assists with marketing support for admissions.

The diversity and quality of many programs at SMCHS are key factors in attracting good candidates for the school. Survey results by current and former students and parents support the high level of satisfaction people have with the school. Enrollment of a sufficient size student body is needed to maintain the programs in place and in turn the programs attract the numbers.

D5. To what extent does the school have an effective development/fundraising program that is consonant with school philosophy?

To what extent is there evidence of development planning?

SMCHS has several fundraisers that are essential to the operations of the school. The variety of fundraising endeavors, such as scrip, Valentasia, magazine drives, and other fundraisers demonstrate the existence of a good foundation of programs to generate financial resources. In particular, the existence of booster support for so many athletic teams and club sports show a vibrant parent, alumni, and community partnership with the school.

The long range planning by the development sectors of the school leadership are clear and demonstrate collaboration amongst all stakeholders. The Consultative School Board discusses quarterly development activities. Fundraising is part of the school life and programs like the Eagle Fund, “Completing the Dream,” and the efforts of the Alumni Office show a long range, targeted approach to raising funds and sustaining programs.

A variety of marketing strategies ensure the health of the advancement and development program. Potential students and their families are reached through a myriad of grass roots and technological campaigns. Alumni are enjoined to remain part of the faith and learning community. The school website and other media efforts seek to include a broad community of actual and potential stakeholders. The school sees the need to continue innovative, cutting-edge practices in this area to ensure the effectiveness of future resource planning.

Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development Category

- The school’s facilities are well maintained, purposeful, and effectively support the provision of a safe and nurturing environment for learning.
- The school’s business, admission, advancement, and public relationships offices and staff are well organized and efficient in ensuring the school retains a sufficient financial condition that supports present and future operational needs.
- The school leadership is committed to the completion of the Master Plan and secured a bond to finance projects.
- The school has adopted a new governance model with the President/Principal model and increased staff for Advancement to support efforts to improve fundraising and outreach to get community support for future capital campaigns.

- The school has increased communication with alumni, parents, and the community to create attention for the school and raise awareness of the charism and accomplishments of SMCHS.
- Business operations follow the appropriate professional standards for managing resources as endorsed by their annual audit.
- A review is in place for collecting and analyzing data to support decision-making regarding finances, fundraising and marketing.

Key Issues for Resource Management and Development Category that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

- Increase and improve efforts in fundraising and capital campaigns to support the completion of the Master Plan and the overall program to support student achievement of the ESLRS.
- Continue to communicate to stakeholders the long range plans to manage and eventually eliminate the 30-year bond.
- Create a Strategic Plan that incorporates the Action Plans to address long-term financial vision and direction for the SMCHS community.
- Explore ways to strengthen the relationship between the Advancement Office and the Admissions Office to promote the school to prospective students.
- Continue to communicate with the burgeoning alumni population in order to increase their support for the future advancement efforts for SMCHS.

The Catholic Identity of the School

All members of the administration, faculty and staff were involved in the process to review how the WCEA's Catholic Identity standards apply to SMCHS. After diocesan level meetings, the Principal shared the standards with the faculty and they then reviewed each standard within their respective Focus Groups. The leadership of the school has taken an active role in promoting Catholic Identity while at the same time empowering all stakeholders to take part in building a vibrant faith community.

SMCHS demonstrates through its curricular and co-curricular programs and in all facets of school life, a conscious and effective infusion of the eight standards developed by WCEA to assess the Catholic Identity of a school. Specific indicators giving evidence of the standards are incorporated throughout the chapters of the report. In particular, the school recognized Mission and Philosophy, Prayers and Sacraments, Teacher Formation and Certification, Christian Service, and Signs and Sacraments. Curriculum is identified as a strength, but due to the new framework from the USCCB, they acknowledge that this will be under review as the new curriculum is

adopted at all grade levels. Two areas in which the school community meets the standards, but suggest additional focus, are Parents as the Primary Educators and Evangelization.

The areas of strength for the school's Catholic Identity are many. The school's Mission and Philosophy reflect the integration of the Roman Catholic faith as evident in the charism of *Caritas Christi*. The charism is understood and embraced by the entire school community and used to shape decisions and to guide the community in living out the Mission. Students regularly participate in prayer and the Sacrament of Eucharist is available through school Masses and retreats. The Campus Ministry Fellowship allows students to gather in a more informal setting to pray, share in faith and music. All of the faculty and staff gather for retreats and time for prayer. The certification of the Religion teachers meets the requirements and standards of the Diocese of Orange. Campus Ministry and the Faith Facilitation program, as administered by the Sacred Heart Sisters, provide faith formation for faculty and staff. Christian Service is integrated into the life of the students. Students have mandatory service requirements and take part in international, national, and local service projects under the direction of Campus Ministry. The campus of SMCHS has visible symbols and activities that reflect the Catholic faith life. A remodeled chapel, the St. Margaret's statue and other areas on the campus create an environment and atmosphere on the campus support the spiritual life of the community. These areas of strength are intrinsic to the community's Catholic culture and appear to secure aspects of the school's future.

Areas identified as needing growth, are not deficient in meeting Catholic Identity, but rather are recognized as areas where the leadership and the community wish to put more effort and attention. The religion curriculum of the school follows the teachings of the Magisterium. However, the Religion Department is making adjustments with the new curriculum provided by the USCCB so as to meet the new requirements. The school recognizes parents as the primary educators of the students and this recognition also includes their role with regards to faith formation. Through ongoing teacher communication, school support of parents and specifically through programs like the Faith Facilitation, greater support is in place to help some parents better understand their role as primary faith educators. Recognizing the number of non-Catholics and the awareness of non-practicing Catholics, the SMCHS leadership and faculty and staff see a need for further evangelization. This evangelization takes form in the strengthening of a community of faith in promoting a Catholic culture, ongoing faith formation for students, the learning that takes place in the Religion classes, and through the moral and spiritual example of the administration, faculty and staff.

Part B: Schoolwide Strengths and Critical Areas for Follow-Up

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

- School leadership has effectively collaborated with staff members to create an even stronger sense of community and to implement the school's focus on its Catholic Identity through policies, procedures, religious instruction, as well as through impressive examples of Christian attitudes and behavior.
- Teachers are enthusiastic about their work and have made significant strides in improving instruction and student learning through PLC work that has served the development of common assessments and use of best instructional methodologies in SMCHS classrooms.

- Students are positive, support each other, and genuinely appreciate the academic and spiritual support and personal attention they receive from caring teachers, resulting in an enhanced sense of community/family at SMCHS.
- SMCHS provides a balanced program of rigorous academics and extra-curricular opportunities for students that effectively serves the school's mission and purpose of "whole child" education. Included in the school's programmatic offerings are superior co- and extra-curricular experiences that support the development of academic, personal, and time management skills, which are enabling students to be well prepared for personal and academic success now and in the future.
- The school's instructional delivery model supports the needs of all enrolled students; those with advanced academic skills are able to access IB, Honors, and AP courses, while those in need of academic support are provided special support through the school's ASP.
- Religious instruction, retreats, Peer Ministry, and Link Crew activities combine with school leadership and teachers to provide students with personal guidance and opportunities that support the development of character, traits for success, and a sense of belonging at SMCHS.
- The school's facilities are well maintained, purposeful, and effectively support the provision of a safe and nurturing environment for learning.
- The school's business, admission, advancement, and public relationships offices and staff are well organized and efficient in ensuring the school retains a sufficient financial condition that supports present and future operational needs.

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

Schoolwide Areas for Growth

- The school's leadership and staff need to collaborate on the development of a Strategic Plan that can help retire present indebtedness and that will concurrently support the school's WCEA/WASC Action Plan to ensure a strong foundation for future enrollment growth, and continual improvement of academic quality.
- The school's leadership team should consider options for adjusting present schedules to better coordinate assessments, provide time for teacher collaboration, and allow additional time to enhance opportunities for student independent learning.
- Members of the school's leadership team should collaborate with teaching staff to build more effective intervention programs and strategies for students that struggle academically.

- The school's leadership team must sustain and enhance curricular and co-curricular programs and initiatives designed to support students with their faith formation and commitments.
- The school's leadership and business support staff should develop clear plans for expanding annual, major, capital, and planned gift fundraising to ensure completion of the school's facility master plan, particularly in relationship to the completion of a Fine and Performing Arts facility.
- The President and Principal need to review collaboratively the current governance structure with the intent to provide greater clarity regarding the process of decision-making and level of communication to stakeholders in support of the mission of the school.
- SMCHS must be focused on transitions for current administrative staff. It is important that the school set up a deliberate process of not only leadership development but awareness of timetables for retirements and the plans for replacement of those administrators. This process of leadership succession, in particular regarding the offices of President and Principal, must be undertaken in collaboration with the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Orange. Central to the process must be understanding and living out the SMCHS charism of *Caritas Christi*, which, combined with the highest academic training and professional excellence, will insure that the work accomplished in the first twenty-five years of the school's existence will continue into the next twenty-five years and beyond.

Appendix A: Expected Schoolwide Learning Results

EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS (ESLRs)

Spiritually – People of Faith

- Demonstrating a faith-based knowledge of Catholic beliefs, traditions, and practices.
- Demonstrating a commitment to an ongoing relationship with God, through prayer, and if appropriate, through the Sacraments and communal liturgical celebrations, as well as other ongoing co-curricular events.
- Demonstrating knowledge and application of the inherent connection between lived faith and works of charity, service, as well as social justice.

Intellectually – Skilled Lifelong Learners

- Demonstrating the ability to express themselves orally and in writing, across various media, by meeting school standards demonstrated by competency that meets or exceeds state standards.
- Demonstrating critical thinking, analysis, and evaluation skills, as well as collaborative problem-solving aimed at inventive, adaptive solutions.
- Demonstrating competency in reading, writing, and mathematics demonstrated by achievement that meets or exceeds school and state standards.
- Demonstrating competency in identifying and finding information and resources necessary to develop personal goals and continuous learning.

Physically – Healthy Individuals

- Demonstrating knowledge and application of the skills to practice a healthy lifestyle.
- Participating in wholesome activities that promote emotional and physical well being.

Socially and Morally – Involved Citizens of the World

- Understanding the basic civic responsibilities of a citizen, demonstrated by an awareness and appreciation of the global community and the environment.
- Understanding the connections between choices and consequences by taking responsibility for their actions.
- Demonstrating the skills and qualities required for positive leadership.