



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027



BLESSED SACRAMENT
★ SCHOOL ★

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STRATEGIC PLAN | 2022-2027

Rev. Gary Studniewski, Pastor
Mr. Christopher Kelly, Principal

Vision Statement

Guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, Blessed Sacrament School will prepare each child spiritually and intellectually to lead lives of courage, curiosity, and Christian service.

Mission Statement

Blessed Sacrament School is a Catholic, parish-based school dedicated to academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment. We are guided by our Core Values:

Living Faith

Celebrating Community

Inspiring Curiosity

Fostering Altruism

Respecting Everyone



School Profile and History

For a century, Blessed Sacrament School (BSS) has provided religious training, character formation, and an outstanding education to multiple generations of families living in Northwest, D.C. and Chevy Chase, Maryland. Throughout the school's history, the parish, faculty, and staff have been committed to the teaching mission of the Catholic Church. Originally located in a house of the parish, the school opened its doors in 1923 to 90 children in grades one through six. By 1928, the growing success of the school warranted the construction of the current school building, and an increasing enrollment required the addition of grades seven and eight after 1930.

In its early years, Sisters of the Holy Cross exclusively staffed the school. Enrollment grew steadily and reached over 1,000 students in the early 1960s. By the late 1960s, demographics of the parish were consistent with trends in the general population, and enrollment eventually settled to around 500 students, similar to our current student body.

In 1998, the school celebrated its 75th anniversary, and more than 1,500 parishioners, alumni, spouses and friends attended the celebration. The amazing response was a testament to the powerful influence BSS has on its graduates and their families. In 2023, BSS will mark its 100th anniversary.

Throughout our history, we have continued to identify ways to improve our resources and facilities. In the 1960s, a gymnasium complex was added. In 2001, under the leadership of Monsignor Thomas

Duffy, the BSS community embarked on a major building and renovation campaign exceeding \$13 million. Significant renovations and expansion of the school's space were part of this project. The convent was gutted and attached to the school building. That space now houses the library, several classrooms, the resource department, and a sky-lit art room. In 2009, we added the "Field of Dreams," our first green play space, by purchasing property adjacent to the school.

School enrollment remains robust, and our commitment to providing quality education continues. In 2012 and 2019, we were recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. BSS continues to be a vibrant parish school. In a time when many Catholic schools are faced with dwindling enrollment and diminishing resources, we remain strong. Our parent community continues to actively support the mission of the school through volunteer and fundraising efforts.

We are fulfilled by the work that we do with the students and are proud of our strong standardized test scores and exceptional high school placement results. We are grateful for our community of parents as well as the talent and dedication of our faculty and staff. This strategic plan is evidence of our commitment to continuous improvement for our students and their families, our faculty and staff, and our supporters.

Strategic Planning Process

For 100 years, BSS has represented the absolute best in Catholic elementary education. In order to continue our tradition of academic excellence and to help our students grow spiritually, morally, emotionally, and physically, it is necessary to challenge ourselves.

This strategic plan represents the work of nine sub-committees under the guidance of our School Advisory Board (SAB), whose members bring diverse professional backgrounds and parental experiences to the process. It will be implemented over a five-year period (September 2022 through June 2027). In the planning process, we carefully considered current and forecasted needs, the Archdiocese of Washington's Catholic Schools Strategic Plan, and the results of our comprehensive annual parent surveys.

Non-negotiables and mandates, as affirmed by the Pastor and Principal, include that the school is bound

by the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington and serves elementary school-aged children.

The strategic plan clearly outlines the goals and action steps for each strategic focus area: Catholic Identity, Academic Excellence, Enrollment, Parent Engagement, Aftercare and Extracurricular Programs, Staffing, Communications, Facilities, and Budget.

Specific initiatives needed to achieve action steps and goals will not be determined by the SAB. BSS's administration, faculty, and staff will develop plans for how the institution will make progress toward these goals. This approach gives the strategic plan the flexibility needed to navigate an ever-changing educational landscape. Additionally, BSS's administration, faculty, and staff can use their professional expertise and daily experiences to influence the selection and implementation of initiatives.



Strategic Plan Monitoring

The SAB will monitor the progress toward the strategic plan's goals by receiving and reviewing formal bi-annual updates on the implementation and effectiveness of initiatives from the Principal and

Assistant Principal. On an annual basis, a Strategic Plan Progress Report will be provided to the community, celebrating milestones and identifying any needed modifications.



Strategic Planning Committees

CATHOLIC IDENTITY Katherine Amaya (Chair), Nelda Harris

STAFFING Katie Lamade (Chair), Chris Kelly, Jenna Harar

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE Meghan Matthews (Chair), Katie Lamade

COMMUNICATIONS Anna Meenan (Chair), Amanda Loveland, Liz Vorrasi

ENROLLMENT Allison Cogswell (Chair), Amanda Loveland, Luwam Berhane

FACILITIES Amanda Loveland (Chair), Allison Cogswell, Dan Bond

PARENT ENGAGEMENT Liz Vorrasi (Chair), Jenna Harar

BUDGET Chris Kelly (Chair), Rev. Foley, Dan Bond

AFTERCARE + EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS Nelda Harris (Chair), Susan Albertson, Luwam Berhane



School Advisory Board Members 2021-2022

REV. WILLIAM FOLEY, Pastor

CHRIS KELLY, Principal

ALLISON COGSWELL, Assistant Principal

AMANDA LOVELAND, Director of Development

ANNA MEENAN, School Nurse, Parent Representative

KATIE LAMADE, School Advisory Board President, Parent Representative

LIZ VORRASI, Home School Association President, Parent Representative

LUWAM BERHANE, Parent Representative

DAN BOND, Parent Representative

JENNA HARAR, Parent Representative

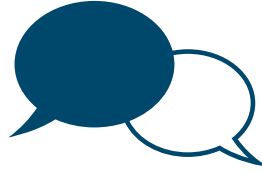
NELDA HARRIS, Parent Representative



Strategic Plan Achievements 2017-2022



New Faculty and Staff
Positions Created



Foreign Language
Instruction Expanded



Social Media Presence Established



Enrollment Targets in All Grades Met



Operation of Aftercare
Program Streamlined



New Extracurricular Activities Added



Permanent Lease of
"Field of Dreams" Secured



Technology Bolstered



1-1 Chromebook Initiative
in Grades 6-8 Implemented



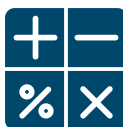
Status as a Nationally Recognized
Blue Ribbon School of Excellence
Earned for Second Time



Over \$125,000 in
Annual Financial Aid Granted



Acceptance of 98% of Graduates into
Catholic High Schools Achieved



New K-8 Math Curriculum
Implemented



Learning Spaces Enhanced
(Outdoor Classroom, Sister Mary Ann
Reading Room, Library and Learning
Center, Kindergarten Wing, 8th Grade
Advisory Classrooms, and Second
Floor Hallway)



Frequency of Parent Communication
Improved, including the BSS Weekly

Catholic Identity

GOAL 1: TO UPHOLD THE SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT TO THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF STUDENTS

- **Action Step:** Develop a scope and sequence for the K-8 religious education curriculums, ensuring alignment with the Archdiocese of Washington standards.
- **Action Step:** Utilize classroom materials that are current and appropriate for each grade level.
- **Action Step:** Evaluate and update teaching materials during professional development opportunities.
- **Action Step:** Expand opportunities for students to collaborate with their peers in the Archdiocese.
- **Action Step:** Help students understand the connection between their Catholic faith and topics of contemporary relevance.

GOAL 2: TO GENERATE EXCITEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

- **Action Step:** Continue to focus on student-led service activities through the Christ Care Corps.
- **Action Step:** Streamline service projects and initiatives to provide more effective organization and communication.
- **Action Step:** Communicate important dates and information about service opportunities promptly.
- **Action Step:** Incorporate a student reflection component into service opportunities as appropriate.

- **Action Step:** Provide students with the context needed to fully understand how their contributions affect the greater community.
- **Action Step:** Increase the number of hands-on service activities.

GOAL 3: TO STRENGTHEN THE PARISH-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

- **Action Step:** Encourage weekly Mass attendance.
- **Action Step:** Share best practices and resources with Blessed Sacrament's School of Religion.
- **Action Step:** Strengthen communication between the parish and school faith formation faculty and staff.
- **Action Step:** Raise awareness about parish events and activities by modernizing communication methods.
- **Action Step:** Increase the visibility of the pastor at the school.



Academic Excellence

GOAL 1: TO PROMOTE ACADEMIC GROWTH AND A PASSION FOR LEARNING IN ALL STUDENTS

- **Action Step:** Ensure the curriculum is age-appropriate and rigorous, allowing students to meet and exceed the Archdiocese of Washington standards.
- **Action Step:** Align skills, content, and outcomes across the curriculum, including writing, study skills, and technology.
- **Action Step:** Review student data to implement adjustments to the curriculum or program delivery.
- **Action Step:** Track and review measures of student achievement and growth to maximize each student's academic success.
- **Action Step:** Engage students by helping them make connections between disciplines and explore their interests and passions.
- **Action Step:** Develop academic and orientation programming to prepare all new and returning students for the next grade level.

GOAL 2: TO SUPPORT A DIVERSE SET OF LEARNERS THROUGH ACADEMIC OFFERINGS AND SERVICES

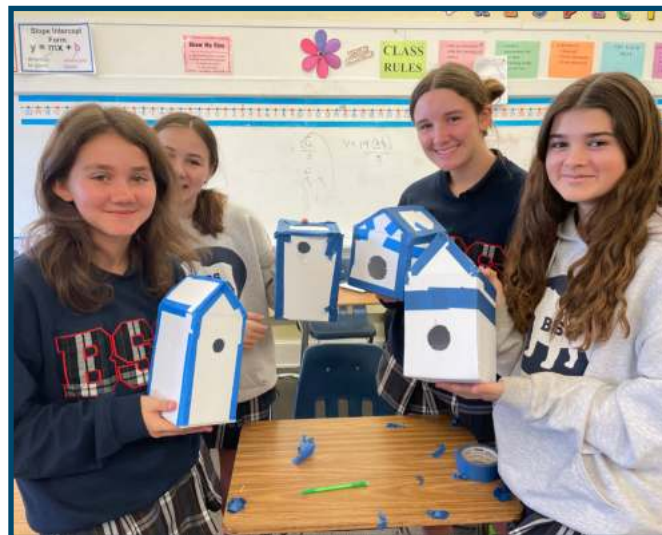
- **Action Step:** Expand opportunities in areas such as Spanish, performing and visual arts, and STEM.
- **Action Step:** Instruct students on how to be proficient and responsible users of technology, including digital citizenship.
- **Action Step:** Utilize technology to enrich and enhance both the teaching and learning experience.
- **Action Step:** Support the different learning styles within the school, creating an environment in which all students can thrive.
- **Action Step:** Design experiential learning offerings by leveraging the school's proximity to Washington, D.C.
- **Action Step:** Evaluate and refine the daily schedule as needed to support the academic program, accommodate opportunities beyond the core content areas, promote collaboration, and build community.



Academic Excellence (continued)

GOAL 3: TO PRIORITIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT FOSTER INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS AND IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

- **Action Step:** Craft a professional development plan that provides faculty and staff with the knowledge, skills, coaching, and support needed to address the educational needs of each student.
- **Action Step:** Identify professional development opportunities that connect teacher growth to students' needs.
- **Action Step:** Provide faculty and staff with opportunities to collaborate across disciplines and grade levels.
- **Action Step:** Evaluate teaching materials and resources to ensure they are current and related to the Archdiocese of Washington standards.



GOAL 4: TO REMAIN A LEADER IN CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

- **Action Step:** Earn a third National Blue Ribbon status by 2027.
- **Action Step:** Uphold a high school placement process maintaining or exceeding an acceptance rate of 98% of eighth-graders who apply to Catholic high schools.
- **Action Step:** Invest in the best instructional resources for teaching and learning in all disciplines.



Enrollment

GOAL 1: TO MAINTAIN OPTIMAL ENROLLMENT

- **Action Step:** Attract and retain a competitive student population of at least 500 students.
- **Action Step:** Refine a marketing plan, including the use of print and digital materials for Open Houses and on the BSS website.
- **Action Step:** Define and increase the strategic use of social media and online platforms to enhance BSS's reputation within the community.
- **Action Step:** Set targets for Open House attendance, the conversion rate of Open House attendance to applications, and overall enrollment of accepted students.
- **Action Step:** Identify prospective student populations and formalize an outreach and advertising strategy.
- **Action Step:** Develop an engagement plan for current families to retain students at every grade level, with an attrition rate of less than 7.5% per year.



GOAL 2: TO ENSURE THAT A LACK OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES DOES NOT DETER PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES FROM APPLYING OR CURRENT FAMILIES FROM RE-ENROLLING

- **Action Step:** Articulate and make visible the available financial plans and the process for requesting tuition assistance.
- **Action Step:** Provide the resources needed for every enrolled student to fully participate in all educational aspects of school life.
- **Action Step:** Maintain and enhance scholarship funding sources (e.g., Sister Rose Tuition Assistance Fund and Monsignor Smyth Endowment Fund).



Parent Engagement

GOAL 1: TO CULTIVATE A CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY THAT ENGAGES ALL FAMILIES AND SCHOOL SUPPORTERS

- **Action Step:** Communicate the “Time, Talent, and Treasure” expectations and opportunities to parents, resulting in 100% participation.
- **Action Step:** Expand educational opportunities for students by engaging grandparents, alumni, and other school supporters.

GOAL 2: TO ENABLE ALL PARENTS TO FEEL WELCOMED AND INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- **Action Step:** Maintain the Family Ambassador Program and the Buddy Family Program.
- **Action Step:** Develop an outreach plan to engage new parents, including New Parent Receptions for different grade levels.
- **Action Step:** Expand programs and activities that celebrate diversity within the school community.



GOAL 3: TO IMPROVE THE VISIBILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION AND THE SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

- **Action Step:** Clearly articulate the role of the Home School Association (HSA) and the School Advisory Board (SAB).
- **Action Step:** Create and publicize the selection process for HSA and SAB membership to attract volunteers with a range of experiences and professional backgrounds.
- **Action Step:** Annually review the structure and goals of the HSA and SAB and their effectiveness in helping the school achieve its strategic goals.
- **Action Step:** Direct parents on how to communicate feedback, questions, or concerns to the HSA and SAB.



Aftercare and Extracurricular Programs

GOAL 1: TO OFFER A SAFE AND FLEXIBLE AFTERCARE PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES

- **Action Step:** Continue to employ members of the BSS faculty and staff to supervise the Aftercare Program.
- **Action Step:** Clearly articulate policies and procedures with parents, including who to contact with questions or concerns.
- **Action Step:** Ensure aftercare programming meets the interests of students and families, updating offerings as needed.
- **Action Step:** Streamline administrative efforts regarding enrollment, billing, and payment, utilizing technology for program administrative needs.
- **Action Step:** Communicate information regarding available programming at BSS and in the community.
- **Action Step:** Identify spaces on campus and secure resources for programming based on current and projected demand.



GOAL 2: TO DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS THAT MEET THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

- **Action Step:** Effectively communicate information associated with programs offered on campus, through CYO, and in the community.
- **Action Step:** Streamline administrative efforts with regards to enrollment, billing, and payment, utilizing technology for program administrative needs.
- **Action Step:** Survey parents annually to assess satisfaction with current offerings and interests in new programs, adjusting programming accordingly.

GOAL 3: TO ENSURE THAT PARTICIPATION IN AFTERCARE AND EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMMING IS NOT DETERMINED BY A LACK OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- **Action Step:** Identify and secure vendors for extracurricular programs that provide exceptional offerings at cost-effective rates.
- **Action Step:** Increase student participation in aftercare and extracurricular programs.



Staffing

GOAL 1: TO ATTRACT, DEVELOP, AND RETAIN EFFECTIVE AND MISSION-DRIVEN FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATORS

- **Action Step:** Offer a competitive compensation and benefits package to faculty and staff members, including tuition remission and salaries that are at least 83% of the Montgomery County Public Schools' pay scale.
- **Action Step:** Provide new faculty and staff with the information and training needed to feel fully informed, welcomed, and integrated into the BSS faculty.
- **Action Step:** Develop effective faculty, staff, and administrators through a robust evaluation process and mentoring program.
- **Action Step:** Invest in professional development opportunities that support faculty growth and relate to best practices in teaching.
- **Action Step:** Effectively communicate with and provide growth opportunities to faculty and staff to limit annual attrition to <10%.
- **Action Step:** Craft a recruitment strategy for new faculty, staff, administrators, and substitute teachers.



GOAL 2: TO UTILIZE A STAFFING MODEL THAT SUPPORTS THE NEEDS AND GOALS OF THE SCHOOL

- **Action Step:** Update job descriptions for non-instructional staff positions to accurately capture duties and responsibilities.
- **Action Step:** Generate a succession plan for key roles that is informed by the programmatic needs of the school.
- **Action Step:** Monitor staffing to ensure it is appropriate for current and expected enrollment.
- **Action Step:** Create and implement a standardized interview process.
- **Action Step:** Ensure that programmatic needs, and not specific personnel, dictate the staffing model.



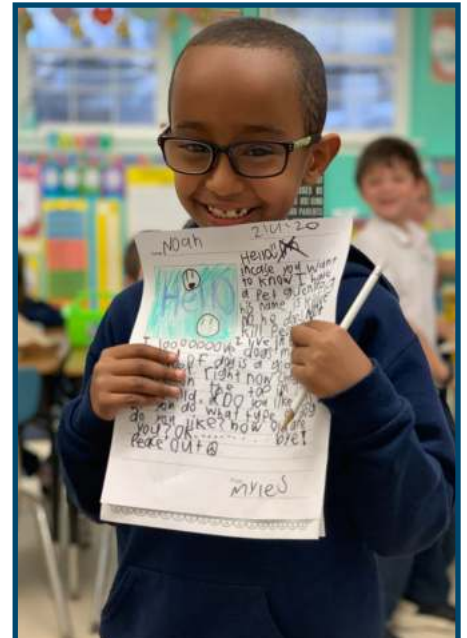
Communications

GOAL 1: TO ENHANCE THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY THROUGH A RESPECTFUL HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

- **Action Step:** Continue to utilize the BSS Weekly to communicate essential information to families.
- **Action Step:** Annually review the Parent Handbook for accuracy and clarity in outlining school policies and procedures.
- **Action Step:** Ensure the BSS website is current, attractive, and user-friendly, providing essential information and promoting the school and its successes to the broader community.
- **Action Step:** Continue to formally solicit feedback from parents through an annual survey.
- **Action Step:** Enhance parent communication by providing direction on how, when, and to whom feedback, concerns, and questions should be directed.

GOAL 2: TO BOLSTER THE HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP THROUGH EFFECTIVE AND TIMELY COMMUNICATION

- **Action Step:** Tell parents how they can help facilitate their child(ren)'s learning at home at each grade level.
- **Action Step:** Maintain opportunities for parents to formally discuss student progress with teachers and/or advisors.
- **Action Step:** Communicate the process for how teachers will address academic concerns with students and their parents.
- **Action Step:** Ensure standards for and methods of teacher communication are consistent and appropriate for each grade level.
- **Action Step:** Streamline communication between the school and parents when possible.



Facilities

GOAL 1: TO FORMALIZE THE OVERSIGHT PROCESS FOR SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM UPDATES AND IMPROVEMENTS

- **Action Step:** Employ a Facilities Manager to oversee the facilities team, hire and manage outside contractors, and perform in-house maintenance.
- **Action Step:** Institute a monthly checklist and walkthrough between the Principal, Assistant Principal, and Facilities Manager to identify areas of concern.
- **Action Step:** Develop a streamlined request process for facility and technological needs.
- **Action Step:** Implement a schedule for the deep cleaning and painting of different spaces within the school building.

GOAL 2: TO DEVELOP A MASTER FACILITIES PLAN THAT MEETS THE CURRENT AND FUTURE PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL

- **Action Step:** Ensure the facilities, grounds, equipment, and technology are meeting the evolving needs of the community.
- **Action Step:** Maximize the use of current spaces and conduct viability studies before any large capital improvements.
- **Action Step:** : Develop a plan to enhance learning spaces, technology, and other areas of the school's campus to support and optimize the teaching and learning experience.
- **Action Step:** Evaluate the costs and benefits of permitting outside organizations to use the school's facilities after hours.

GOAL 3: TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND VISITORS

- **Action Step:** Leverage the expertise of professionals to evaluate and improve school safety and security.
- **Action Step:** Complete an annual review of safety procedures and the emergency preparedness plan.
- **Action Step:** Continue to train faculty, staff, and students on the best practices for how to respond during an emergency.
- **Action Step:** Improve the effectiveness of internal communications within the building.
- **Action Step:** Continue to invest in school security and staffing.



Budget

GOAL 1: TO SUSTAIN THE FINANCIAL HEALTH OF THE SCHOOL AND MONITOR AFFORDABILITY

- **Action Step:** Control annual operating costs, expand financial aid, and maximize enrollment.
- **Action Step:** Effectively plan and prepare for large capital improvements.
- **Action Step:** Determine the appropriate level of annual increases to tuitions and fees.

GOAL 2: TO CREATE A FINANCIAL PLAN OUTLINING SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

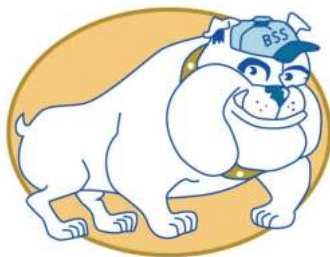
- **Action Step:** Craft a school capital plan that includes current and projected facility upgrades.
- **Action Step:** Create a long-term investment plan for classroom and technology upgrades as well as large capital improvements.
- **Action Step:** Audit current sources of funding and determine their effectiveness.
- **Action Step:** Identify new development opportunities and ways to increase parent participation and fundraising contributions.
- **Action Step:** Engage the alumni network in promoting the value of a BSS education.



GOAL 3: SET AGGRESSIVE FUNDRAISING GOALS

- **Action Step:** Strengthen communication and outreach regarding the Monsignor Smyth Endowment Fund.
- **Action Step:** Maintain or increase current Annual Fund goals.
- **Action Step:** Use 100th-anniversary event to capture donor information to be used for future engagement and fundraising.





Blessed Sacrament School
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