

The background of the entire image is a photograph of a stone archway. The arch is made of light-colored stone and features intricate Gothic-style carvings, including floral and geometric patterns. Below the arch is a large, dark wooden door with three vertical panels, each containing a stained glass window with a landscape scene. The door is set within a stone frame. The text is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

LEADERSHIP ROOTED IN FAITH:

A Vision for
Immaculate Conception Grade School
in 2020

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

As we look at the future of Immaculate Conception Grade School, it is vital that we take stock of our foundation, one that began with a deep commitment by the Sisters of St. Agnes of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, in a one room school. Since 1900, the year ICGS was founded, the leadership of our parish and school has sought the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to guide the education of our students in their faith in order to become Catholic leaders in their future academic and professional endeavors. As we look ahead, at the encouragement of the Diocese of Joliet, our administration and school board have recognized the value of establishing a Strategic Plan to guide our steps for the next five years. This plan, which was created with our school's mission at its core, will allow future board members and administrators to measure our success against specific outlined goals. This document will guide our vision for maintaining a strong Catholic identity as well an excellent, thriving academic environment for ICGS students. We hope you will take the time to read ICGS' Strategic Plan, **"Leadership Rooted in Faith: A Vision for Immaculate Conception Grade School in 2020,"** and share in the vision and progress that we will realize during the next five years.

Very Reverend Thomas L. Paul, V.F., Pastor

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

MISSION

As an educational ministry of Immaculate Conception Parish, we partner with parents to prepare students for lives as Catholic leaders. As Christians empowered by the Holy Spirit, we focus on formation through prayer, message, concern, and service to community. We teach students to live a life that embodies these values, is centered in Christ, and strives for their greatest academic potential. They will experience a world around them rich in God's love.



PHILOSOPHY

Immaculate Conception Grade School merges a strong academic program with rich faith formation to maximize each student's potential. All students are encouraged to develop their faith through devotion to the values that strengthen our Christian life – to know the Gospel message of Jesus, to deepen our connection to Our Father through worship, to celebrate our faith with others through community, and to share God's love with others through service.

ICGS works to support growth through a program attending to the whole child. While students are challenged to meet high academic expectations, we also recognize and cherish each child as unique and look to their individual needs. Creating an environment of love, faith, and justice in which an education can flourish is our priority.

The school staff works as part of a team with parents and parish ministers to guide our students to learn and grow. As a team, our emphasis is placed on the students' acceptance of responsibility as strong Catholics. Further, in recognizing our parents as primary educators, ICGS is proud to support their efforts to instill in their children Christ-like attitudes and virtues.







GOALS

The vision set forth in this plan for Immaculate Conception Grade School is fully aligned with our mission and philosophy. We have identified the following fundamental goals to guide us.

- Create an educational environment that emphasizes a strong commitment to our Catholic faith in every aspect of our children's lives.
- Occupy facilities that are on par with or superior to those of other schools in the surrounding community.
- Pursue and demonstrate academic excellence as compared to other schools in the surrounding community.
- Adopt best practices to ensure that all staff and administration are of the highest caliber.
- Communicate the value of an ICGS education in order to retain and grow student headcount consistent with our 5 year financial plan.
- Implement to the best of our ability the appropriate governance system as outlined by the Diocese of Joliet.

STRATEGIES

We will employ certain strategies to assist us in the attainment of the goals

Catholic Identity & Faith Life

- Display prominently a variety of visual symbols representing our core Catholic values, both in academic environments and within significant communication mediums.
- Continue to develop our website, reflecting our Catholic beliefs as well as student involvement in faith formation, Christian service projects, and Immaculate Conception parish ministry.
- Establish a designated fund for the advancement of the religious education of our faculty as well as continue to attend all diocesan catechetical continuing education conferences.
- Develop a formal comprehensive annual plan which specifies each grade level's expectations, scope, and sequence, ensuring that all grade levels are aware of their role in the larger religious education picture.
- Promote weekly Mass attendance and involvement as well as opportunities to participate in parish-sponsored service activities, youth ministry, and faith formation.
- Increase opportunities for students to gather in "faith families" to increase faith sharing and community building among grades.

Academic Environment

- Continued review of ICGS educational space in order to ensure most efficient use.
- Establish regular maintenance and refurbishment cycle for classrooms.
- Establish regular maintenance and replacement cycle for technology items with rapid deterioration in useful life.

Goals And Strategies



Curriculum

- Annual review of standardized testing effectiveness along with recommendations for improvement by staff and administration.
- Evaluation of standardized test results by staff and administration and development of plan for addressing weaknesses.
- Establish school-wide program to reinforce basic math skills and evaluate program for improvement at year end.
- Develop school-wide reading program including summer reading, parental involvement, and evaluation for improvement at year end.
- Provide financial resources for long-term professional development of faculty.
- Establish structure for small group support and additional personnel in key curricular areas.
- Utilize additional time of extended school day for further work in areas of math and reading.
- Regular review of curriculum to enhance core curriculum and supplemental subjects.
- Develop additional classroom learning opportunities with ICCP and Elmhurst College.
- Document critical best practices that promote academic excellence, Catholic values, and leadership skills.

Administration & Leadership

- Identify and train faculty members (passing along critical best practices) with the potential to serve in leadership roles at ICGS and the Diocese of Joliet.
- Publicize school board meetings as well as meeting minutes to provide timely information.
- Enlistment by school board and administration of parents and parishioners to serve in ICGS related leadership roles that present themselves.

Advancement & Governance

- Develop and regularly assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats with regard to an ICGS education.
- Communicate clearly the value of an ICGS education using key print, electronic, and social media tools.
- Establish and annually evaluate budget for marketing and communication efforts.
- Communicate general diocesan policy and adherence procedures to ICGS faculty, boards, and parents.



NEXT STEPS

Each year, the ICGS administration and school board, along with additional sub-committee members, will assess the designated goals and strategies put forth in this Strategic Plan and measure results. Progress in goal attainment will be publicized.



CONCLUSION

Immaculate Conception Grade School enjoys an excellent reputation as the oldest Catholic grade school in Elmhurst. The commitment of so many in years past and their vision for the future has established ICGS as an attractive choice for parents who desire an excellent Catholic education for their children. In order for ICGS to continue to thrive and grow, we must continue to look ahead at ways to enhance our students' understanding of their Catholic faith. Similarly, we must remain committed to expanding and improving academic offerings as elementary education evolves. We are eager to see what the next five years hold for ICGS.



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