

Sacred Heart Catholic School STRATEGIC PLAN

2019-2023

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SCHOOL



INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

Sacred Heart Catholic School was founded in 1879 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, France. The Sisters returned to France in 1898, and the parish priest quickly arranged for the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame from Ripa, St. Louis to organize the school ministry.

The School Sisters remained at Sacred Heart until 1984, at which time Sacred Heart made the difficult transition to 100% lay leadership. Whereas the faculty had always been provided by the Order, the school was now responsible for compensating all staff. Although tuition has never successfully been able to meet the needs of the school, Sacred Heart parish and school families believe strongly in the mission and ministry of the school, and they faithfully provide the support needed to maintain a strong academic program.

Today, Sacred Heart strives to always exemplify our motto of "*Enlightening Minds, Enriching Souls, and Inspiring Hearts Since 1879.*" We recognize the special challenges that we face as one of only two remaining pre-k - 12th grade Catholic schools in the state, existing in a community that projects minimal growth in the coming years.

In 2018, our school began working with Catholic School Management to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for our school. This work was carried out by a committee of dedicated faculty, staff, and parents, with input from our families in every area. Within this document, we present our strategic goals, areas of focus, and the plan of action. We invite our families to join us in this work, and we look forward to sharing our progress along the way.

Academic Profile of a Sacred Heart Graduate

- Mastery of the academic skills needed for college/other advanced education/training
- Development of problem-solving skills in learning new tasks
- Development and mastery of a mastery of logic and critical thinking skills
- Skill development in oral and written expression
- Able to work together as a member of a group
- Understands one's own government and one's rights and responsibilities as a citizen
- Able to use a variety of technology and media resources effectively

Spiritual Profile of a Sacred Heart Graduate

- Holds a basic understanding of the Gospels, the teachings of the Catholic Church, and the mission of the Church
- Has begun to take more responsibility for exploring and validating one's faith
- Has been exposed to the presence of God in private and liturgical prayer and in other moments of grace
- Understands the Church's teachings on moral issues and social justice and understands the relationship between faith in Jesus and being men and women for and with others
- Growth of an informed conscience, influenced by the words of Christ

Social Profile of a Sacred Heart Graduate

- Is aware of one's own attitudes and tendencies and is consciously seeking to be more understanding, accepting, and generous with others
- Understands the roots of injustice in social institutions, attitudes, and customs
- Development of compassion and a growing understanding of social changes
- Recognizes the importance of public opinion and voter influence on public policy and the need to evaluate diverse sources of information
- Understands that Christ's commandment to love one another calls forth a commitment to promote a just society
- Applies Catholic moral teaching and prayer to life decisions



MISSION STATEMENT

Since 1879, Sacred Heart Catholic School has strived to be a Christ-centered community dedicated to developing the whole child and serving families in the Arkansas River Valley. Faculty and staff collaborate to establish a safe, encouraging, and welcoming environment where students are able to discover their individual gifts.

We are committed to:

- Enlightening Minds through a comprehensive and rigorous P-12 learning environment.
- Enriching Souls through the Roman Catholic faith, service to others, and spiritual growth
- Inspiring Hearts through leadership and integrity

VISION STATEMENT

Guided by our Christian tradition, Sacred Heart Catholic School will provide the highest quality education from preschool through high school where teachers, students, staff, and school families work together to nourish the body, mind, and soul of each student, and help them become faithful servants of Christ.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Sacred Heart will provide a strong academic program while implementing a comprehensive curriculum plan to evaluate, via data, curriculum needs, enhance subject offerings via nontraditional means, and fully integrate technology into the learning process.

From our earliest days, under the direction of the Sisters, Sacred Heart has delivered a rigorous educational program, geared to prepare students for college or other advanced/training programs. We are committed to teaching the whole child and to sustaining programs that provide opportunities for all students, including those who require additional or differentiated learning opportunities.

In recent years, through partnerships with parents and local educational resources, Sacred Heart has worked to develop programs that add value to the classroom experience. Our Robotics program and Quiz Bowl teams provide a competitive academic experience outside the classroom. In 2019, in partnership with our local public school, we offered our high school students the opportunity to take specialized online classes not offered at Sacred Heart through Virtual Arkansas.

This partnership with SCCSD, along with *School Counts!*, may also allows our students to take concurrent college classes at UACCM at no charge to our families. Students in grades 7-12 are now also utilizing Google Classroom, which will further prepare students for the expectations of the college classroom or other advanced technical programs.

To accomplish our academic goals, Sacred Heart will fully align curriculum, ensuring that students are learning what is needed from one year to the next. We will continue building on the technological foundation began in 2019, ensuring that students are able to continue learning in a technologically advanced setting.

"Our commitment to academic excellence ultimately underpins everything we do - from curriculum alignment to technology integration in the learning process."

-Buddy Greeson, principal, parent to 2 SH students



CATHOLIC IDENTITY & SERVICE

Sacred Heart will foster an environment where students embody Christian attitudes in their interactions with each other, faculty, and the community.

First and foremost - we are a Catholic School. Since 1879, our top priority has been to be a Christ-centered community. Each day at Sacred Heart is infused with Roman Catholic teaching. Daily prayer, weekly student-led school Mass, recitation of the Angelus prayer each day at noon, Jesse Tree readings during Advent, Stations of the Cross during Lent, classroom prayer tables, and regular conversations about faith are integral to the mission of Sacred Heart.

Sacred Heart will pursue further opportunities in our community where our students, with the guidance of faculty, can engage in ministry and social justice issues. We will integrate class ministry projects by grade and work with existing community organizations to meet their needs. As our seniors look toward college, we will reach out to our local universities to establish relationships with their respective Catholic ministry groups, offering a seamless transition for students. To encourage volunteerism and philanthropy, we will work with our seniors to reinstate our community service projects, and we will contact the Diocese of Little Rock for information about state mission projects available.

In an effort to more fully connect our students to their Roman Catholic faith and traditions, we will pursue opportunities for our students to visit the Vatican, the spiritual center of the Church. We will also engage locally with the Holy Family Mission in Morrilton.

"Giving our students new experiences to grow spiritually to a deeper level, as well as opportunities for ministry in our community/state, will better prepare them in their adult life to embrace their Catholic faith and to serve others."

-Angie Hartman, School Board member, parent of '15 and '17 graduates and 2 current SH students



RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Sacred Heart will implement a rigorous enrollment plan with a marketing strategy to attract, recruit, and retain students to achieve set enrollment goals. The marketing strategy will include education opportunities, benefits of a small setting, and the inclusive family environment of Sacred Heart for non-Catholic students while maintaining the culture and spirit of our Catholic Identity.

Pope Francis has said, "May the church be the place of God's mercy and love, where everyone can feel themselves welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live according to the good life of the Gospel." As an extension and ministry of the church, our school must also exemplify this sentiment.

Welcoming new families is the first objective in our recruitment and retention plan. Our staff will coordinate an effective plan for tracking prospective families and will ensure that all feel welcome and included. It is also imperative that we constantly and consistently share the story of our school in order to recruit more families. Our marketing efforts will especially emphasize our Christian atmosphere, the high ACT average achieved by our students, affordability, and the openness to students of all faith backgrounds. Finally, we recognize that one of the key components to retention is communication. Our retention plan will focus on ways we can better engage our parents, with a foundation built on transparency.

"Communication - and the ability to recognize issues that need to change or improve - are key to recruitment and retention."

-Becky James, School Board and Development Advisory Board member, non-Catholic parent of 2 students



GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

Sacred Heart will develop a structured set of policies and procedures for the school that are easily accessible for faculty, staff, and parents and will develop a comprehensive financial plan that will support the financial viability of the school for future years.

In Catholic schools, the school board has the unique task of empowering and supporting the principal. The Sacred Heart school board will work with our diocese to ensure that board members' roles are understood and followed, while also providing evaluation and support for the principal. The board will review and fully disclose to families all policies and procedures in such a way that is simple and accessible. In keeping with the school's high expectation in terms of behavior, the school board will pay special attention to disciplinary policies.

Through strong leadership and strategic fund development, significant strides have been made over the past ten years to ensure financial viability for Sacred Heart. Recognizing that our tuition cost is relative to the community in which we serve, the school board and other advisory committees take responsibility to meet the financial needs of the school. Specifically, development efforts are focused around supporting teachers through planned salary increases, providing tuition assistance to families in need, and investing in the changing technology needs for the most up to date classroom learning. Strategic campus improvements will continue to be a priority, guided by a long-term and often-reviewed capital investment plan.

"A pro-active school board is vital to the vision and mission statement of our school"
-Patrick Hartman, School Board member, parent of 3 students

Strategic Plan Committees

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Kevin Gottsponer, Buddy Greeson, Kara Jones, Jennifer Roscoe

CATHOLIC IDENTITY & SERVICE

Angie Hartman, Mary Kay Wiedower

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Brandi Cooper, Stacy Drilling, Mary Eggart, Becky James, Alisha Koonce, Emily Lear, Mary Magie, Abby Parham, Misty Willbanks

GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

Ken Fresneda, Patrick Hartman, Chris Magie, Pete Zambrzycki

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Susan Buser, Stephanie Guinn, Angie Hartman, David Hartman

