



Exemplary Recognition – Mission and Catholic Identity Rubric

Mission and Catholic Identity				
Application Statement	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
STANDARD 1: <i>An excellent Catholic school is driven and guided by a clearly communicated mission that embraces a Catholic identity that includes gospel values, a focus on the Eucharist, and a commitment to communal faith formation, academic excellence, missionary discipleship, and service.</i>				
1. The school community engages in a process to develop their mission statement that is comprehensively reviewed and evaluated by school stakeholders each year. <i>Include your mission statement.</i>	The mission statement explicitly and unequivocally proclaims that the school’s pervasive commitment is to fostering Catholic identity. It is used in discussions throughout the school community. It is visible throughout the school and all school constituents understand it. The school community reviews the mission statement at regular intervals.	The mission statement clearly communicates the school’s commitment to fostering Catholic Identity. It is referenced in discussions within the school community and displayed in various areas of the school. Most school constituents are aware of its core message, and the school community reviews the mission statement periodically.	The mission statement uses generically Christian language to allude to the school’s commitment to Catholic identity. It is referenced periodically by the school community. The existence of the mission statement is known throughout the school, but school constituents cannot comment on it. The school community reviews the mission statement when required.	The mission statement does not communicate a commitment to Catholic identity. The school community does not review the mission statement.
STANDARD 5: <i>An excellent Catholic school has a governing body (person or persons) which recognizes and respects the role(s) of the appropriate and legitimate authorities, and exercises responsible decision making (authoritative, consultative, advisory) in collaboration with the leadership team for development and oversight of the school’s fidelity to mission, academic excellence, and operational vitality. (For the purposes of this standard in Wisconsin, “governing body” includes the pastoral authority and the advisory education committee/commission or corporate board according to the Catholic educational governance requirements of the (arch)diocese.)</i>				
STANDARD 6: <i>An excellent Catholic school has a qualified leader/ leadership team empowered by the governing body to recognize, prioritize, and successfully embody the school’s mission and vision.</i>				

<p>2. The mission statement guides the school leader and leadership team in decision-making within the school community.</p>	<p>The leader/leadership team carefully articulates a clear mission and vision for the school and consistently demonstrates the mission and vision are continuously forming the foundation for all decisions. The school community is fully engaged at all levels.</p> <p>The governing body systematizes and shares the policies of the school’s operations. The governing body ensures its fidelity to the mission through ongoing professional and spiritual development.</p> <p>In collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, the governing body maintains and communicates to all stakeholders a strong, positive and visible relationship with the Pastor, Bishop, and the Office for Schools.</p>	<p>The leader/leadership team articulates a clear mission and vision for the school and engages the school community to ensure a school culture that embodies the mission and vision.</p> <p>The governing body shares the policies of the school’s operations, as well as measures for successful implementation of policies. The governing body ensures its fidelity to the mission through periodic professional and spiritual development.</p> <p>In collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, the governing body maintains and a strong, positive and visible relationship with the Pastor, Bishop, and the Office for Schools.</p>	<p>The leader/leadership team articulates a mission and vision for the school, but it is not broadly shared with the larger community.</p> <p>The governing body shares the policies of the school’s operations. The governing body ensures its fidelity to the mission through occasional professional and spiritual development.</p> <p>In collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, the governing body maintains and a relationship with the Pastor, Bishop, and the Office for Schools.</p>	<p>The leader/leadership team does not articulate a clear mission and vision for the school. The school community is not engaged in expressing the mission and vision. The school culture does not embody the mission and vision.</p> <p>The governing body does not share the policies of the school’s operations. The governing body does not pursue professional and spiritual development.</p> <p>The leader/leadership team, the governing body do not maintain a constructive relationship with the Pastor, Bishop, and the Office for Schools.</p>
<p>STANDARD 2: An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides an exemplary (rigorous) academic program for religious education (studies) and catechesis in the Catholic faith, set within a total academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture, and life.</p>				
<p>3. The mission is integrated into all aspects of the school community and is structured around the approved <i>Grade Specific Religion Curriculum</i> or the</p>	<p>The school’s mission is fully integrated into all aspects of the community, including academics, activities, and interactions, with a clear and consistent connection to the approved Religion or Theology curriculum. Teachers and staff consistently model and reinforce the mission in their daily practices, ensuring it is evident in the curriculum, classroom</p>	<p>The school’s mission is well-integrated into most aspects of the community and is closely aligned with the approved Grade-Specific Religion or High School Theology curriculum. Teachers and staff regularly refer to and reinforce the mission in academic and extracurricular settings. While the</p>	<p>The integration of the mission into the school community is inconsistent. While the approved curriculum is followed, the mission is referenced occasionally and may not always be clearly connected to all academic or extracurricular activities. Teachers and staff may infrequently reinforce the mission,</p>	<p>he school’s mission is not effectively integrated into the community or the approved Religion or Theology curriculum. The connection between the mission and daily activities, classroom teaching, and student life is unclear or absent. Teachers and staff</p>

<i>High School Theology Curriculum.</i>	discussions, and student experiences. The mission is woven into school events, extracurricular activities, and community outreach efforts. Students demonstrate a deep understanding of the mission and its connection to their faith and academic growth.	mission is evident in many school activities, there may be occasional gaps or inconsistencies in its application. Students understand the mission and can make connections to their faith and academic work, though some areas may require more emphasis or depth.	and its presence in the community is not always evident. Students may have a basic understanding of the mission but struggle to connect it consistently to their faith or academic learning.	rarely refer to the mission, and it is not consistently reinforced in the curriculum or school events. Students have little to no understanding of how the mission relates to their faith, academic work, or the broader school experience.
4. The religious curriculum is integrated into other areas of the school curriculum and programming.	Catholic culture and faith are expressed and integrated throughout the school through multiple and diverse forms of visual and performing arts, music and architecture. Symbols of Catholic faith abound at every level and recognition of the school's Catholic culture and faith as expressed through visual and performing arts, music, and/or architecture are noted in a significant way by parents/guardians and those outside of the immediate school community.	Catholic culture and faith are expressed in the school through multiple and diverse forms of visual and performing arts, music and architecture. Any visitors to the school (including parents/guardians, staff, students, and others) readily identify signs and symbols of Catholic culture and faith.	Catholic culture and faith are expressed in the school through some form of visual and/or performing art and/or music and/or architecture. If someone actively looks for Catholic culture and faith, they are apt to find something.	Catholic culture and faith are not expressed or are expressed minimally in the school through forms of visual and performing arts, music or architecture. A tour of the school does not give evidence of Catholic culture and faith. Visual and performing arts and/or music created by teachers and students do not or rarely exemplify Catholic culture and faith. Symbols may point to spiritual realities but are not expressly Catholic.
5. Various aspects of the school environment exemplify the school's commitment to its essential tradition, spirituality, and mission.	In all subjects, faculty use the lenses of Scripture and the Catholic intellectual tradition to require students to think critically and ethically about the world around them. Students participate in lectures, debates, service opportunities or other experiences that give evidence of their growth and maturation in the Catholic intellectual tradition and moral ethical thinking.	Faculty use the lenses of Scripture and the Catholic intellectual tradition in all subjects to help students think critically and ethically about the world around them. The theory and practice of the Church's social teachings are essential elements of the curriculum. Every student receives planned instruction in the Church's social teaching.	In only a few subjects, some faculty use the lenses of Scripture and/or Catholic intellectual tradition to help students think critically and ethically about the world around them. The theory and practice of the Church's social teachings are minimally present in the curriculum. Students may be exposed to the Church's social teaching but there is not a clear plan of instruction.	Faculty are not familiar with the definition of Catholic intellectual tradition and do not manifest teaching behaviors that evidence it. Faculty do not use or seldom use the lenses of Scripture and/or Catholic intellectual tradition in subjects to help students think critically or ethically. The theory and practice of the Church's social

				teachings are not found in the curriculum.
6. Each Catholic Social Teaching is integrated into the total school community in an exemplary way, reflected in various practices and initiatives that embody these principles. This integration fosters a culture of compassion, social justice, and community service, ensuring that all members of the school community live out these teachings in their daily lives.	A highly effective Catholic school fully integrates Catholic Social Teaching into all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, service projects, and extracurricular activities, reflecting all key principles. This integration fosters a strong culture of compassion, social justice, and service, with active participation from students, staff, and families, who consistently live out these teachings in their daily actions. The school engages in continuous reflection and improvement, ensuring that Catholic Social Teaching remains central to the community.	In an effective school, Catholic Social Teaching is present in key areas but may not be consistently integrated across all activities. While compassion, social justice, and service are promoted, participation may not be universal. Many students and staff are engaged in living out these principles, though there may be room for growth. The school reflects on its practices and strives to improve the integration of Catholic Social Teaching, though this process may not be systematic.	A somewhat effective school addresses Catholic Social Teaching in some areas of school life but lacks full integration into the broader culture. Compassion, social justice, and service are occasionally promoted, but engagement is limited and not consistently reflected across the community. Reflection on these teachings is infrequent, with minimal follow-through on improvements or changes.	An ineffective school rarely or inconsistently addresses Catholic Social Teaching, with little integration into school activities or culture. There is little to no focus on compassion, social justice, or service, and minimal engagement from students, staff, or families in these principles. Ongoing reflection or efforts to improve the integration of Catholic Social Teaching are absent.
STANDARD 3: An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities both within and outside the classroom for Christ-centered student faith formation, participation in liturgical and communal prayer, and action in service of missionary discipleship and social justice.				
STANDARD 4: An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities for Christ-centered adult faith formation and action in service of missionary discipleship and social justice.				
7. Multiple forms of prayer are integrated into the total school community in age-appropriate ways, fostering a vibrant	Students/faculty and staff learn and can lead a variety of forms of prayer; are involved in the design of prayer services; regularly serve in a variety of roles in the liturgy; liturgy is celebrated frequently as a school or class community. Retreats	Every student is offered timely and regular opportunities to learn about and experience the nature and importance of prayer, the Eucharist, and liturgy. Retreats are a part of both student and faculty	Prayer is evident throughout the school day, and liturgy is celebrated a few times a year, such as on special feast days. Retreats are offered on an optional basis for	Prayers are not a regular part of the school day, or prayers are said in a perfunctory manner, or opportunities for a growing prayer life or for Eucharistic celebration are

spiritual life for all students.	are an integral part of both student and faculty development. Multiple opportunities for different types of prayer are cultivated among faculty and students both separately and together.	offerings. Opportunities for different types of prayer are offered for faculty and students both separately and together.	students and faculty. Different types of prayer are presented.	scarce. Retreats are not offered.
8. Exemplary approaches to adult faith formation for faculty and staff extend beyond the required Archdiocesan faith formation, offering enriching opportunities for spiritual growth and development.	A highly effective school offers a rich variety of regular opportunities, such as retreats, prayer groups, and scripture study, that deeply engage staff and enhance personal and professional faith integration. Activities are tailored to specific roles, contributing to a vibrant, faith-centered community. Leadership actively participates, modeling a commitment to faith formation and prioritizing resources for it.	An effective program offers consistent opportunities, such as monthly gatherings or an annual retreat, that connect faith with professional roles and support personal growth, though they may lack tailored content. These programs help build a positive faith-centered culture, with leadership encouraging participation, even if they are not always directly involved.	A somewhat effective program offers sporadic, less consistent activities with limited staff participation. Content is generalized and lacks depth, so faith formation has minimal cultural impact. Leadership may support the program but isn't actively engaged, leading to low integration into the broader	As ineffective program has a few structured activities beyond Archdiocesan requirements. Content feels obligatory and irrelevant, contributing little to the school culture. With leadership showing minimal support or involvement, there's little staff interest or impact on the school environment.
9. The liturgical life of the Church is integrated into all aspects of the community, extending beyond regular opportunities for Mass.	The liturgical life of the Church is deeply integrated into all aspects of the school community, extending well beyond regular Masses. Liturgical celebrations, feasts, and seasons are woven into daily school life through prayer, reflections, and activities that involve both students and staff. Students actively participate in various liturgical events, such as special prayer services, retreats, and community service, all reflecting the Church's liturgical calendar. The school's environment is consistently infused with a reverence for liturgical traditions, and staff actively model and encourage liturgical participation. Liturgy is central to the faith formation of students, helping	The liturgical life of the Church is integrated into many aspects of the school community, extending beyond regular Masses, but with some variation in consistency. Liturgical celebrations and seasons are regularly observed through prayer, special services, and relevant activities. Students participate in these events, with some opportunities for deeper involvement, though there may be fewer opportunities compared to highly effective schools. The school's environment reflects the Church's liturgical life, and staff encourage participation. Students have a clear connection between	The liturgical life of the Church is somewhat integrated into the school community but may be limited to Mass and a few liturgical celebrations. There may be a lack of follow-up activities or connections to the broader liturgical calendar. Liturgical events are observed but may not involve students in an engaging or meaningful way. While the environment may reflect some liturgical elements, participation may be minimal and inconsistent, with few opportunities for students to connect liturgy with their daily lives. Staff may reference liturgy, but its importance may not be	The liturgical life of the Church is minimally integrated into the school community, with a primary focus on regular Masses and few other liturgical celebrations. The school may not observe key feasts, seasons, or other liturgical events, and there is little to no connection between liturgy and the broader school experience. Students have few opportunities to participate in liturgical events, and the significance of liturgical practices is not actively reinforced. The environment

	them make meaningful connections between worship and daily life.	liturgy and daily life, though there may be occasional gaps or missed opportunities for deeper engagement.	consistently reinforced in the school community.	may lack any noticeable elements of the Church’s liturgical life, and staff do not actively encourage or model participation in liturgy.
10. Retreats for students are intentionally designed to deepen the integration of faith, life, and culture within the community.	Student retreats are thoughtfully designed, deeply integrating faith, life, and culture. Activities encourage self-reflection, community building, and connections between faith and daily life. Students are fully engaged, inspired to live out their faith, with strong support and follow-up from engaged leaders.	Student retreats are well-organized with relevant, faith-centered themes that connect to students' lives and culture. Activities promote reflection and some faith-life integration. Participation is enthusiastic, with supportive facilitators, and there is some follow-up to reinforce impact.	Student retreats include faith activities, but themes may lack depth or relevance to students' lives. Engagement and reflection are inconsistent, with facilitators providing limited support. Minimal follow-up reduces impact on students' faith integration.	Student retreats are minimally planned with little connection to faith, life, or culture. Activities lack depth, and student engagement is low. With disengaged facilitators and no follow-up, the retreat has minimal effect on students' faith journey.
11. Our school’s service efforts include reflection, preparation, and an intentional connection to Catholic Social Teachings.	Service efforts are well-structured and include thorough preparation, reflection, and a strong, intentional connection to Catholic Social Teachings. Students and parents are actively engaged in the service experience, with opportunities for deep reflection on how the service relates to their faith and real-world applications of Catholic Social Teachings. The school provides clear guidance and support for service efforts, and follow-up activities reinforce the lessons learned. Service projects foster a sense of community and social responsibility.	Service efforts include adequate preparation, reflection, and a clear connection to Catholic Social Teachings. Students and parents participate in the service experience, with some opportunities for reflection and understanding of the faith implications. The school provides basic support for the service efforts, and there is some follow-up to reinforce the connection to Catholic Social Teachings. Service projects encourage community involvement and responsibility.	Service efforts include basic preparation and reflection, but the connection to Catholic Social Teachings may be superficial or inconsistent. There are limited opportunities for students and parents to engage in deeper reflection or explore the faith implications of their service. The school offers minimal support, and follow-up activities are lacking, making it harder to reinforce lessons learned or foster a strong community connection.	Service efforts lack adequate preparation, reflection, and a clear connection to Catholic Social Teachings. Students and parents may participate in service activities, but the faith and social justice aspects are either missing or unclear. There is little to no reflection or follow-up, and service projects do not effectively engage the community or encourage a deeper understanding of Catholic Social Teachings.
12. Before graduation, our school assesses its graduates’ personal integration of faith-based knowledge, dispositions, and skills among students	Students demonstrate an understanding of faith-based knowledge exhibiting profound comprehension and application across various contexts. They consistently embody faith-based dispositions, positively influence their peers and community. These students effectively apply their skills in real-life situations, showcasing a strong	Students show a solid grasp of faith-based knowledge, applying it in relevant situations. They generally reflect faith-based dispositions, although their impact on others may be occasional. These students can apply their skills in certain contexts, demonstrating some connection to	© 2024 by the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America. All rights reserved. This document is the property of the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America and is loaned to you for your personal use only. It is not to be distributed, copied, or otherwise used without the express written permission of the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America. This document is not to be used for any commercial purpose. This document is not to be used for any purpose that would defame, libel, or otherwise harm the reputation of the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America or any of its members. This document is not to be used for any purpose that would constitute an infringement of any copyright or other intellectual property rights of the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America or any of its members. This document is not to be used for any purpose that would constitute a violation of any applicable law or regulation. This document is not to be used for any purpose that would constitute a violation of any applicable policy or procedure of the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America or any of its members. This document is not to be used for any purpose that would constitute a violation of any applicable contract or agreement of the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America or any of its members. This document is not to be used for any purpose that would constitute a violation of any applicable law, regulation, policy, procedure, contract, or agreement of the Board of Catholic Bishops for the United States of America or any of its members.	Students lack a fundamental understanding of faith-based knowledge altogether. They rarely exhibit faith-based dispositions, showing minimal influence on their peers and community. These students fail to apply pertinent skills in any context, demonstrating no

<p>in the current 8th grade or senior class.</p>	<p>connection to their faith. They engage in deep reflection and show significant personal growth related to faith and community service. Additionally, they consistently make meaningful connections to Catholic Social Teachings in their service and daily life.</p>	<p>their faith. They engage in reflection, providing evidence of personal growth in their faith and service activities. Additionally, they make some connections to Catholic Social Teachings in their service and interactions.</p>	<p>real-world application of their learning. They show no evidence of reflection or personal growth related to their faith and service activities. Lastly, they fail to make any connections to Catholic Social Teachings in their actions or service efforts.</p>	<p>real-world application of their learning. They show no evidence of reflection or personal growth related to their faith and service activities. Lastly, they fail to make any connections to Catholic Social Teachings in their actions or service efforts.</p>
<p>13. The pastor is intentionally incorporated into the life of the school community. (Elementary School Only)</p>	<p>A highly effective pastor is regularly active and fully engaged in all areas of community life, attending events, supporting programs, and connecting with members at every level. This involvement is characterized by a strong, consistent presence that makes the pastor a familiar and approachable figure within the parish and school community. By participating in a broad range of activities, the pastor demonstrates commitment to the community and builds trust and rapport with members of all ages.</p>	<p>An effective pastor is frequently visible at key events and maintains regular interactions with the community. While they may not be present at every gathering, they are consistently supportive and engaged with parishioners and staff. This level of involvement provides a solid connection to community life, even if the pastor's engagement is more focused on specific events or groups rather than the entire community.</p>	<p>A somewhat effective pastor attends some community events but may lack consistency in their participation. While they are generally approachable and available when needed, they are less proactive in taking leadership roles within the parish. Their presence is appreciated but may be limited to particular groups or events, creating a more selective engagement that doesn't fully reach all members of the community.</p>	<p>An ineffective pastor is rarely present in community life, limiting their involvement and impact. Without consistent visibility or accessibility, the pastor may struggle to build meaningful connections with parishioners. This lack of presence often leaves members feeling disconnected from parish leadership and can diminish the overall sense of unity within the community.</p>
<p>14. Your Catholic school motivates and supports students to actively participate in broader Church and parish life.</p>	<p>A highly effective Catholic school provides a variety of frequent opportunities for students to participate in parish and Church activities, such as service projects, liturgies, and community events. Staff actively encourage this engagement, consistently modeling participation in Church life and providing robust support for students. Faith is deeply integrated into school life, with clear connections between Church involvement and the school's mission and values, helping students see Church life as a natural extension of their faith education. As a result, students are</p>	<p>An effective school offers regular opportunities for Church and parish involvement, though the range of activities may be more limited. Staff encourage participation and offer support, though not as consistent. While faith and Church life are linked to the school's mission, these connections may not be emphasized as strongly. Many students participate in Church activities, showing an interest in the broader Church community.</p>	<p>A somewhat effective school provides occasional opportunities for student involvement in Church life, but these are limited and infrequent. Encouragement and support for participation are minimal, with fewer visible efforts by staff to model engagement. The integration of Church life into the school's mission is limited, making connections between faith and school activities unclear. As a result, student participation in Church activities is limited, with modest overall engagement.</p>	<p>An ineffective school rarely offers or promotes opportunities for students to engage in Church or parish activities, with little to no active encouragement or support from staff. Church life is not clearly connected to the school's mission, leaving students without a strong link between their faith education and involvement in the broader Church. This lack of integration results in minimal student</p>

	highly engaged, actively participating in Church activities and demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility toward the Church community.			interest or engagement in Church activities.
Comments:				

Note on Sources:
The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, Second Edition, is the primary source for the Exemplary Recognition Program and all documents created for the program. Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT) was used in the formatting of the documents.