Exemplary Recognition Program

ARCHDIOCESE *of*
MILWAUKEE

Exemplary Recognition
Archdiocese of Milwaukee Catholic Schools

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee has a commitment to excellence and continued school improvement that ensures the best learning possible for our Catholic elementary and high school students. The Exemplary Recognition Program, based on the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools*, * honors schools that have demonstrated innovation and outstanding results in one of the following categories:

- **Academic Excellence**
- **Educating the Whole Student**
- **Mission and Catholic Identity**

The Exemplary Recognition Program is offered on a biennial basis. Schools chosen to receive Exemplary Recognition display outstanding achievement in one of the areas above, as demonstrated by information provided in the online application and data validated by an onsite visiting team.

General Program Outline:

- Information for the Exemplary Recognition Program is available on the schools' page of the Archdiocesan website located at https://schools.archmil.org/educators/Exemplary-Recognition-Program.htm.
- Schools seeking Exemplary Recognition must be fully accredited.
- Completed application narratives are due to the Office for Schools no later than the end of January in the application school year.
- All application narratives will be reviewed by the Office for Schools. If a school demonstrates exemplary status in a qualifying area, it will be selected for a site visit to validate the data submitted. Site visits take place in the spring of the application school year.
- Award winners will be announced in early June of the application school year.
- Awards are valid for 5 years.

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EXEMPLARY RECOGNITION CATEGORY: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Please describe, in narrative form, how your school meets and/or exceeds the criteria listed below.

CURRICULUM

1 The curriculum adheres to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee policies/guidelines and curriculum standards, ensuring that each student successfully completes a sequence of rigorous and coherent expectations/courses based on vertically and horizontally aligned standards.

2. The curriculum in all content areas integrates Catholic values, embedding religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions into both content and pedagogy.

INSTRUCTION

3. Students develop and apply critical thinking skills to conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions guided by Gospel values, utilizing technology effectively and responsibly.

4. Classroom instruction engages and motivates all students, addressing their diverse needs by applying current research in interventions, accommodations, and curriculum modifications.

5. Classroom instruction intentionally addresses the affective dimensions of learning by fostering intellectual and social dispositions, building relationships, and developing habits of mind.

6. Teachers apply their expertise in subject matter, pedagogy, and technology to create experiences that promote student learning, creativity, and innovation.

7. Teacher's design, develop, and assess authentic learning experiences using contemporary tools and resources to enhance content learning within meaningful contexts.

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ASSESSMENT

8. School-wide and aggregated student data are formed to appropriate populations and shared with stakeholders to ensure transparency and inform decision-making.

9. Faculty utilize a variety of curriculum-based assessments aligned with learning outcomes and instructional practices to evaluate student learning and plan for ongoing growth.

10. Criteria for evaluating student work and reporting are standards-based, valid, consistent, transparent, and administered fairly.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

11. Faculty work collaboratively to design, implement, and refine curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices to maximize student achievement.

12. Faculty and professional support staff demonstrate and actively enhance their knowledge and skills to provide effective instruction, practice cultural sensitivity, and exemplify Gospel values.

13 Teachers continuously enhance their professional practice, exemplify lifelong learning, and demonstrate leadership within the school and professional community by effectively promoting and utilizing digital tools and resources.

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EXEMPLARY RECOGNITION CATEGORY: EDUCATING THE WHOLE STUDENT

Please describe, in narrative form, how your school meets and/or exceeds the criteria listed below.

1. School-wide programs offer parents/guardians opportunities to collaborate with school leaders, faculty, and fellow parents to enrich the educational experiences within the school community.

2. Guidance services, wellness programs, behavior management initiatives, and ancillary services offer essential support to help students successfully navigate and complete the school program.

3. There is systematic tracking of student data and outcomes for these services and programs (identified above). Student data is analyzed and shared appropriately across these services. Frequent communication ensures the greater community is aware of the existence of the programs and how to access them.

4. Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and are guided in its use by the teachings of the Catholic Church.

5. Co-curricular and extracurricular activities offer students opportunities beyond the classroom to explore and develop their gifts and talents while enriching their creative, aesthetic, social-emotional, physical, and spiritual growth.

6. Classroom instruction is designed to intentionally address the affective dimensions of learning, such as intellectual and social dispositions, relationship building, and habits of mind (7.5).

7. Students leverage digital tools and environments to communicate and collaborate, enhancing their own learning while contributing to the learning of others.

8. Classroom instruction is structured to engage and inspire all students, meeting their diverse needs and abilities while providing inclusive accommodation for students with special needs.

9. Faculty and professional support staff consistently demonstrate and actively enhance their knowledge and skills to deliver effective instruction, practice cultural sensitivity, and exemplify Gospel values.

10. Faculty integrate Scripture and the Catholic intellectual tradition across all subjects, guiding students to think critically and ethically about the world around them.

11. Catholic culture and faith are expressed in the school through multiple and diverse forms of visual and performing arts, music and architecture (2.6).

12. The leader/leadership team articulates a clear vision for educating the whole child through academic, co-curricular, faith-formation, and service programs, imparting technical knowledge alongside spiritual wisdom and virtuous behavior for daily life.

13. Administrators and teachers recognize local and global societal issues and responsibilities within an evolving digital culture and are guided in their professional use of technology by the teachings of the Catholic Church.

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EXEMPLARY RECOGNITION CATEGORY: MISSION AND CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Please describe, in narrative form, how your school meets and/or exceeds the criteria listed below.

THE MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

1. The school community engages in a process to develop their mission statement that is comprehensively reviewed and evaluated by school stakeholders each year.

2. The mission statement guides the school leader and leadership team in decision-making within the school community.

3. The mission is integrated into all aspects of the school community and is structured around the approved *Grade Specific Religion Curriculum or the High School Theology Curriculum.*

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

4. The religious curriculum is integrated into other areas of the school curriculum and programming.

5. Various aspects of the school environment exemplify the school's commitment to its essential tradition, spirituality, and mission.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

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.

7. Multiple forms of prayer are integrated into the total school community in age-appropriate ways, fostering a vibrant spiritual life for all students.

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LITURGY, PRAYER, AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

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.

9. The liturgical life of the Church is integrated into all aspects of the community, extending beyond regular opportunities for Mass.

10. Retreats for students are intentionally designed to deepen the integration of faith, life, and culture within the community.

11. Our school's service efforts include reflection, preparation, and an intentional connection to Catholic Social Teachings.

SERVICE AND GOSPEL WITNESS

12. Before graduation, our school assesses its graduates' personal integration of faith-based knowledge, dispositions, and skills among students in the current 8th grade or senior class.

13. The pastor is intentionally incorporated into the life of the school community. (Elementary School Only)

14. Your Catholic school motivates and supports students to actively participate in broader Church and parish life.

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APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Complete the online application narrative for the relevant category. Go to https://schools.archmil.org/educators/Exemplary-Recognition-Program.htm, and then the appropriate ERP category. Enter your schools mission statement and describe, in detail, how the school meets or exceeds the category's criteria.

2. Submit the application narrative to the Office for Schools no later than February 8, 2027.

3. Schools demonstrating exemplary status in the selected category will be chosen for a site visit during the spring of the 2027 school year.

4. Winners will be announced early in June 2027.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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*The *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools*, Center for Catholic School Effectiveness, School of Education, Loyola University Chicago, in partnership with the Barbara and Patrick Roche Center for Catholic Education, Lynch School of Education, Boston College (2012).
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