

Executive Summary of the Findings of the Visiting Committee

First Edition

This page documents the many strengths of the school and the school's critical areas of growth affirmed by the Visiting Committee. This summary is designed to be shared with the broader school community.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength as Identified by the Visiting Committee

Domain 1: Mission and Catholic Identity

Strong Catholic Community Providing a Caring, Nurturing Environment

- Strong Leadership
- Focus on Mission - The mission statement, in combination with the philosophy statement and Schoolwide Learning Expectations (SLEs), clearly affirms that Annunciation Catholic School is guided and driven by a clearly communicated mission that embraces a Catholic identity rooted in Gospel values, centered on the Eucharist, and committed to faith formation, academic excellence, and service.

Education and Formation

- Faith formation for students is integral to all aspects of school life in and beyond the classroom.
- The school has an active Catholic Identity Committee to promote and enrich Catholic values, while supporting families and faculty in their efforts to instill in the students a deep love and reverence for the faith.
- Scripture and the Catholic intellectual tradition are infused into lesson planning. They help students learn to think critically and ethically.
- The parish provides many opportunities for adult faith formation that are available to staff members and school parents as well.

Spirit of Service - "To have JOY in life, one must learn to think first of Jesus and Others before yourself."

- Schoolwide service projects take place throughout the year. Charities are chosen based on their alignment with the school's mission.
- Parents and guardians of Annunciation Catholic School students have many opportunities to further their own faith formation.
- The parish also provides many adult faith formation opportunities as well.
- In addition, Annunciation Catholic School offers parents and guardians the opportunity to serve.

Domain 2: Governance and Leadership

Collaborative Leadership

- The Advisory Council membership represents a diversity of stakeholders, includes parent (50%), non-parent (50%), and community members.
- The Council assists the principal in developing school policies and reports progress and accomplishments on a monthly basis.
- The governing body ensures continuity and stability through leadership and succession as

the term of office for voting members is three years, up to two consecutive terms (except for Chair and Vice Chair), and the Vice Chair succeeds to the office of Chair upon completion or interruption of the Chair's term of office. Leadership Team and Advisory Council work collaboratively and consistently. Leadership Team and Advisory Council can carry out functions in the absence of one of its members.

- Members of the Advisory Council are part of committees in the Diocese and periodically meet with pastors who are in contact with the Bishop. Effort will be made to contact the Bishop, due to a busy schedule.
- The school's leadership team and Advisory Council engage in open communication with the diocesan education office. Principal and Advisory Council attend and are part of other committees at the Diocese office.
- The Pastor and Principal share the same vision and mission for the school and the Advisory Council shares a variety of skills/perspectives for the on-going benefit of the school.
- The Advisory Council self-evaluates annually, with a report being sent out to the staff and Advisory Council.

Forward Thinking

- Principal holds a doctorate in educational leadership and 26 years of experience as an administrator.
- The school leadership engages the school community to ensure a school culture that embodies the mission and vision. Principal is constantly seen around campus greeting students and community.
- The pastor, principal, and dean share responsibility for the oversight of hiring personnel.
- Formal Assessment of faculty in compliance with diocesan policies.
- The school leader/leadership team serve as the initiator, promoter, planner, and supporter of collaboration among the school's stakeholders and provide them with clearly delineated goals, objectives, assessment protocols and budgets.
- Faculty is led to continuously review curriculum and update Curriculum Maps as needed.
- There is evidence that a strategic plan has been developed, implemented, and assessed through the collaborative efforts of the school's leader/leadership team and governing body.
- Leadership team clearly demonstrates the importance of regular communication about specific initiatives - prior to, during, and after implementation.

Domain 3: Academic Excellence

Faith Integration Across the Curriculum

- The school consistently fosters a strong presence of faith in both lessons and classroom environments.
- Teachers thoughtfully integrate faith into all subject areas, creating opportunities for students to explore and deepen their spiritual understanding.
- Students are encouraged to ask insightful questions and engage meaningfully with their faith in the context of their academic studies.

21st-Century Skills and Technology Integration

- Students are developing essential 21st-century skills through the thoughtful integration of age-appropriate technology across all grade levels.
- The school ensures safe and effective use of technology, with a 1:1 device program that supports individual learning needs.
- Teachers utilize interactive whiteboards to enhance lessons, actively engaging students and capturing their attention in a dynamic learning environment.

STREAM Program and Project-Based Learning

- The school's robust STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) program provides students with engaging, project-based learning opportunities.
- Through this hands-on approach, students are encouraged to think critically, solve complex problems creatively, and innovate solutions. As part of the program, students are challenged to not only find creative solutions to problems but also to refine and enhance their work, fostering a growth mindset and a commitment to excellence.

Individualized and Specialized Support Given to All Learners

- The school has highly qualified faculty that supports every students' needs.
- Students with exceptional needs work with resource and special education teachers that assists with the development of their support plans and monitoring their progress.

Domain 4: Operational Vitality

Structures of Operational Support

- There is strong collaboration between the school and parish to manage facilities, HR, planning, and the budget.
- Finance Committee is comprised of community members who have professional experience in business and non-profits.
- Councils and administration monitor the budget closely and keep all purchasing and growth aligned with the school's mission and vision.

Safe Modern Facilities

- Parents, students, and staff members have strong confidence in the school's management, maintenance, and security of the facilities, equipment, and technology. All additions to the school, be it buildings, equipment, or technology, are in line with the school's mission and philosophy and are done for the betterment of the students, staff, and community.
- School growth has provided facilities that allow students and teachers the space needed for success.
- School buildings are designed with purpose to foster community within the students and teachers.

Institutional Advancement

- Finances and enrollment are a strength for Annunciation.
- Current communication, fundraising, and marketing strategies leave the school thriving and open to growth.
- Yearly expenses are able to be fully covered by tuition, donors, and fundraisers, while keeping tuition lower than 65.5% of schools in the valley.
- Enrollment continues to be at capacity, with a wait list for each grade level.

Critical Growth Areas as Identified by the School Self-Study

- Domain 1:
 - Not all teachers have completed the initial catechist certification through the Kino Institute.
 - There is a need for more faith formation opportunities especially for teachers.
- Domain 2: The faculty, staff, and parent need to be more informed of the membership

and functioning of the Advisory Board and Finance Council.

- Domain 3: • Collaboration with CCUSD in regard to Child Studies/SpEd, OT, PT, and Speech is limited and not always effective.
 - The school does not have a guidance program to support mental health and other social/emotional challenges.
- Domain 4: • The school does not currently have a facilities, equipment, and technology plan.
 - Preparing students for 21st century learning is always a challenge due to the constant evolution of new technologies and the cost of hardware, software, and training.

Additional Critical Growth Areas Identified by the Visiting Committee

none

Final Comments by the Visiting Committee

As a Visiting Committee, our time at Annunciation Catholic School can be summed up in one word; special. The school and parish community are welcoming and supportive of one another, and parent involvement on campus is exceptional. Parents are truly viewed and respected as the primary educators of their children and partner with staff to ensure that their children are thriving academically, socially, and spiritually.

Honoring and forming the whole child is of top priority to staff, administration, and volunteers. This is evident from the differentiation and support offered to students of all needs. Students are kind, respectful, and encouraging to each other and to adults. Teachers work together to give students the time and space to be successful and take interest in their lives. The implementation of effective technology provides students the opportunity to grow in 21st century skills necessary for success in their futures, and helps them to learn to be good digital citizens. We saw the SLEs come to life on campus in every classroom we visited and in every student we spoke to.

But what stood out to us the most, was the genuine faith and joy that we experienced on campus. Students love their school. Teachers love their jobs. Parents are so proud of the work that's being done here and the lasting impact that the school has had on their children. Teachers, parents, and students feel supported and heard, and we can tell that everyone, especially Dr. Pristash puts their heart and soul into the mission of this beautiful school. God was brought up in every lesson we witnessed, and the desire of the young people on campus to grow in their faith and have a relationship with Jesus is a testament to the work that is being done by each and everyone.