

The Report of the Visiting Committee

**Holy Family Parish School
Kirkland Washington 98115**

Archdiocese of Seattle

Prepared for: WESTERN CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION and

NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS

**Process for School Improvement
March 14-16, 2007**

VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

Holy Family Parish School
7300 120th Ave. NE.
Kirkland, Washington 98033-8121

March 14-16, 2007

The views expressed in the following report represent those of the entire evaluation team. The committee wishes to thank the school community for the hospitality shown the team members. The committee wishes to express appreciation for all of those persons who, using the *Process for School Improvement* as a guide, completed the WCEA-NAAS Self-Evaluation at Holy Family Parish School.

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PREFACE

The members of the Visiting Committee extend to the community of Holy Family School, Kirkland our sincere appreciation for their warm and gracious hospitality to us. Please be assured that we are most impressed by the commitment of the entire school community to the spiritual, educational, and personal welfare of each student at Holy Family School.

We are grateful for the work and cooperation that made the self-evaluation meaningful. It is evident from the Self-Study, the interviews, the classroom visits, and all of the evidence gathered that the entire school community had input into the *Process for School Improvement*.

We encourage you in all your efforts as you implement your School Improvement Action Plan. The Team found our three days at Holy Family School professionally rich and personally rewarding. We experienced a community where everyone is striving to provide a Catholic environment where quality education is a priority.

We wish to thank all of you, pastor, principal, faculty, staff, parents, and students for your warm and gracious hospitality.

Chapter I

The Student/Community Profile

Holy Family Parish School is located in Kirkland, the heart of Seattle's Eastside. In 1955, Archbishop Edward J. O'Dea directed Father Donald Conger, pastor of Holy Family Parish, to begin construction of a new church building. A ten-acre tract was purchased in December 1955 and construction began on the church, school, rectory, convent and parish hall. In August 1957, five Dominican sisters of the Congregation of St. Thomas Aquinas staffed the convent. The school opened under the direction of the Dominican Sisters of Saint Thomas Aquinas on September 18, 1957 serving two hundred twenty students in six grades. The sisters continued classroom teaching through the late sixties and early 1970s as more lay teachers joined the school staff.

With the opening of the Evergreen Floating Bridge in 1963, rapid growth and development in Kirkland created growth in the parish. Today Holy Family Parish serves 1900 families with over 70 ministries. Today the school serves 260 students from 169 families in grades Pre-K-8.

In 1998, in response to rapid growth, the parish developed a master plan to renovate and expand its facilities to more adequately meet the demands of its growing community. This plan is divided into four phases. The Holy Family Parish Education Center was completed and opened in September 2001. This addition included a new interactive Science Lab, Technology Lab, Library and Administrative offices. The parish is currently in phase two of the plan which will fund a new parish center. The center will include a large-capacity meeting space, a dedicated nursery, a stage for performances, a kitchen and parish administrative offices. Parking and soccer/play field upgrades will also be included.

Since the 2001 accreditation visit, Holy Family Parish School has had four administrative philosophies as the leadership of the school changed four times during the five intervening years. With each change, the school experienced a period in which short-term decisions were enacted, but long-range planning was postponed. Administrators, educators, and parent leaders recognized the rationales behind decision postponement. Overall, the educational process remained stable throughout these challenges.

Holy Family Parish School is coeducational, with a capacity enrollment of 270 students. At present, 99.6% of the 260 student population is Catholic. Enrollment patterns have remained stable for many years with a wait list in many classes. The average rate of withdrawal over the past six years was 4.2%. Approximately 29% of the total student withdrawal during that time was in the upper grades. Most students who withdrew began public junior high and continued in the public school system for their high school education.

During the past 3 years, the school has had an increase in ethnic diversity. The ethnic population in Holy Family Parish School community also reflects the income level of the Eastside. These students come to the school well prepared and within the norms of the student population.

Holy Family Parish School's standardized test results reflect its students' strong academic performance. The DIBELS is given each trimester. Prior to the spring of 2006, the ITBS was administered each spring. WASL is administered each year. All teachers are literacy teachers and all teachers have been trained in the Four-Square Writing method. Students' WASL scores for writing have improved since 2004.

During the last five years, 136 students have graduated from Holy Family Parish School. Of that population, 84.5% attend a Catholic high school. All of the students who applied to Catholic high schools were accepted by at least one. In the past two years, 30% of Holy Family graduates attending Catholic high schools were admitted with honors and awarded merit scholarships.

Of the 169 school families, 95 completed the parent survey that was distributed in the spring of 2006. This represents 56.2% of the school's population. Parent participation in the 2001 accreditation survey was 100%. No conclusive rationale has been found for this discrepancy in participation. The parent population is well educated with over 80% of parents holding at least a Bachelor's Degree. The income level of the Holy Family parent population coincides with the income level ranges on the Eastside, as provided by the cities of Redmond and Kirkland. Attendance at Kid's Club, a before, during and after-school childcare program, has increased over the past three years as more families have two parents in the workplace.

The school facility underwent significant improvement during its remodel which has had a positive impact on student learning. The school now has a dedicated reading room for the reading specialist to conduct small group instruction. A technology center was built to accommodate instruction for an entire class. The administration area increased in size allowing for more staff meeting and planning areas, a private counseling office, and a dedicated health room. Currently, the school has nine classrooms, a visual and performing arts room, a reading resource room, a science lab, a conference room/counseling office, a faculty room, a business office, a health room, a large workroom, a social hall, and a gymnasium with a CYO regulation volleyball and basketball court.

The 2006-2007 faculty and staff, both certified and non-certified, consists of 41 females and one male. The teaching staff consists of twelve classroom teachers, seven specialists, six instructional assistants, five support personnel and two administrators. Fifty percent of the teaching staff has attained a master's degree, and 22% of the teaching staff is currently enrolled in continuing education programs. Twenty-one percent of the teaching staff has Catechetical Certification through the Seattle Archdiocese.

During the 2001 accreditation, class size emerged as an area for growth. Since that time, improvements have been made and instructional assistants are assigned to each classroom for half of the school day. Scheduling changes have been made that allow for class sizes of 15 for specialist classes such as technology, handbells, library, and dance/movement. Over the past five years, core subjects have been paired with a specialist class on an alternating basis for the purpose of smaller group instruction.

Chapter II

Progress Report

The school improvement plan in the 2001 self-study by the Holy Family Parish School staff and supported by the visiting team involved three target areas. These were to reduce the student-adult ratio, hire a math specialist, and increase integration in all areas of the curriculum.

Due to frequent turnover in the administration, implementation of and focus on the school improvement plan has been delayed and inconsistent. However, since the fall of 2005, the staff and administration have focused on the process of self-study and school improvement. In spite of the variety of leadership styles over the past five years, the quality of education has been consistent and the Holy Family Parish School staff has made improvements to the curriculum.

Beginning in the fall of 2001, instructional assistants were scheduled for 50% of the teaching day in grades K-5 and 33% of the teaching day in grades 6-8. The following school year, classes were divided into two equal groups to attend library, technology, speech and some music classes, thus lowering the student-adult ratio. In the fall of 2005, instructional assistants were scheduled for 50% of the teaching day in all grades; this increased to 60% of the teaching day for kindergarten in the fall of 2006 and an assistant was hired for music classes attended by groups of thirty students.

The second target for school improvement was to “expand faculty to include a math specialist to support student learning.” At this time, Holy Family Parish School does not have a math specialist. In August 2005, the junior high math teacher hosted a teacher workshop to present strategies for creating ten-minute mini-lessons designed to introduce students to curricular areas generally not covered in the course of the year. In January 2007, a former teacher who is a parent volunteer began creating mini-lessons for teachers to have available in their classrooms for use during the brief times between activities or whenever there is an unexpected ten-fifteen minute time period. Implementation of these mini-lessons has not yet begun. Additionally, the Holy Family technology curriculum includes programs that allow students to practice their basic math skills.

The third target area for improvement was “increased use of integration in all subjects across the curriculum.” The strategies and interventions listed in 2001 highlighted integration with technology. Some subject areas are integrated with technology and a number of teachers have designed strategies to connect other curricular areas as well. In the junior high curriculum, the English, writing, social studies and literature curriculums have been combined to form a humanities block for grades 7 and 8. Junior High teachers meet every Tuesday morning to discuss curricular plans and to plan opportunities for integration of subject matter, assignments and assessment. Teachers in kindergarten through 6th grade meet informally with specialist teachers to discuss opportunities for integration within the curriculum. Teachers and administration agree that a formalized meeting and planning time will enhance and increase integration through all of the grade levels.

In addition to the three target areas identified in the 2001 School Improvement Plan, the visiting committee identified two additional areas as critical Areas for Follow-Up. These are:

- Continued efforts to align all school business practices with Archdiocesan guidelines.
- Allocation of funds to strengthen library resources to enhance the curriculum.

The main concern regarding business practices was the large amount of money from auction proceeds and other Parents' Club fundraisers that were held by parent volunteers in accounts outside the control of the school or parish administration. Parents' Club was voting on many expense line items of the school operating budget. During the 2000-2001 school year, the pastor and principal spearheaded major reform of financial practices based on Archdiocesan recommendations. Personnel change in the spring of 2004 provided the opportunity for Holy Family Parish School administration to bring accountability and management of the Scrip, development, auction, yearbook, and other funds back to the school business office. Currently, all school funds are under the umbrella of the parish administration, and all business practices are aligned with Archdiocesan policies.

A new library was created as part of the 2001 remodel project and is used for large group instruction, private study and recreational reading. In an effort to strengthen library resources to enhance the curriculum, the school budget reflects a line item designated for library materials. Additionally, each year the librarian organizes a book fair, and the proceeds are used for library materials. The 2006 auction "Fund an Item" raised monies for literacy centers in each classroom. This allowed for the purchase of books at each grade and ability level to be available in each classroom as well as in the school library.

Chapter III

Self-Study Process

The Holy Family Parish community is commended for undertaking this self-study process. This is the second time that Holy Family Parish School has used the Process for School Improvement. The Schoolwide Learning Expectations are the result of revisions to the SLE's that had been developed and adopted during the 1999-2001 self-study.

The Holy Family Parish School student is:

1. A Faithful Catholic who:
 - demonstrates care, compassion, and respect for all human life
 - reveals Catholic identity through prayer, reflection, and participation in the liturgy
 - lives out Gospel values in service to school and parish communities
 - demonstrates a basic understanding of the teachings and history of the Catholic church
 - is aware of global issues related to Catholic Social Justice Teachings

2. A Lifelong Learner who:
 - demonstrates a strong understanding of basic skills
 - utilizes critical thinking and problem solving skills
 - practices strong organizational skills and study habits
 - utilizes literacy for learning and pleasure
 - pursues personal and academic goals
 - uses technology effectively for learning, communication, and enjoyment
 - lives a balanced life of health and fitness
 - appreciated and participates in the fine arts and humanities
 - demonstrates good sportsmanship in interactive and cooperative play

3. An Effective Communicator who:
 - writes clearly and creatively
 - listens attentively to others
 - speaks publicly with poise and confidence
 - works cooperatively in groups respecting the feelings, opinions and ideas of others
 - recognizes and models positive leadership

4. A Globally Aware Citizen who:
 - practices social responsibility by responding to the needs of the greater global community
 - demonstrates knowledge of current events and their effect on our world
 - exhibits an understanding of and appreciation for individual and cultural diversity
 - takes pride in personal roots and heritage

- develops a solid sense of self-esteem and self-discipline that is reflected in social behaviors
- practices stewardship by sharing time, talent, and treasure in his/her community

B. Process Used to Determine Schoolwide Learning Expectations

In the fall of 2005, Holy Family Parish School established a team to begin a review process of the school's mission, philosophy and Student Learning Expectations. This process involved several months of research and input. The team met initially as a committee for review of the existing Student Learning Expectations. Then each member did independent research and returned to the committee meeting with recommendations and changes. After accessing all the relevant input from various constituents, the committee gave its final approval and in late November 2005, the Schoolwide Learning Expectations were presented to the faculty and unanimously approved. The committee chair and administration presented the revised Schoolwide Learning Expectations to the School Commission and to a parent representative committee for additional review. Input from these presentations was discussed and ideas incorporated where applicable. In February 2006, the selected commissions and parent group approved the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

1. Involvement and Collaboration of all Stakeholders in the Self-Study

The Accreditation School Improvement Process began in the fall of 2005 prior to the current administration who began in January 2006. All faculty and staff were an integral part of the *School Improvement Process*. Input into the mission, statement of philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations was received from the School Commission and leaders in the parent community through small focus groups. They reviewed the mission, statement of philosophy and the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and made comments which were considered before finalizing these documents. All parents received surveys as means to provide input. All parents were informed about the process and the school's progress through parent bulletins and coffees with the principal. Some parents indicated little knowledge about the particulars of the accreditation process, while others were very familiar with the process and the goals the school had established.

2. The clarification of the school's purpose and the Schoolwide Learning Expectations

The school's philosophy, mission statement and SLE's are clarified through the self-study. There is evidence of a strong commitment to Catholic values across the school's programs. The school's mission statement and philosophy are supported through the SLE's and the evidence provided in the self-study. Posters displaying the school's mission and Student Learning Expectations are displayed in all classrooms and teachers include a focus on SLE's in lesson plans and assessment.

3. The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning in relation to the criteria and Schoolwide Learning Expectations

Teachers at Holy Family Parish School use a variety of formal and informal assessments to measure student progress toward meeting curricular goals as well as to evaluate academic programs. ITBS and WASL scores are compiled and graphed. They are presented to teachers for analysis and are used to inform instruction. Formal assessment instruments include the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) which is given each trimester to students in kindergarten through second grade. In the spring of 2006, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) was given to students in grades 3rd, 5th and 6th. The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) is given to students in grades 4 and 7. Beginning in the spring of 2007, the WASL will be administered in grades 3rd-5th and 7th.

Some Holy Family Parish School teachers use scoring sheets with specific criteria or guidelines to evaluate and assess student work. Authentic assessments include student generated work samples in a portfolio format, performing a task, student self-assessment, and construction and/or application of a product.

4. The development of a schoolwide action plan that integrates subject/area program and support plans to address identified growth needs.

Holy Family Parish School developed an action plan to address three areas identified through the self-study process. This action plan is a direct derivative of the areas of growth identified throughout the self-study and are the top three areas for growth identified after all areas of growth were compiled and prioritized. Those areas of growth that were identified as having the greatest impact on maximizing the achievement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations became the action plan. These goals are:

- to develop for each subject a written curriculum map of instructional goals, activities and resources used that are correlated with the SLE's, grade level EALRs and Archdiocesan standards,
- to develop and implement a schoolwide system for tracking student growth toward meeting standard
- to design new report cards that correlate with the SLE's, EALRs and Archdiocesan standards.

5. The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan

Each action plan goal includes a timeline for implementation, the identification of persons' responsible for action plan steps, resources needed and assessment. The Staff Development Committee, which acted as the leadership team for the purpose of this self-study, has as its goal to review and evaluate the school action plan, generate specific goals for the school year and facilitate curriculum review.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

A. Organization for Student Learning

School Purpose

- **To what extent has the school established a clear statement of philosophy that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity, thoroughness of instruction, a focus on the needs of the whole person, parents as primary educators, teachers as facilitators of learning and recognition of the dignity of all members of the school community?**

Holy Family Parish School has developed a faith community where all members are key components of the school's Catholic identity. Holy Family Parish School has created a mission and statement of philosophy that has identified itself as a community seeking to inspire, educate and prepare their students for a Christ-centered life of learning, faith, and service. Wanting to pay special attention to the words, "Inspire, Educate and Prepare", the school's mission and philosophy statements are prominently displayed in the entrance foyer of the school, as well as in classrooms, school handbooks and development pamphlets and serve as constant reminders of the school's purpose. The students participate in liturgy, take part in the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation, and learn prayers each year. There is an emphasis on actively involving students in the preparation of liturgies, in addition to having students serve as readers, altar servers or musicians.

The mission statement's concise structure allows the entire community of Holy Family Parish School to easily remember its shared vision. First approved in 1999 and reviewed in 2005, it clearly reflects what and who the Holy Family Parish School community is. The school's service learning process, PARC (Plan, Act, Reflect, and Celebrate) began this year and further expands an already strong commitment to service.

The faculty at Holy Family Parish School participates in a rich faith life. Staff attends mass together to begin each school year and attend Archdiocesan theological updates. Prayer among the faculty is an important part of the Holy Family Parish School experience as evidenced through weekly Friday morning prayer gatherings, a yearly faculty retreat each February, as well as prayer to begin each faculty meeting and regular prayer gatherings throughout the year.

The school's statement of philosophy reflects a commitment to prepare students for success in a changing and challenging world while fostering the development of the whole person with a commitment to academic excellence. In order to actualize this philosophy, teachers combine traditional strategies with a variety of practices to help students attain deeper levels of knowledge and understanding. Teachers take classes to stay current with the developmental needs of their students and utilize an understanding of multiple intelligences as they develop curriculum and instruction.

The commitment to the development of the whole person is reflected in the school's mission statement and becomes a reality through a partnership of family, school, parish, and community. This partnership helps to develop the spiritual, academic, personal/physical, and service potential of each student. Students are guided to act and respond with compassion and

justice, discovering the satisfaction of helping those in need while strengthening the concept of Catholic Social Justice Teachings.

Parents support learning at Holy Family Parish School through homework guidance, volunteer hours, and enrichment opportunities. There is a strong connection between the teachers and parents as evidenced by weekly, biweekly, or monthly newsletters and the principal's regularly scheduled conversation and coffee mornings in the social hall. Parents take a lead role in sacramental preparation and are encouraged to use parish and school teachers as resources.

Teachers are recognized as the facilitators of learning at Holy Family Parish School. They build on a foundation of academic excellence by emphasizing basics in education and by providing opportunities for students to explore subjects that will enrich their lives. Many strategies and methodologies are used at all grade levels in order to establish and maintain a high level of learning for all students. Lessons based in Gospel values are used to teach dignity and respect for all members of the school community.

Governance

- **To what extent does the school administration seek input/participation from members of the school community, adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and drive the learning expectations of the school, delegate implementation to the professional staff and is committed to sharing the Catholic vision, mission and goals?**

The pastor of Holy Family Parish oversees the school. Over the course of his pastorate, he has initiated the process of securing administrative personnel multiple times. During these times, guidance, management, and operations were collaborative. The pastor feels that the current relationship between the parish and the school is vibrant and positive. He also believes the community's commitment to living the Catholic faith and Gospel values is readily apparent.

The pastor and principal seek input and participation from members of the school community through the School Commission. The commission hosts a yearly "State of the School" meeting for parents where the financial status, operational and organizational structures of the school are outlined.

The faculty and administration meet each week to integrate curriculum, delegate responsibilities, and conduct staff development. Email is utilized to share information on events and schedules and teachers are encouraged to provide input to the principal on curriculum and staff development through individual meetings and discussion at faculty meetings.

The Parent's Club plays a significant role in overseeing activities such as fundraising, volunteering, and community building events and plays a key role in the success of the school.

Leadership

- **To what extent does the school leadership encourage the cultivation of Catholic Christian values and the spiritual formation of the school community, focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, empower the staff, and ensure shared accountability for student learning?**

Holy Family Parish School's leadership encourages the cultivation of Catholic values and the spiritual formation of the school community. The leadership accomplishes this through the development of a variety of faith-based experiences. Each year, a value or theme is identified through the staff's beginning of school year, in-depth prayer experience. Signs and symbols of the Catholic faith are seen throughout the entire building. Prayer tables are evident in each classroom, as are dedicated prayer spaces in the main office, the administrative offices, and the faculty room.

Each month, a particular class plans an all-school liturgy, with students serving as readers and liturgical ministers. Classes are encouraged to attend daily mass during the course of the year. The pastor's commitment to the spiritual formation of the students is apparent in his homilies relating to issues that concern school-age children in addition to his classroom visits each trimester.

The school leadership and faculty have worked diligently to create and implement the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. SLE's are posted in each classroom for the students to study, learn, and understand.

After 4 years of frequent change in leadership, the new principal and vice principal have brought a sense of stability, support and a vision to the school. The principal places a high value on professional development. Teachers are encouraged to seek out professional development opportunities and are provided a yearly stipend to spend on professional development. A Staff Development Committee recommends specific goals for the school year which are worked on during faculty meetings. Some recent examples of staff development are 4-Square Writing for grades K-6 and Inquiry Science Training.

Student progress is shared with parents frequently throughout the year, which helps to ensure shared accountability for student learning. A reading specialist closely monitors student progress in the primary and intermediate grades.

Staff

- **To what extent are the school leadership and staff professionally qualified, dedicated to the school’s philosophy and mission, and committed to ongoing professional development that will promote student learning? To what extent are the administration and staff prepared to lead by example and work collaboratively with parishes to create communities of faith?**

Holy Family Parish School’s philosophy and mission statements are the guiding force behind all decisions. The faculty demonstrates their commitment to modeling the attributes of a faithful Catholic through their consistent presence and participation in Mass, providing various opportunities for individual and schoolwide prayer, and through their service to the community.

The faculty and administration of Holy Family Parish School are professionally qualified and certified by the State of Washington. A high percentage of staff hold advanced degrees and all are educated in and committed to the school’s mission and philosophy. Teachers are encouraged to further their own professional development.

Teachers are encouraged to achieve their catechetical certification through the Archdiocese. Four teachers have completed the certification process. The staff is committed to furthering their personal development, both spiritually and professionally, in order to promote student learning and ensure their own life-long learning. All professional and support staff attend a yearly 3-day in-service related to the year’s academic and spiritual goals. As part of this in-service, the principal and Staff Development Committee set professional development goals for the coming school year.

Holy Family Parish School has a contract with a licensed marriage and family therapist. This person is on site one day per week, and is available to students and staff at the request or referral of staff or parents. The therapist is on-call to the administration 24 hours a day.

School Environment

- **To what extent is the school a safe, healthy, nurturing environment which fosters community and the achievement of religious and educational goals and is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for each student and a respect for diversity?**

At Holy Family Parish School, all members of the school community work together to create and nurture a safe and healthy environment that brings their mission and philosophy to life. Anchored by a Safety Committee, a safe environment for learning is created by a system of locked outside doors, controlled campus access, and a comprehensive student safety plan that addresses the routines for all emergencies. Visitors must sign in and out and wear a visitor pass. A volunteer school nurse coordinator is available and instructional assistants and parent volunteers monitor students on the playground.

The school building is physically attached to the church, encouraging parishioners to view the school as an extension of the parish. Eighth graders serve as “prayer buddies” to all grades, furthering their leadership development and modeling regular faith-filled prayer. A mentoring

program welcomes new families to the school community. The staff is committed to bringing diversity into the classroom experience. A Cultural Fair, attended by students, parents, and parishioners supporting Holy Family's commitment to teach students to respect and care for each other. The social studies and fine arts programs provide opportunities for students to explore global and cultural practices while learning about other societies.

The staff, parents, and parishioners work together to cultivate a strong Catholic community, linked together by faith. Expectations for both students and parents are stated specifically in a parent-student policy handbook along with shared individual class expectations. Academic expectations include both student achievement targets and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Targets and Student Learning Expectations are posted during the lesson to focus student learning. Students are able to identify the goal of a lesson and connect it to the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Reporting Student Progress

- **To what extent does the school leadership and staff regularly review and report to the rest of the school community student progress toward accomplishing the school's learning expectations?**

Procedures are in place to ensure that student progress is reviewed and assessed to determine the degree to which students are achieving the Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Teachers consider the SLEs both in the design of lessons and the assessment of lessons. Students understand and are able to articulate the connection between the SLEs and their learning outcomes. A formal process for assessing and communicating student progress toward accomplishing the SLEs is being developed.

School Improvement Process

- **To what extent does the school leadership facilitate school improvement as a process which (1) drives plans of action that embody quality learning for students, (2) has school community commitment and involvement and (3) effectively guides the work of the school; and do the leadership and instructional staff in cooperation with the rest of the school community demonstrate accountability through the monitoring of the schoolwide action plan implementation?**

An unusually high rate of administrative turnover over the past five years has resulted in inconsistent application of the school improvement process. For example, a written five-year plan was begun in 2003, but it has not been reviewed or revised since it was written. The Staff Development Committee has done an admirable job of helping the school through difficult times of transition and instability within the school administration. The purpose of the Staff Development Committee is to review and evaluate the school action plan, generate specific goals for the school year as they relate to long range curriculum goals and facilitate curriculum review and the adoption of new textbooks. The school administration is clearly committed to engaging the entire school community in the continuing process of monitoring the school plan and providing reports on student progress.

Key Areas of Strength for Organization for Student Learning

- In spite of the transition and instability within the administration over the past five years, students at Holy Family Parish School have continued to thrive and make gains in their learning.
- The daily lived experience at Holy Family Parish School is highly congruent with the mission and philosophy of the school.
- The staff and administration are lifelong learners. Staff development is promoted in a variety of ways through workshops, technological updates, professional guest speakers, and classes. Money, time, and resources are allocated by the administration to facilitate this development.
- The school leadership provides clear direction to ensure that Schoolwide Learning Expectations are being met. This is done through clear communication, facilitating school improvement, and empowering the staff to share accountability.
- A safe, healthy, and caring environment is evident throughout the school. With this environment in place, optimal student learning occurs at Holy Family Parish School.
- The current school administration – principal and vice-principal - have brought a sense of stability, support and a vision to the school.
- The availability of an on-site therapist provides additional support for students and staff.
- The pastor is commended for his support of the school.

Key Areas of Growth for Organization for Student Learning

- Update long term curriculum plan/focus in conjunction with the Archdiocesan calendar of textbook review.
- Develop for each subject a clearly written curriculum map of instructional goals, activities, and resources available showing correlation with Schoolwide Learning Expectations, grade-level EALRs and Archdiocesan standards to facilitate curricular integration and articulation.
- Develop a plan for teachers and administrators to regularly meet to communicate student concerns.
- Establish a School Improvement Committee to implement the new action plan and other school improvement activities.
- Develop and implement a process to regularly review and report to the school community accomplishment of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

B. Curriculum and Instruction

What Students Learn

- **To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose, strengthens Catholic identity and results in the student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?**

Holy Family Parish School provides a broad and relevant curriculum that is based on its philosophy, mission, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Curriculum is assessed and chosen for implementation using an ongoing process by the principal and staff. Since the last accreditation, the principal and staff have made several improvements to the curriculum including implementing the new Archdiocesan guidelines for religious instruction, reevaluating the math curriculum and adopting new textbooks, adopting an inquiry based science curriculum, adding a library center to each classroom, and adding a visual arts curriculum. Curriculum integration was one of the school's targets for improvement. The primary and intermediate grades have worked diligently to integrate content area instruction. Many lessons integrate literature, social studies, math, art and/or music. Improvements have also been made in this area by integrating social studies, literature, and grammar/writing for the 7th and 8th grades into a humanities block and integrating technology into the curriculum whenever possible. Holy Family Parish School also offers classes in music, choir, handbells, drama, dance, guitar, and speech to further students' experience of and appreciation for the fine arts and humanities.

The expansion of the library and technology center demonstrates the school's commitment to meeting the future technology needs of the students and to further integrate technology into the curriculum by creating the space for students to access and use the technology available.

Catholic values permeate the curriculum. Prayer is part of the daily experience of the students, and classes attend Mass together regularly. The school is establishing a service learning program. Students have many opportunities to learn about, practice and experience their Catholic faith and Gospel values are incorporated into the general curriculum. Students are taught to treat others with dignity and courtesy at all times, to use good sportsmanship, and to follow the example of Jesus.

How Students Learn

- **To what extent does the Professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy and expectations?**

The Holy Family Parish School staff uses current state and Archdiocesan curriculum guidelines to plan learning experiences for students. Teachers use research-based knowledge learned from teacher workshops, staff development in-services, supplementary texts, Internet sources, and library reference materials.

Teachers use a variety of strategies and materials to recognize the uniqueness of each student and actively engage students in their learning experiences. Common strategies are direct instruction, cooperative learning, group discussion, problem solving, teaching to multiple learning styles, peer tutors, mnemonics, role playing, drill and practice games, peer conferencing, literature circles, and jigsaw questioning. The amount of time instructional assistants spend in the classroom has increased since the last accreditation. They work with individual students and small groups to provide support and remediation at various levels of abilities. Students in grades 3-8 participate in student-involved conferences by sharing goals, assignments, and progress with their parents.

Catholic values and teachings are integrated through discussions in all types of situations in the classroom, on the playground, and on field trips. Students receive daily religious instruction using textbooks and other learning activities. Students actively participate in service learning projects.

Literacy skills are integrated into mathematics instruction through solving story problems and communicating problem solving strategies used. Holy Family Parish School staff provides age appropriate teaching strategies. Kindergarteners learn math through a kinesthetic math program. Primary students work cooperatively at math stations. The 7th and 8th grade students are encouraged to enter local math competitions.

Teachers use a variety of methods to meet the Schoolwide Learning Expectations in literacy including the use of newly added classroom libraries, leveled reading groups, vocabulary textbooks, and the increase from a half-time to full-time reading specialist has benefited student learning. More effective use of her time allows her to work as a co-teacher with faculty. Instruction is designed in accordance with the school's philosophy with materials available for meeting the needs of individual learning styles.

Improvements have been made in the instruction and support of students' organizational practices and study skills. A school assignment notebook and daily homework policy has been implemented. Students are introduced to study skills such as note-taking, highlighting, worksheets, flashcards, games, books on tape, and videos to recap content. Common routines also help develop students' responsibility and organizational skills.

How Assessment is Used

- **Is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?**

An assortment of assessment methods and tools are utilized across grade levels at Holy Family Parish School. A variety of formal, informal, and performance assessments are used to measure student progress and make informed decisions when making adjustments to their curriculum and instruction. Classroom based assessments are tied to the state standards and SLE's. Since the last accreditation, an inquiry based science program has been added, which involves formal and informal assessments.

Teachers ensure students understand learning expectations through the use of multiple ways of communicating and standardizing the criteria. Some examples of ways they do this are through the use of scored rubrics, checklists of learning expectations, authentic writing samples, teacher-made tests, performance tasks, and more. A variety of assessments are used at Holy Family Parish School including; but not limited to, the following: student generated work samples in a portfolio, performing a task, student self-assessments, and construction and/or application of a product.

Student portfolios are used during student-involved conferences to showcase students' accomplishments and skill development. Student self-assessment and reflection is also used to measure student progress towards learning objectives. Parents are informed regularly of student progress through reviewing work, participating in conferences, and receiving progress reports throughout the year.

Key Areas of Strength for Curriculum and Instruction

- Catholic values and teachings are integrated across the disciplines.
- Holy Family Parish School faculty and staff are committed professionals and engage in on-going professional staff development.
- Instructional aides provide small group and individual instruction.
- Student-centered assessment is an integral part of the assessment process.
- A strong academic curriculum prepares students to be life-long learners.
- A well developed and broad fine arts program provides students the opportunity to develop talents, as well as integrate the arts into the curriculum.

Key Areas of Growth for Curriculum and Instruction

- Continue integrating technology into the general curriculum.
- Develop and implement a schoolwide system for tracking student progress toward meeting standards. Document student progress each year to help students get the support they need at the beginning of each school year.
- Develop instructional and assessment strategies that reflect knowledge of the EALRs, ensuring what is taught and assessed aligns with state and archdiocesan standards.
- Develop consistent assessment practices between grade levels.
- Reporting to parents needs to clearly communicate academic progress. Report cards need to match assessment outcomes. The current K-8 report cards and progress reports need to be reviewed and revised to incorporate the EALRs, Archdiocesan standards and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

B. In-Depth Study--Religion

What Students Learn

- **To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose, strengthens Catholic identity and results in the student achievement of the Schoolwide learning expectations?**

Holy Family Parish School provides a challenging, coherent, and relevant religion curriculum for each student. Schoolwide Learning Expectations have been included throughout the scope and sequence developed for the entire program. Age appropriate curriculum guidelines are in place for all grade levels and are taught through the use of Sadlier textbooks. A clear process was used to review the current religion program. In the spring of 2007, the school plans to include Formation for Love and Chastity in the classroom curriculum; previously instruction took place in the home.

In addition to formal religion classes, students learn to become faithful Catholics in other ways. All grades celebrate liturgical events throughout the Church year and attend biweekly parish daily Mass. Students help with the preparation and celebration of many of these events. Prayer is part of each school day. Teachers collaborate with parish staff to engage students in meaningful service projects. Since the last accreditation, Holy Family Parish School has enhanced service learning by creating an advisory program in the 7th and 8th grades. They are also developing the Prepare, Act, Reflect, Celebrate (PARC) service-learning model throughout the school. Students participate in assemblies throughout the year to address and honor all of God's people.

Diversity is addressed in all classrooms. The inclusion of drama or skits, participation in parish life, and prayer buddies helps to address the needs of all learners. The intermediate grades compare Catholic beliefs, traditions, and practices with non-Catholics. Students in the upper grades discuss current social and political issues from a Catholic viewpoint and are exposed to a variety of prayer experiences.

Catholic values and Gospel messages are integrated into other subjects in a variety of ways. Science discussions include creation versus evolution theories. In all classrooms, discussion topics include respect and responsibility toward all human life and the environment. Eighth graders also work on a social justice research project.

Holy Family Parish School recognizes the parents as the primary educators in the spiritual and religious development of their children. Parents are informed about religious topics being studied and discussed through parent/teacher letters, grade level handbooks, take-home activity worksheets and tests, and homework assignments. Parent participation is encouraged in service projects. The administration educates parents on how they can partner with the school in religious formation in newsletters or evening parent meetings.

How Students Learn

- **To what extent does the Professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy and expectations?**

Teachers use a variety of approaches and teaching methods for religious instruction. Whole group instruction, small group discussions, self-reflection, group learning activities, chapter tests, posted targets, music, Gospel readings, storytelling, Bible projects, plays, and art are used as effective methods of teaching. Students also engage in learning through participation in liturgical celebrations and prayer services throughout the year. The parish priests engage the students in learning about their faith by visiting classrooms and when the students participate in Mass and the rosary with the parish. Service-learning projects provide another way for students to actively engage in faith development experiences.

Students collaborate with each other, their parents, teachers and the administration when learning about the Catholic faith. Students often voluntarily devote recess time to music rehearsals for school Masses. Students work with their parents to write essays and participate in service projects, and most students work with their parents on homework assignments for religion class. The principal and vice principal interact individually with students to celebrate successes, congratulate them on the reception of sacraments, and to support a student who is experiencing difficulty.

Religion is integrated and supported in many ways throughout all subject areas. Classroom libraries have a religion section. Powerpoint skills learned in the technology center are used in religion classes. In visual arts classes, students create religious themed artwork. Drama students study Passion, mystery and morality plays. Liturgical music is taught in all music classes. At each grade level of science, respect for life is emphasized, and Catholic values are reinforced. In social studies, community and family values are related to Catholic teachings. Discussions are held in literature classes on whether or not the moral and ethical behaviors of story characters reflect Catholic values.

How Assessment is Used

- **Is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the Schoolwide learning expectations?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?**

Religion assessment uses a variety of methods. Students' reverence and participation are observed during Mass and other prayer and liturgical services. Other forms of assessment used are class discussions, oral responses, written tests, one-on-one assessments, graphic organizers, trivia games, and informal questioning. Information gained from these assessments helps teachers to make informed decisions about when to incorporate review for extra practice. Portfolio assessments are also used. Tests are sometimes administered traditionally, and sometimes sent home to involve parents in the learning process.

Resources are allocated to supplement the religion textbooks. Some of the supplemental materials used include Bibles, Pflaum publication, *Student's Daily Prayer*, and the *Archdiocesan Book of Prayer*. Guest speakers are also welcomed to the school. The school staff attends theological in-service updates, catechesis and liturgical training, and yearly staff retreats to improve as religion teachers. The administration provides several publications to support the staff in their own spiritual development and development as a catechist.

Faith Experience

- **To what extent does the school community place high priority on frequent prayer and liturgical experiences that are developmentally and liturgically appropriate and meaningful as well as spiritual formation and support of the religious mission of the school?**

The Holy Family Parish School community gives regular evidence of meaningful expressions of worship and the centrality of prayer. Teachers join weekly for prayer as a staff. They also receive the sacraments on a regular basis in their own faith community and participate in their own family prayer and classroom prayer. Prayer is a daily part of each classroom, and the school gathers each morning for all-school prayer. Eighth grade students lead prayer in the classrooms on Friday mornings. Lent is celebrated as a school through events like a simple soup lunch on Ash Wednesday, a Seder meal (every two years), and Stations of the Cross presented by the 8th grade.

All teachers attend annual catechetical training workshops, and have completed the certification program or have begun the process.

Eighth grade students attend two retreats during the school year. The whole school is involved in the annual Christmas program, which includes Christ-centered music and prayer. Service projects, Reconciliation services, Bible stories, and discussions of the life of Jesus are other meaningful expressions of faith. A high percentage of parents believe a strength in the school is

the wide variety of prayer experiences, community service projects, spiritual opportunities and efforts made to develop a faith community within the school.

Each grade at Holy Family Parish School lives the mission of service by choosing, directing and leading service projects which include the entire student body. The school has begun implementing a more formal service learning process since the last accreditation to make a more thorough experience for the community. Students are also involved in the parish life through weekly liturgies, sacramental classes and programs, altar serving, handbell choirs, and activities such as raising awareness of the sister parish in Malawi or fundraising.

Prayer tables and religious bulletin boards are visible in the classrooms and hallways. Prayer is used in student gatherings, faculty meetings and parent meetings. The school provides many current religion and prayer resources for staff use.

The parish has embarked upon a program of whole-family catechesis. Second graders are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist in the classroom, while parents take classes through the parish to share in the preparation of their children. The Parents' Club Spirituality Committee leads a weekly rosary prayed after morning Mass, followed by a catechism study class for parents. The pastor presides over many school liturgies and leads the Reconciliation service. He is available to bless communities and makes scheduled visits to each classroom. The parish staff members are available to serve as Eucharistic ministers, occasionally take part in 8th grade retreats, and work closely with the principal and teachers on service projects.

Key Areas of Strength for Religion

- A conscious and deliberate effort is made to develop a faith community within the school.
- A variety of prayer experiences, community service projects, and spiritual formation opportunities are provided.
- Opportunities for participation in celebration of the Eucharist and other sacraments are available.
- Prayer is an observable and valued part of the life of the school.
- The purpose of service is explained as a call to discipleship and service learning opportunities are viewed as extensions of the school curriculum.
- The school staff collaborates with the parish staff and pastor.
- The school offers opportunities for parents to practice and nourish their own faith.

Key Areas of Growth for Religion

- Develop a process by which the Staff Development Committee plans regularly scheduled meetings to review curriculum, achievement, and assessment targets in the area of religion.
- Implement a uniform, schoolwide approach to conflict resolution.
- Challenge students and faculty to critique the school and society from the viewpoint of the poor and marginalized.
- Continue expanding the service learning program by extending it to service to the Church and connecting service projects to scripture readings.
- Encourage and support religion teachers in completing the Archdiocesan certification program.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

B. Curriculum and Instruction In-Depth Study- Literacy

What Students Learn

- **To what extent does the school provide a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose, strengthens Catholic identity and results in the student achievement of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?**

The primary literacy goal at Holy Family Parish School is to develop proficient readers who read for both learning and pleasure. Holy Family Parish School uses a challenging, coherent, and relevant literacy curriculum for each student. Holy Family Parish School uses the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) and the Seattle Archdiocesan Language Arts Curriculum to place an emphasis on literacy throughout its curricular content areas. The grade level literacy expectations help students to communicate effectively, solve problems, think conceptually, and apply skills in realistic situations. Through self-reflection, review of grade level expectations, and review of WASL scores, teachers identified the need to examine the literacy program as part of their in-depth study for this accreditation visit.

Within the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, students are asked to think critically and to communicate effectively through speech, writing and active listening. Teachers provide ample opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency in these areas. Some of these opportunities include, but are not limited to: discussing current topics, conducting research, debate, writing reports and oral presentations. Students and parents are expected and encouraged to read together regularly. Parent involvement is evident through the signing of reading logs, diaries, Friday folder communications, and portfolio conferences. The principal is also an integral part of the literacy program at Holy Family Parish School and visits the classrooms regularly to help foster and develop a positive rapport with students.

Catholic identity is apparent across all grade levels in the literacy program at Holy Family Parish School. One way religion is integrated is through the reading of the Gospel. Reading, reflecting on, and discussing the Sunday Gospel through the use of weekly Catholic periodicals help students better understand the message for Sunday's liturgy. There are various reading and writing assignments across grade levels that are aligned with the school's Catholic identity. Some of these include: writing prayers, performing skits, writing saint reports, and joint service projects. Students strengthen their communication skills through reading scriptures and petitions at all-school Masses.

Literacy integration at Holy Family Parish School is inclusive of all learners, challenges students, and leads students to integrate knowledge across all disciplines. This is evident through book talks, science journaling, problem solving strategies in math, and plays in drama class. In the upper grades, a humanities block has been established to act as an integrated curriculum course.

How Students Learn

- **To what extent does the Professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school's philosophy and expectations?**

Staff development has been an integral part of the literacy development at Holy Family Parish School. Staff development has included Four-Square Writing workshops, reading and discussing of literacy texts, training in writing assessment for the WASL, comparison of literacy curriculum with state and Archdiocesan standards and visits to other schools that model comprehensive literacy programs. Teachers connect new concepts to prior learning through experiences and activities that are engaging and meaningful for students. Some of these include reference tools, K-W-L charts, graphic organizers and real-life applications. Teachers are also encouraged to attend additional workshops geared toward grade level literacy.

Teachers employ various strategies and teaching methods for literacy instruction. Students participate in buddy reading, peer revising/editing, circle groups, study centers, partner reading and various other forms of learning. The teachers at Holy Family Parish School understand how students learn and develop, and help to provide support in various areas. In the intermediate grades students are involved in reading conferences with their teachers. They work together to set goals and identify learning strategies. Weekly reading logs are also used to help foster communication between teacher and student. Teachers and students also work together to create an effective learning environment. Each classroom is equipped with a library full of various materials and books leveled for that specific grade. A variety of books are available and the environment is inviting and comforting. All students also participate in Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time.

Teachers at Holy Family Parish School provide problem-solving activities and strategies that promote understanding, elaboration, flexibility and originality. Learning is built upon prior experiences and knowledge. Classroom activities which help to promote problem solving skills are scientific investigations, literature circle discussions, and student-led service projects.

Holy Family Parish School teachers recognize it may take longer for students with learning disabilities to process written information. Assignments may be altered, books on tape are available, options for extended exam times and written work may be read orally, to help students with their individual needs. A reading specialist is available to support students with diverse abilities. Appropriate accommodations are made for those students in need.

How Assessment is Used

- **Is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the Schoolwide Learning Expectations?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?**
- **Are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?**

A wide variety of assessment tools are used at Holy Family Parish School in regards to their literacy program. Teachers have a working knowledge of the state EALRs and students are exposed to the Student Learning Expectations and learning objectives as they relate to the state and Archdiocesan standards. The assessment practices are frequent and integrated in the teaching/learning process. The school voluntarily administers standardized tests which include the ITBS (prior to spring 2006), DIBELS and WASL. This data is used by teachers to look at the achievement levels of their students in relation to a representative student group.

Assessment drives instruction and precedes planning at Holy Family Parish School. Students and teachers also work collaboratively to review assessment needs, setting goals and to develop strategies for teacher-parent-student conferences. Teachers recognize that assessment, curriculum, and instruction are interconnected. Teachers often post achievement targets in their classrooms and use sample papers to discuss, determine and define readers' understanding of rubrics.

Holy Family Parish School also recognizes that effective assessment positively affects student learning. Along with formative and summative assessments, teachers also focus on assessing students' prior knowledge. Some ways they continue to do this are by using K-W-L charts, student inventories and surveys. These assessment tools are helpful in tracking individual progress and determining areas of need for different instructional approaches. Students in grades K-2nd are assessed three times per year to determine reading levels. Theme tests are used throughout various grade levels as well as journaling, discussion and hands-on approaches to assessment. In the older grades examples of summative assessments include written reports and projects. Students often journal and use notebooks to track their own learning as well as participate in teacher and student led discussions. Teachers across the grade levels are working with students to create rubrics and are exposing students to the importance of authentic assessment practices.

Time is spent at Holy Family Parish School during faculty meetings analyzing and interpreting data from standardized tests. The teachers have been improving their staff development needs in writing and have adopted the Four-Square writing program. Also the Read Naturally program was adopted by the reading specialist and librarian as a before school program with a focus on those students needing extra support in literacy. As a result, all students in the Read Naturally program met the standard on the WASL.

Assessment is the driving force for resource allocation. As a result of the 2004 WASL scores, teachers at Holy Family Parish School conducted an in-house professional development workshop and have increased the use of in-class theme tests. Teachers were involved in group discussions focused on the book *Mosaic of Thought* and attended Damien Cooper's assessment workshop in the summer of 2006.

Assessments are often integrated and modified for students needing special accommodations. Holy Family Parish School's assessment practices are fair and equitable for all students. Teachers strive to provide a wide range of methods for assessing student learning.

Key Areas of Strength for Literacy

- Teachers use a wide variety of formative, summative and authentic assessment methods.
- Access to school and classroom libraries, as well as an on-site reading specialist, helps those students in-need by offering extra support and guidance.
- Grade level literacy expectations challenge students and are inclusive of all learners.
- There is a strong reading and writing curriculum that begins in kindergarten and continues through the grades.
- The teachers understand how students learn and develop, and provide learning opportunities that support intellectual, social and emotional growth.

Key Areas of Growth for Literacy

- Allocate more time for individual reading conferences and informal reading inventories.
- Provide more opportunities for immediate feedback through actively engaging students.
- Literacy instruction needs to be integrated and taught across the curriculum.
- Continue expansion of student-centered assessment as an integral part of the assessment process.
- Continue to provide practice and guidance in developing student self-assessments that reflect their understanding of the EALRs.
- Clearly communicate student progress in literacy to parents on a regular basis.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

C. Support for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

Student Connectedness

- **To what extent are students connected within the faith community to a system of support services, and activities and opportunities to assist them in meeting the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the school wide learning expectations?**

The administration and teachers at Holy Family Parish School pride themselves on preparing students to be successful in high school and beyond. As part of the School Improvement Plan that they developed during their 2001 Self Study, Holy Family Parish School set about reducing the student-adult ratio to improve student learning for all children. At the start of this school year, each classroom has an aide at least 50% of the time and an aide was hired for music classes attended by classes of 30 students. Classes were divided for some specialists. Classroom teachers provide both emotional and individual academic support, when needed, to ensure the success of their students. A variety of instructional methods are used to identify and meet the diverse learning needs of students. A reading specialist serves as a resource person for parents, students and teachers in first through fifth grades. The reading specialist works collaboratively with teachers, parents and students to make reasonable classroom accommodations to better meet the student's needs. An occupational therapist is also available on request to teachers and parents for consultation. Holy Family Parish School administers the WASL, these test results are used to identify and evaluate areas of strength and need for growth within the curriculum.

Holy Family Parish School strives to have a wide variety of activities for its students. Participation in these activities gives the students at Holy Family School a well-rounded view of themselves as Catholics in their school community and in their community at large. Many activities take place during the school day with additional activities taking place before and after school. Students in the middle school are given opportunities to be leaders throughout the year as they are paired with younger students in the school and plan student service projects and schoolwide spirit events. Every Tuesday morning, the junior high students participate in a creative arts program which includes visual and performing arts. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade learn and master the basics of music by singing, moving to music and playing a variety of percussion instruments. Sixth graders study guitar, movement and drums and the seventh and eighth graders perform with handbells. The entire Holy Family community nurtures and guides students by giving them many opportunities to develop spiritually through a Christ-centered life of learning, faith and service. Each class attends Mass bi-monthly and plans a liturgy at least once during the year. Many students actively participate in the liturgies as cross bearers, altar servers, readers and cantors. The feast day of St. Francis of Assisi is celebrated in October with a Mass and a blessing of the animals. Students gather around the Advent wreath each Monday in Advent. Students participate in prayer, adoration, the rosary and Stations of the Cross during Lent. As a school, students are involved in many service projects that benefit their school community and their community at large. A large number of 7th and 8th grade students participate in Edge, a continuing religious education program sponsored by the parish on Sunday evenings after the Lifeteen Mass.

The Holy Family Parish School is in the process of developing a covenant, "God With Skin," to integrate within the fabric of the school. The philosophy of this covenant is to teach the students of Holy Family Parish School how to see God in all aspects of everyday life, as well as how to be God-like to all. This covenant will honor the vision of the late principal.

A large percentage of Holy Family students are active in extracurricular activities. The parish sponsored CYO program which offers activities that include soccer, basketball, volleyball, cross-country and track and field is a favorite of many students. The school also offers a variety of activities, including a Speech and Debate Team for 6th-8th grade students, a Children's Choir and Chess Club for students in K-8th grade and students in 4th-8th grades can participate in the French Club.

Holy Family Parish School offers a state licensed and certified before/during/after school extended care program. This is offered to all Holy Family Parish families. This program allows children to engage in supervised recreational activities, work on homework, and take part in art activities.

Parent/Community Involvement

- **To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?**

Parents actively support the academic, moral and spiritual development of their children. Each fall, families are made aware of the procedures and policies of the school through the Parent-Student Policy Handbook. This handbook includes the school's mission statement, statement of philosophy and Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

Communication that keeps parents informed is a high priority for the administration. In addition to the handbook, weekly packets, summer mailings and Coffee with the Principal, are used to keep the lines of communication open. The school's website and email system is actively used as a communication and public relations tool. It utilizes a password protection for parents to access important information relevant to them.

Holy Family Parish School parents and community members serve on committees and volunteer time in addition to attending school sponsored parent education functions. The success of numerous school activities is dependent upon the active parent community. Some of the important jobs they fill are classroom assistants, office receptionists, recess supervisors, lunch room volunteers, field trip drivers, room parents and recess health room volunteers. The Holy Family Parents' Club is charged with supporting and enhancing the educational program; engaging in fundraising activities to help financially support the school; promoting service needs; enhancing communication between parents, school staff, the School Commission and the parish and organizing social, educational and spiritual activities for both students and parents.

For over 49 years, Holy Family Parish School has worked to foster ties within the Kirkland community and the greater Eastside community. Community members, parishioners and parents are invited as guest speakers in classrooms. Authors, storytellers and artists, including several local authors, come in as guests to share their books and discuss writing techniques.

Key Areas of Strength for Support for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

- Parent and community involvement is one of the strongest attributes of Holy Family Parish School.
- The school provides a high level of support for students' emotional and developmental needs.
- The parish, school and parents provide a high level of support for students' spiritual development.
- The school offers a well-rounded academic and extra-curricular program.

Key Areas of Growth for Student Personal, Spiritual and Academic Growth

- Increase the presence of the Edge youth minister in the middle school.
- Continue the development with junior high students regarding personal sense of Catholic identity and explorations of moral issues.
- Continue the development of the covenant, "God With Skin."

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

D. Resource Management and Development

Resources

- **To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program and reflect sound financial practices and responsible stewardship?**

Holy Family Parish School uses a variety of practices to ensure sound financial stability. These practices include; stewardship that is in alignment with Archdiocesan guidelines, planning of annual budget, maintaining financial reserves, and a creating of an endowment fund and savings account. Most of Holy Family's operational income is derived from the tuition at approximately 58% of their income. Holy Family Parish provides 20% of to the budget, and development makes up the final 22%. Eighty-six percent of the school's operational budget for expenses is allotted to salaries and benefits; services, supplies and utilities make up the other 14% of their expenses.

The school budget is compiled by the principal in collaboration with the School Commission and sent to the Parish Finance Council for approval. Once the tuition has been declared, parents have the opportunity to pay the actual full cost of tuition through the Annual School Gift Campaign; this has generated \$315,000 for the school. Tuition has increased on an average of 8% to 9% over the past few years and the multi-level child discount has been decreasing to a base level discount. Available tuition assistance has increased 10% to 15% over the past few years for family with financial hardships. The number of students receiving tuition assistance has increased 47% over the past two years.

Holy Family Parish School teachers are paid 101% of the Washington State Salary scale, which surpasses the Archdiocese of Seattle's recommendation that all schools be at least at 90% of the state scale. This has enabled Holy Family Parish School to retain quality teachers.

In 2001, Holy Family Parish School underwent a \$5 million building project, which included a new computer lab, a library and junior high science lab. The school is lacking a work room space designated for school volunteers.

Resource Planning

- **To what extent do the governing authority and the school execute responsible resource planning for the future?**

Holy Family Parish School aligns its school budget process with that of Archdiocesan guidelines to ensure sound financial responsibility. The principal works with the School Commission in developing and planning the school budget. The budget is approved by the Parish Finance Council. The principal has access to the school's accounting program and the parish bookkeeper sends monthly financial statements to principal and School Commission to ascertain that sound financial practices are occurring.

Holy Family Parish School's five-year plan was drafted in 2003; however, the plan has not been reviewed or revised since that time. The need for this plan to be developed has been recognized by the school. Out of the meetings and discussions the need for the music and visual arts program to be expanded, a visual arts specialist, and an after-school Foreign Language program, were identified, which have now been accomplished. Support staff for the business office has been added as a result of the five-year plan. Holy Family Parish School staff review a curriculum area yearly which helps in the allotment of resources for new textbooks, manipulatives, staff development and other resources. The yearly review also helps in the opportunities of field trips, assemblies and parent-involvement activities.

The parish administrator works with the principal in the area of facilities upkeep for the school. At the end of the school year an assessment is assembled on what improvement needs to be accomplished over the summer. The custodian works with the parish maintenance person in seeing that the work is completed.

The principal, under the guidance of the parish administrator and the School Commission, has established an endowment fund, a savings account and other development efforts to help secure the future of Holy Family Parish School.

Key Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development

- Responsible stewardship and financial planning for the present and future by the administration, school and parish and the School Commission, including Holy Family Parish's commitment to the school's overall operating budget with its support of a financial commitment of 22% of the parish's overall budget.
- The school and parish administration, along with the School Commission, maintain a reasonable tuition rate, tuition assistance for families in need, and still maintain a salary scale comparable to the Washington State Salary scale to help retain quality teachers.
- The school's high level of commitment of money and time for staff development and allocation for funds for upgrading curricular needs allows for a variety of teaching strategies and learning opportunity methods.
- The school and parish administration implement a responsible plan of action on the upkeep and improvement of facilities.

Key Areas of Growth for Resource Management and Development

- The administration, pastor, staff and School Commission need to complete a review and update of the five-year planning to ensure its viability.
- A workroom space designated for parent volunteers is needed.

CHAPTER IV: QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

SYNTHESIS OF SCHOOLWIDE AREAS OF STRENGTH AND SCHOOLWIDE CRITICAL AREAS FOR FOLLOW-UP

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Holy Family Parish School is to be commended for participating in the *Process for School Improvement*. They have developed Schoolwide Learning Expectations with input from faculty, staff and community constituencies. The *Process for School Improvement* assisted the school community in clarifying their learning expectations, identifying key areas of strengths and targeting key issues for school improvement.

The important evidence that supports schoolwide areas of strength and critical areas for follow-up include:

- The *Process for School Improvement* Self-Study
- The Progress Report from the WCEA/NAAS Recommendations, 2001
- Interviews with pastors, principal, faculty, staff, parents, and students
- Conferences with self-study committees and with the Leadership Team
- Classroom observations
- Self-Study Evidence

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH

- A concise and deliberate effort is made to develop a faith community within the school. A variety of prayer experiences, community service projects and spiritual formation opportunities are provided. The daily lived experience at Holy Family Parish School is highly congruent with the mission and philosophy of the school.
- In spite of the transition and instability within the administration over the past five years, students at Holy Family Parish School have continued to thrive and make gains in their learning. The current school administration – principal and vice principal – have brought a sense of stability, and a vision to the school. They are supported by a strong parent and parish community.
- Responsible stewardship and financial planning for present and future needs by the administration, School Commission and parish reflect a commitment to the mission, philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations. The administration and School Commission maintain a reasonable tuition rate while maintaining a salary scale comparable with the Washington State Scale, enabling the school to retain high quality teachers.

- A quality instructional program is supported by a strong reading and writing program, regular use of a variety of assessment tools, and instructional assistants who are presents in the classrooms. Increased integration exists in all subject areas across the curriculum with emphasis on integrating the arts.
- Staff development is promoted in a variety of ways. Money, time and resources are allocated by the administration to facilitate this learning.

SCHOOLWIDE CRITICAL AREAS FOR FOLLOW-UP

- Develop, for each subject, a clearly written curriculum map of instructional goals, activities, and resources used that demonstrate correlation with Schoolwide Learning Expectations, grade level EALRs, and Archdiocesan standards to facilitate curricular integration and articulation, allowing for smoother transition when there are staffing changes.
- Develop and implement a schoolwide system for tracking student growth toward meeting the Schoolwide Learning Expectations and the Essential Academic Learning Requirements. Clear documentation of student progress each year would facilitate clear communication and an awareness of the skill level of incoming students.
- Design new report cards that correlate with the Schoolwide Learning Expectations (SLEs), Washington State EALRs and Archdiocesan Standards.
- Establish a School Improvement Committee to guide the school through this cycle of school improvement and make certain that the goals of this plan, as well as those of a long-range plan, are realized.

Chapter V: School Improvement Plan

Summary of School Improvement Plan

Holy Family Parish School has developed an action plan which is a direct derivative of the areas of growth identified throughout the self-study. The growth areas identified for each section were compiled and prioritized. Together the staff came to consensus regarding the top three areas for growth. Those areas of growth that were identified as having the greatest impact on maximizing the achievement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations became the foundation for the School Improvement Action Plan.

Target Goal One is to develop, for each subject, a clearly written curriculum map of instructional goals, activities, and resources used that demonstrate correlation with the SLE's, grade level EALRs and Archdiocesan standards to facilitate curricular integration and articulation, allowing for smoother transition when there are staffing changes.

Target Goal Two is to develop and implement a schoolwide system for tracking student growth toward meeting standard. Clear documentation of student progress each year would facilitate clear communication and an awareness of the skill level of incoming students.

Target Goal Three is to design new report cards that correlate with the SLE's, Washington State EALRs and Archdiocesan standards. Reporting criteria needs to match assessment outcomes.

All three target goals flow from the self-study and address all SLE's. They flow from the areas for growth identified through the self-study process and represent the goals that all faculty and staff believe have the greatest impact on maximizing the achievement of Schoolwide Learning Expectations.

The administration and faculty of Holy Family Parish School has demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring a strong curricular program where Catholic values and teachings permeate all aspects of school life. This focus has continued in spite of gaps in leadership during the past five years. The establishment of a School Improvement Committee will guide the school through this cycle of school improvement and make certain that the goals of this plan are realized.