



**BLESSED SACRAMENT
SCHOOL**

Blessed Sacrament School

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Mission Statement

Blessed Sacrament School is a Catholic, faith-based community dedicated to instilling a love of God and inspiring a commitment to lifelong learning. Our dynamic curriculum develops independent thinking, curiosity and social awareness both locally and globally. Our dedicated faculty and staff are committed to academic excellence and the education of the whole child in an atmosphere of Christian concern and service. The Blessed Sacrament School community provides a safe and nurturing environment for students to grow spiritually, intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally. We are an integral part of our Collaborative parishes, Blessed Sacrament Parish and St. Mary's Parish, and we welcome a diverse student body from a variety of parishes and towns. Together we strive to build the city of God on a foundation of faith and knowledge.

A Vision for Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is an essential component of any organization that is truly committed to sustained excellence. While Blessed Sacrament School has rightly earned its reputation as one of the finest Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston, we recognize that we must never become complacent as we strive to live out our mission in all that we do and all that we are. In this highly competitive educational market, we must constantly seek out ways to be innovative and visionary, while always remaining true to our identity as a Catholic school. As such, our

plan and the steps we take to achieve this plan must be rooted in Gospel values and inspired by the spirit of St. Francis, our patron saint.

The strategic plan we have developed is both comprehensive and realistic, positioning this community to build off our numerous strengths while honestly addressing areas where further growth and development are needed. It is our hope that this plan will help Blessed Sacrament School to subsist as the premier educational option for families in the greater Walpole area that seek an exceptional, values-based, Catholic education for their children.

Promoting & Sustaining Academic Excellence

Like all schools, Blessed Sacrament School seeks to promote and sustain academic excellence at all grade levels and in all subjects. This community is blessed, however, to build from a strong foundation of proven academic success. Some of our current areas of academic strength include...

- A culture of high expectations for all learners.
- A dedicated, talented, caring, and accessible teaching staff that seeks to develop meaningful relationships with all students.
- A dynamic curriculum that is not limited by national or state standards, nor tied to state assessments.
- Providing students and teachers with regular access to instructional technology that has the capacity to transform teaching and learning.
- Small class sizes at all grade levels, helping to promote individual student growth.

With this solid foundation, we are able to target our strategic efforts on areas where further growth is needed, while responding dynamically to emerging trends in education. To that end, our primary academic goal will be **to transform Blessed Sacrament School into the premier destination for Math and Science instruction in the region.** We believe that this is a natural progression for the BSS community, as we build off the success of our school-wide STREAM program and respond to the increasing demand for high quality STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programs in all schools.

To transform our educational community in this way, we will...

- Create a new STEM curriculum in the middle school that allows each student to participate daily in a 90-minute STEM class that seamlessly integrates the components of our current math and science programs in a much more comprehensive way, with a focus on project-based learning and hands-on student collaboration. (completed by STEM Teachers in summer of 2018, continued improvement ongoing)

- Work with all science teachers at BSS to further develop our Math and Science curricula, ensuring that all students are regularly engaging in hands-on scientific learning and applied mathematics that responds analytically to real world issues, with an emphasis on a collaborative, project-based approach to learning. (Grades 4-8 worked on aligning science and math curriculum during the summer of 2019, K - 3 will do this summer of 2020)
- Use MAP testing data and feedback from our most recent graduates to improve the quality of our math and science curricula, so as to ensure a high level of preparedness for success in high school. (8th grade STEM teacher is working on collecting this data, ongoing)
- Continue to expand the extracurricular offerings available to our students in STEM-related areas, including robotics, coding and mathematics. (We are launching new math clubs in the school for the 2019-2020 school year)
- Work to develop partnerships with local colleges and universities to provide our students with greater access to the educational communities that are preparing young people for success in STEM fields. (Still in the planning stages, target 2020-2021)
- Provide students with more opportunities to connect with BSS parents and alums who are working in STEM-related careers. (Both STEM teachers have begun getting career STEM parents to come in and present in the middle school, ongoing)
- Participate regularly in state and local math competitions, particularly at the middle school level. (BSS is looking at forming a math team for the 2019-2020 school year)
- Actively seek out opportunities for teachers to participate in individual professional development opportunities related to the STEM subjects, while also developing school-wide professional development goals for continued improvement of our STEM programs. (Administration is giving a \$250 stipend to attend development, Ongoing with faculty through the 2020-2021 school year)

Beyond these specific Math and Science goals, some additional strategic goals designed to promote academic excellence include...

- Continuing to recruit and retain highly qualified educators who are actively dedicated to these academic goals. This goal will be supported by a commitment to...
 - Exploring ways to further enhance and improve teacher benefits and compensation across the pay scale.
 - Providing all teachers with meaningful opportunities for personal and professional growth, particularly in the areas of technology integration and differentiated instruction for exceptional student learners - both struggling and advanced.
 - Providing teachers with the resources needed to support the learning needs of ALL students.
 - Explore the possibility of school-university partnerships to recruit teachers and enhance professional development.

- Continuing to implement a consistent teacher evaluation and feedback process aimed at promoting the continuous improvement of teaching and learning
- Providing teachers with more consistent access to technology resources in all classrooms and at all grade levels.o
- Leveraging resources within the community to provide high-achieving students with regular opportunities to move at an accelerated pace, when appropriate. (Administration began a new STEM program as an accelerated level, the tech coordinator is also looking at improving use of Khan Academy and other apps to give enrichment opportunities across grade levels, ongoing)
- Exploring programmatic opportunities aimed at more specifically supporting the learning needs of our talented and gifted students. (Administration is exploring grants to get a talented and gifted program off the ground at BSS, ongoing)
- Developing an advisory program for students in Grades 4-8 by utilizing the resources of the larger BSS community, so as to more directly meet the counseling needs of our students. (Has not been attempted as of yet. Would be the administration teams pervue before 2020-20201 school year)

Ensuring our Financial Sustainability & Operational Vitality

As the cost of a Catholic education continues to increase, it is essential for the Blessed Sacrament School community to become a model of sustained financial strength, while continuing to remain affordable and accessible to all sorts of families. Once again, we are building off a position of relative financial strength, including...

- Our continued affordability within a competitive market for Catholic and private schools.
- The increased availability of financial aid to families in need of additional support over the past decade.
- Facilities that are well maintained and have been upgraded significantly over the past five years, including several large capital improvements.
- The continued success of our early childhood programs, which are at capacity, with lengthy wait lists, each school year.
- The accessibility and reach of our school community, which currently serves students and families from over 20 different towns.
- A highly successful fundraising program that annually raises over \$200,000 in support of our school's mission.

Amidst these areas of strength, the challenges that Catholic schools like BSS face are immense. With a yearly budget that is heavily driven by enrollment numbers, it is important to develop strategic financial goals that are fiscally conservative, while exploring all options to increase the school's revenue streams.

Our overarching strategic goal related to financial sustainability and operational vitality, then, is **to increase student enrollment by at least 3% over the next three years while maximizing the school's various revenue generating opportunities.**

We will do this by...

- Developing a committee to assist with the school's marketing and enrollment management efforts. This committee will focus on... (The School Board implemented this for the 2018-2019 school year, ongoing)
 - Targeting the school's outreach to specific towns and regions, so as to reach the families that are most likely to consider BSS as an option for their children.
 - Creating a "Family Ambassador Program" to assist the school with the recruitment of potential new families.
 - Developing a compelling marketing plan that fully showcases the value of a BSS education across a variety of mediums.
- Expanding the school's fundraising efforts to include greater outreach to the larger BSS community, particularly BSS alumni and past parents. This will be achieved by...
 - Using recently acquired data from the Catholic Alumni Partnership (CAP) Program to connect with BSS alumni who are committed to supporting and advancing our school's mission. (Advancement Director began outreach during the 2018-2019 school year, ongoing)
 - Establishing an Alumni Council that includes both recent and older BSS alums to assist with the development of meaningful relationships with former students and families. (Advancement Director has not begun this as of 2019-2020)
 - Utilizing current students and families to connect with past members of the BSS community and other potential donors through various outreach efforts. (Advancement Director working on this, ongoing)
 - Laying down the groundwork for a new school capital campaign aimed at continued facilities improvement. (Parish leadership is holding off on this)
 - Expanding family participation in the St. Francis Annual Fund beyond current participation levels. (Advancement Director looking into new streams of revenue for the St. Francis Fund such as a "buy a brick" campaign, ongoing)
 - Exploring options for additional community-based fundraisers that can increase our school's visibility in the Walpole community without asking more from our already supportive school families. (Advancement Director instituted a "color fun run" in 2019-2020 and was very successful, more plans ongoing)
 - Developing varied models of sponsorship for major school fundraising events (Under the Stars, Christmas Bazaar, Golf Tournament), so as to maximize sponsorship revenue from the larger BSS community. (Advancement Director started a yearly sponsorship option for giving during the 2018-2029 school year)
 - Exploring ways to make fundraising more efficient through the use of technology, with the goal of increasing online donations and donor contributions as well as

streamlining event management and ticketing. (Advancement director switched to a fully online model of fundraising in 2018-2019)

- Exploring all options for the potential expansion of our popular Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten programs. (Administration expanded to a 2nd preschool for the 2019-2020 school year)
- Ensuring that our school's new lunch program is at least revenue neutral, while providing students with affordable and nutritious options. (Administration and Cafeteria Staff created a budget neutral program in 2018-2019, now moving towards a profit producing program in 2019-2020)
- Considering opportunities for local community groups to use school facilities during the summertime and outside of school hours. (Administration will be working with the Parish leadership to see what can be done on this, one outside camp does pay rent to school as of 2018-2019)
- Developing a comprehensive review of our school's main competitors with respect to price, available programs, and other perceived educational assets. (Finance Committee of the School Board, ongoing)
- Using community resources to provide BSS families with support/education about how to leverage recent changes to the use of 529 savings plans to save for tuition at Catholic elementary schools. (Administration has not attempted this yet as of 2019-2020)
- Researching new models for tuition to ensure the continued affordability of a BSS education for all families. (School Finance Committee of School Board will look into this during the 2019-2020 school year)
- Strengthening relationships with partner schools like Bishop Feehan High School, with the goal of improving student retention through the 8th grade. (School Administration worked with Feehan on a partnership program that allows 5th graders early admission, this is also being looked into with other local Catholic high school only models, ongoing)

Enhancing our Spiritual Life & Catholic Identity

Throughout our 52 years, Blessed Sacrament School has been proudly rooted in the Catholic tradition, while always welcoming a diverse community of students and families who may not be Catholic, but are committed to the foundational values of our faith. While fostering the continued academic growth of our students is crucial, the most important task that BSS educators have each day is developing the character of our students. At BSS, this character development has always been rooted in the spiritual life of our school. From the values of our patron, St. Francis of Assisi, to the example that the Sisters of St. Francis set for so many years, to the faith of our educators and school leaders today, there is an unbroken connection that keeps us grounded to our mission of forming disciples who follow Christ's example in their actions and choices.

As we seek to foster the continued spiritual development of our students, we recognize our many current strengths in this area. These include...

- The many ways that our school's Catholic identity permeates into all aspects of school life.
- Our daily community gathering in prayer at morning assembly.
- Regular participation in the sacraments, including monthly celebrations of the Eucharist together as a community.
- Meaningful retreat days for students in Grades 2-8.
- Our students' commitment to charitable work and social justice issues, which is always so generously supported and encouraged by their families.
- The ways that our STREAM program encourage students to connect their faith with real world issues.
- Our growing commitment to stewardship and a genuine care for the earth.
- An openness to students and families from all faith backgrounds.

To promote continued growth as a Catholic educational community, our overarching strategic goal will be **to further distinguish Blessed Sacrament School as a Christ-centered community in which our children will learn to love God, love themselves, love others through service, and love all of God's creation.** With a focus on this goal, we believe that we can continue to differentiate our school through our value and mission-driven Catholic identity, promoting the catholicism of our school in both a local and universal context.

To achieve this goal, we will...

- Encourage all students to develop a more personal relationship with God by developing ways to make daily prayer more accessible and consistent for all students. (Middle School Theology Teacher, and Spiritual Life Committee are looking into this, ongoing)
- Create yearly service projects at each grade level focused on one of the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching. (School Board Mission Committee is planning to pilot this during the 2019-2020 school year)
- Strive to move beyond simply collecting money for charities on casual days, by inviting students to make a deeper connection to the people and groups we are supporting. (Middle School teachers are moving to make our St. Francis House System include more direct service opportunities 2019-2020)
- More actively promote the monthly character traits to inspire a student commitment to these virtues and to recognize community members who are actively living out these traits each day. (Administration is working on how to implement these more into the curriculum, 2019-2020 and beyond)
- Continue to provide opportunities for families to engage in service together as a family, while instituting a "Family Service Challenge" to encourage more active family involvement in social justice and service work. (Mission Committee of the School Board is working on finding new ways to get families involved, ongoing)
- Develop plans for a family-centered service/mission trip during a vacation week. (Spiritual Life Committee began family retreats during the 2018-2019 school year, ongoing)

- Actively seek out social justice-themed field trips for students in grades 4-8, while connecting the field trip experiences to grade-level service projects at school. (Administration has not tackled this year, ongoing)
- Reimagine the middle school's Matthew 25 service program as a service commitment available to all students and families, while considering mandatory service hours for all middle school students. (Administration and new MS Theology teacher will be auditing this during the 2019-2020 school year)
- Invite middle school students to participate in a week-long service experience/mission trip during the summer months. (Administration and new MS Theology teacher will be looking into for the summer of 2020)
- Provide more spiritual growth opportunities for parents (i.e. spiritual talks, parent prayer groups, spiritual book club) throughout the year. (Spiritual Life Committee is working on this as a priority for the 2019-2020 school year)
- Partner more actively with the Matthew 13 Catholic Collaborative in Walpole and other local parishes on programs and activities, so as to enhance the parish-school relationship in Walpole and our surrounding communities. (New leadership of the parish is looking to connect BSS more closely with the faith formation program, Ongoing)

Strengthening Student & Family Life Outside of the Classroom

One of the clear benefits of a Blessed Sacrament School education is the opportunity that every student and family has to participate in enriching programs and activities outside of the classroom. These programs provide students with countless opportunities to develop their individual gifts and talents while inspiring new interests, promoting each child's social development, and fostering the development of stronger family bonds.

Some of our school's greatest strengths in this area include...

- A daily morning assembly that strengthens and invigorates the life of our community.
- An unparalleled drama program that inspires students of all ages to develop and share their talents with the larger BSS community.
- A wide variety of extracurricular offerings that are available to students at all grade levels.
- A successful basketball program with teams that are consistently competitive in local leagues and tournaments.
- A popular Robotics program that engages students in STEM-related robotics work as early as Kindergarten.
- The opportunity for students to participate in overnight trips during each middle school year.
- The St. Francis House System in the middle school, which actively promotes leadership, service and community across all three middle school grades.
- A dedicated Parent Collaborative that provides families with regular opportunities for family enrichment.

As we seek to further enhance student and family life outside of the classroom, our goal is **to provide our students and their families with even more opportunities to improve their emotional and physical well-being while developing a stronger moral compass.**

We will do this by...

- Expanding the athletics opportunities available to our students by exploring all possibilities for the addition of new sports programs. Strengthening the “Friday Night Lights” program to provide students with regular opportunities for fun, social interactions outside of the school day. (Administration and Athletic Booster group began Cross Country and Tennis opportunities for the 2019-2020 school year)
- Increasing STEM-related student extracurricular opportunities, in conjunction with the school’s renewed emphasis on improved math and science education. (BSS Tech Coordinator continues to grow the robotics program and a math club is beginning for the 2019-2020 school year)
- Coordinating a Family Fun Run or Color Run each spring to enhance community life while giving students an opportunity to contribute to school fundraising efforts. (Director of Advancement began the “Fun Run” for the 2019-2020 school year)
- Developing new programs aimed at promoting family-centered fun and community development. (Administration and Parent Collaborative will initiate a “welcome back” block party in September of 2019, Also a Trunk or Treat even in October of 2018 was so successful it will be ongoing)
- Enhancing outreach to potential new BSS families by increasing our school’s presence in local media outlets, including social media. (School Librarian become BSS Social Media Director in 2019)
- Utilizing School Board members and other parent leaders in the BSS community to...
 - Connect with new parents more regularly at “BSS Town Halls” (Administration and Board held a welcome night and a state of the school night starting in 2018-2019, ongoing)
 - Listen to the questions and concerns of all current families so that we can be more responsive to family concerns.
 - Actively promote the value of a Blessed Sacrament School education in Walpole and our surrounding towns. (School Board formed a recruitment and retention committee in 2018-2019, ongoing)
- Providing students with regular opportunities to connect with local Walpole groups, such as the Walpole Council on Aging or Breaking Bread, so that more people in the larger community are able to see the high quality of BSS students. (Admins and Board Chair working on developing a relationship with the Council for the Aging, ongoing)

