

MNSAA

SELF-STUDY REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The primary purposes of the MNSAA Self-Study Report is to provide the necessary reflection for the development of a School Strategic Plan, while also demonstrating compliance with accreditation criteria of MNSAA.

There are nine sections to the MNSAA Self-Study Report:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1 School Profile | |
| 2 Standard 1 - Mission Statement and Philosophy Standard | Religious Identity |
| 3 Standard 2 - Curriculum and Instruction | <i>(As Applicable)</i> |
| 4 Standard 3 - Learner Performance | |
| 5 Standard 4 - School Climate and Facilities | |
| 6 Standard 5 - Community Relations | |
| 7 Standard 6 - Personnel | |
| 8 Standard 7 - Leadership and Governance | |
| 9 Standard 8 - School Improvement | |

School Profile ¹

In order for a school to evaluate their educational program, it must have an understanding of its history, student and family populations, and the broader community in which it serves. The school must also have a clear sense of stakeholder perceptions and attitudes. This section provides objective data on the school population and the surrounding community. It is of benefit for both the school as they begin to evaluate the various components of their educational program – while also providing an overview for the onsite visitation team of the school community. In addition to accessing local resources for information related to the school, a survey will need to be conducted within the school community.

Standards Documentation ²⁻⁸

Schools are required to demonstrate compliance with the educational standards and criteria of MNSAA. Concise narrations identifying how the school complies with the stated criteria will need to be written. Schools will also need to provide documented evidence onsite (indicators) that supports compliance with the criteria. A summary of strengths and challenges will need to be created for each of the eight standards. As a result of documenting compliance quality standards, the school will now be at a place to develop a School Strategic Plan.

School Strategic Plan ⁹

The end product for the school in the accreditation process is the development of a long-range strategic plan for the school – the School Strategic Plan. Schools will need to develop measurable, end-result objectives; strategies for achieving the objectives; and time-specific

action steps for fulfilling the strategies. The plan must meet the Quality Expectations of the association.

DEFINITIONS

Narrations of Compliance

Within the self-study report, most criteria require a *Narration of Compliance* to be written. This narration should be a concise statement (generally 3-9 sentences in length) that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. A quality narration should be substantive, honest, thoughtful and direct. Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.

Indicators of Compliance

For each criteria there are identified *Indicators of Compliance*. These indicators are examples of possible documented evidence for a school to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation criteria. A listing of these indicators can be found separate from the self-study in the *Indicators of Compliance* section. Within the self-study itself, you will often find *Narration of Compliance* stated below the criteria, inferring that a narration will need to be included in your report. Particular indicators are also notated in italics below the criteria; these would be considered essential indicators, which imply that they must be present in order to document compliance - all others simply provide direction for both the school and team in practically identifying documented evidence for demonstrating compliance with the stated criteria. Schools are not responsible for demonstrating documentation for all of the indicators, nor are schools limited to the indicators listed as means of documenting compliance. Schools are required, though, to demonstrate compliance with each of the criteria in some manner.

Legal Requirements ("LR")

Several of the MNSAA standards are designated "LR" for *Legal Requirement*. Federal, state and local levels of government enact laws (ordinances, rules and regulations, statutes) that directly or indirectly apply to nonpublic schools. While compliance with these laws is the responsibility of individual schools, and enforcement the responsibility of the government agencies, MNSAA expects individual schools to be in compliance with these laws. On an annual basis, MNSAA requires schools to sign off on a *Compliance with Legal Requirements* form indicating that the school meets the various legal requirements.

Several of the MNSAA criteria have references to particular legal requirements applicable to nonpublic schools. These criteria have been notated with an "LR" prior to the actual requirement. These criteria in no way provide the specificity and detail found within the actual legal requirements – but rather provide a summary or generalization of the legal standards. Nor should it be concluded that these criteria are a complete list of all legal requirements applicable to nonpublic schools. The school is advised to always consult with federal, state and local governance authorities, or legal counsel, for the most current and comprehensive legal requirements pertaining to nonpublic schools.

SCHOOL PROFILE

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **School Profile:** The school will need to write a concise 3-5 page School Profile describing the following characteristics of the school: *community and neighborhood, students, families, history, and stakeholder perception*. The School Profile should be contained in the self-study report to be given to the onsite visitation team.
2. **Data Collection:** In order to write a School Profile, documented evidence will need to be collected. The school should be prepared to utilize the following sources of information, in addition to other available resources: *Police Department, City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, Census Data, and School District Superintendent*.
3. **School Survey:** The school should conduct a survey to the various stakeholders in order to gather data related to the school profile. In addition, the survey should measure satisfaction levels and concerns of those within the school community.

A.01 STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS

- A school-wide survey was distributed to the 223 families of St. Thomas More Catholic School during fall conferences that were held in October of 2007. 111 surveys were returned that yielded both timely and detailed information about stakeholder’s perceptions of the school. A copy of the survey results along with a compilation of all written comments is attached to this self-study.

Overall, the school received high marks for its administrator and faculty.

A.02 COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD

- St. Thomas More Catholic School is located in Saint Paul near the corner of Lexington Parkway and Summit Avenue. We are a neighborhood-based school, yet we are within walking distance of many businesses located on Grand Avenue, as well as just down the block from the governor’s mansion. In recent years, we have enrolled fewer students from the Selby Avenue neighborhood north of the school, while continuing to have our largest numbers of students coming from the Crocus Hill and Summit Hill neighborhoods located to the east and south of the school. In recent years, we have begun to attract students from a variety of suburbs around St. Paul. Below is a list of the communities where our students live.

**ENROLLMENT OF FAMILIES AT
ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL
2007-2008**

City	PARISH FAMILIES		NON-PARISH FAMILIES
	St. Luke	IHM	
St. Paul	128	19	48
West St. Paul	1	1	
Minneapolis	2	1	3
Mendota Heights	3		1
Maplewood	2		
Little Canada	1		
Inver Grove Heights	1		
Falcon Heights	1		
Eagan	1		1
Cottage Grove	1		
Coon Rapids	1		
Oakdale	1		
Arden Hills	1		
Afton			1
Sunfish Lake			1
Woodbury			2
Blaine			1
	<hr/>		58
TOTAL (as of 11/5/07)	144	21	TOTAL FAMILIES 223

- Our neighborhood is highly residential with a very stable, non-transient population. Many of the homes that surround the school to the east, west, and south are some of the most expensive residential properties in the city of St. Paul. Being within the confines of a stable, more affluent neighborhood, there is very little violent crime reported; however, the neighborhood is not immune to occasional burglaries, robberies, and other non-violent crimes. As a school, we believe it is imperative to provide a safe environment for our students. We have a newly-installed security system with video cameras that allows us to monitor people entering the school building at our two main entrances. In addition, all visitors are expected to check-in at the school office and obtain a temporary, disposable nametag. Students and parents are regularly reminded to not allow anyone into the building without proper authorization. Despite our location, we are not exempt from incidents such as cars being broken into that are parked in the back parking lot or occasional nighttime vandalism. School stakeholders are reminded to look out for their personal safety and report any suspicious activity.

Below you will find information about the demographics of the city of St. Paul.

ESTIMATED POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	St. Paul, MN
Population (2003 Est.)	280,404
Age (2000)	
% under 5	7.60%
% under 18	27.10%
% 65 or older	10.30%
Race/Ethnicity (2000)	
White	67%
Black	11.70%
Asian	12.40%
Pacific Islander/Hawaiian	0.01%
Hispanic/Latino	7.90%
Other race	3.80%
2 or more races	3.90%
Education (2000)	
High School Grads	83.80%
Bachelor's or higher	32%
Income	
Median (1999)	\$38,774
Per Capita (1999)	\$20,216
Households (2000)	
Total (2000)	112,109
Persons per household (1999)	2.46
Persons below poverty (1999)	15.60%
Homeownership (2000)	54.80%
Source: US Census Bureau	

- Enrollment trends and projections from local school district

The St. Paul Public School District has experienced flat to declining enrollment over the past several years. This enrollment trend is related to the flat to declining birthrate in this area as well as increased choices with new charter schools opening around the Twin Cities in recent years. It is expected that the number of school-age children will begin to increase around 2010.

DISTRICT #625 (ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS) ENROLLMENT

GRADE	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
K HD	296			
K AD	2559	3202	2911	2729
1	2992	3121	3269	3193
2	2966	2971	3021	3137
3	2934	2985	2936	2985
4	2969	2929	2938	2887
5	3017	2974	2848	2828
6	3038	2954	2776	2731
7	2941	2915	2728	2586
8	3051	2915	2823	2666
9	3223	3230	3102	3028
10	3202	3241	3232	3000
11	2915	2911	2987	2938
12	3036	3019	3044	3099
Source: St. Paul Public Schools				
RESIDENT LIVE BIRTHS				
Year	St. Paul	Ramsey County		
2000	3348	5665		
2001	3406	5713		
2002	3274	5586		
2003	3305	5631		
2004	3280	5566		
2005	3360	5562		

A.03 STUDENTS

- Current enrollment data for each grade

Below you will find the enrollment for the past five years at St. Thomas More Catholic School

	'03-'04	'04-'05	'05-'06	'06-'07	'07-'08
Kindergarten	52	43	41	28	27
1st Grade	39	48	44	38	35
2nd Grade	38	36	54	40	35
3rd Grade	41	38	38	52	41
4th Grade	62	42	39	35	52
5th Grade	38	60	45	35	42
6th Grade	40	35	49	44	32
7th Grade	44	33	30	42	35
8th Grade	34	36	33	27	45
Total	388	371	373	340	344

- Changes in enrollment over the past five years (explanation)

Just as the St. Paul Public School District has experienced decreases in enrollment over the past five years, so too have many Catholic grade schools in the heart of St. Paul. Over the past five years, St. Thomas More Catholic School has experienced a decrease in enrollment due to several factors:

- Fewer kindergarten age children in this area of St. Paul and within the parishes of Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Luke's, now merged as St. Thomas More Catholic Community
- SPPS offering all-day kindergarten
- Families choosing to leave the school after sixth grade because of concerns about previous administration
- Concerns over the previous school administration
- Teacher turnover
- Parent desire to enter a 7-12 school
- Rising tuition
- Concerns about relationship with the parish and its commitment to the school

- Racial/ethnic/religious composition, special needs, disabilities

The current racial makeup* of the 344 students at St. Thomas More Catholic School for the 2007-2008 school year is:

Caucasian	285	(83%)
African-American	6	(2%)
Hispanic	25	(7%)
Asian	8	(2%)
Multi-Racial	11	(3%)
Not Reported	9	(3%)

* This is self-reported data that some families chose not to report.

As a school, we are not as diverse as we were ten or twenty years ago; however, we are committed to actively recruiting a more diverse student body. The area to the north of the school along the Interstate 94 corridor, extending up to the Midway neighborhood along University Avenue, has a larger percentage of lower-income and more culturally diverse students whom we would like to invite to join our school community.

The current religious makeup** of the 344 students at St. Thomas More Catholic School for the 2007-2008 school year is:

Catholic	292	(85%)
Non-Catholic	45	(13%)
Not Reported	7	(2%)

** This is self-reported data

- At this time, limited contact has been established with alumni. At one time, the school employed a development director who was responsible for making connections with alumni and raising funds for the school, but due to limited success, this position was eliminated. The school currently has a database of approximately 1,500 alumni with whom we would like to establish a stronger connection. A letter was sent out to them in December of 2007 to let them know about school leadership, our name change, as well as to invite them to upcoming events.

A.04 FAMILIES

- The families who send their children to our school can be best categorized as well educated and dual-income households. The vast majority of parents have a bachelor's degree with many also holding a graduate level degree. The average income is well above the average found within the city limits of St. Paul.

A.05 HISTORY

In the fall of 1991, IHM-St. Luke's Catholic School opened for the first time. This "new" school was the result of a merger between Immaculate Heart of Mary School (1550 Summit Avenue) and St. Luke's School (1065 Summit Avenue). Merger discussion had begun in 1988 when representatives from IHM, St. Luke's and St. Mark's formed a task force to study the concept of three parishes with one school building. In 1989, St. Mark's withdrew from merger discussion; however, IHM and St. Luke's continued to study the feasibility of this venture which resulted in a formal merger agreement on March 25, 1991. Until January 1, 2008, we operated as a merged school that was sponsored by the Church of Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Church of St. Luke. These two parishes were merged on January 1, 2008 to form the new Catholic Community of St. Thomas More. The advent of this new Catholic community resulted in St. Thomas More Catholic School reverting back to being a single parish-sponsored school that was renamed to reflect its connection to our larger parish community.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is housed in the original St. Luke's School building that was built in 1951. This three-story building was erected at a cost of slightly more than 1.3 million dollars and was viewed as an exceptional school facility. It boasted a fully-equipped cafeteria, gymnasium, library, and auditorium, as well as seven classrooms in the basement, nine classrooms on the first floor, and eleven on the second floor. As the building ages, it becomes more evident that improvements to the facility's mechanical systems and windows will need to be addressed. Over the past year, parent volunteers and contractors have worked hard to restore the school building to its original grandeur. Parent volunteers have been cleaning, painting, replacing the carpeting, lockers, glass in classroom doors, and restoring the Summit Avenue doors of the school.

When IHM-St. Luke's Catholic School opened in 1991, new administration, faculty, and staff were hired for the new school and a new curriculum was developed by the teaching staff. A number of professionals from both IHM and St. Luke's were hired for the newly merged IHM- St. Luke's Catholic School. Two members of the faculty and one staff member who were selected in 1991 continue to serve this newly merged school. When the two schools merged and opened in 1991, student enrollment was 224. Currently the school has a full-time administrator, 25 faculty members, and thirteen support staff members who work in the office, dining room, and Kids' Kingdom program. Our current enrollment stands at 344 students.

The vast majority of the student body of St. Thomas More Catholic School comes from the neighborhood immediately surrounding the school building that is located at 1065 Summit Avenue. In recent years, the school has begun to attract students from the larger metro area. This is due to our central location and proximity to Interstate 94 as well as the academic reputation of the school. At one time, the school was as diverse as the neighborhoods that surround the school; however, fewer students of color have attended St. Thomas More Catholic School since St. Peter Claver Catholic School reopened north of Interstate 94 five years ago. Discussions have recently begun about how the school can actively recruit a more culturally and socio-economically diverse student body.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has an interdisciplinary approach wherein art, technology, communication skills, and faith formation are integrated into every facet of the school day and within the core subjects of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies, and religion. Students in grades K-5 are in self-contained classrooms, and grades 6-8 have a homeroom teacher but rotate to different classes over the course of an eight period day. Specialist teachers at St. Thomas More Catholic School include educational resources, physical education, music, Spanish,

library media skills, and technology. Regardless of grade level, St. Thomas More students are challenged to reach their highest potential through assignments and projects that correspond to different learning styles.

The school has been the beneficiary of the continued financial support of parents, parishioners, and alumni. In recent years, the generosity of these stakeholders has resulted in a new floor, backboards, and scoreboard in the gym; a new, functional, hands-on science lab; refurbished middle school lockers; area rugs in classrooms; banners hanging above classroom doors; as well as glass replacement in classroom doors and restored entry doors on the Summit Avenue side of the building.

Our school had a two-tiered governance structure consisting of a School Board and a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has been comprised of the canonical administrator, a representative from each parish, the chairperson of the School Board, and the principal (ex-officio). The School Board has been responsible for making policies and assisting the principal in the administration of the school. It has been comprised of seven people elected by parents of children registered in the school and by registered parishioners in both parishes.

As a result of the merger between our sponsoring parishes, the new St. Thomas More Catholic School will revert back to being a single parish-sponsored school with a new name that is shared by both the church and school. This new identity will result in the school disbanding the two-tiered governance structure. The Board of Directors and School Board will be replaced by a School Advisory Committee that is no longer a policy-making body, but instead will be advisory in nature.

We continue to evolve and work diligently to carry out our mission as an excellent, community-based, Catholic school in the heart of St. Paul. Our current enrollment is 344 students. We continue to build upon our proud past and look to a promising future as one of the most exceptional schools in the Twin Cities.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 1: Mission and Philosophy

The Vision and Values of a School

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) **Narration of Compliance**: For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*
- 2) **Indicators of Compliance**: Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.
- 3) **Strengths and Challenges**: After completing each of the criteria, identify a summary list of strengths and challenges related to the broader standard category.

Criteria

1.01

MISSION STATEMENT: The school will have a mission statement that concisely articulates a shared vision for the school community and establishes an overall commitment to a particular course of action.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is a K-8 Catholic school that provides an academically excellent curriculum, promotes the self-worth of each child, and encourages active and responsible Christian leadership and service.

*Indicators of Compliance
Mission Statement*

1.02

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT: The school will have a philosophy statement that articulates the principles, beliefs and/or core values of the educational program.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is a Catholic school sponsored by the Catholic Community of St. Thomas More. We focus on Christian values and academic excellence.

Students, families, faculty, administration, and staff join together as we strive to meet the spiritual, academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each child.

St. Thomas More Catholic School embraces a whole-language curriculum which:

- Recognizes each student's unique abilities;
- Develops social skills;
- Creates life-long learners;
- Encourages risk-taking;
- Inspires students to work for peace and justice; and
- Builds within each child a commitment to living an active faithful life.

Each St. Thomas More Catholic School student learns how to live the Gospel in today's world through academic work, respectful relationships, worship, and community service.

*Indicators of Compliance
Philosophy Statement*

1.03 COMMUNICATION OF STATEMENTS: The school will communicate the mission and philosophy statements to the stakeholders in the school community.

Our mission and philosophy statements drive all that we strive to do in our school community. As you walk through the hallways and classrooms at St. Thomas More Catholic School, you see our mission statement clearly displayed. It is visible in every classroom of the school, on the website, in our weekly newsletter to families, and in our resource handbook.

The St. Thomas More Catholic School mission and philosophy statements are key components found at the beginning of our Student-Parent Handbook. This document, updated annually, contains school policies and procedures. Each year families sign-off that they have received and read the handbook, thereby affirming the statements and their role in our school community.

Indicators of Compliance
Mission Statements Hung in Classrooms
Student-Parent Handbook

1.04 USE OF STATEMENTS: The school will provide evidence that the mission and philosophy statements guide the school's goals, processes, policies, and procedures.

Our student-centered mission and philosophy statements drive everything we do and strive to be here at St. Thomas More Catholic School. The philosophy statement addresses the needs of the whole child. The six main points of our philosophy define the goals of our entire curriculum. Our current Student-Parent Handbook is a compilation of policies and procedures that flow directly from our mission and philosophy statements. Evidence can be seen on every page of the '07-'08 Student-Parent Handbook, including *Student Health and Safety* (pp. 28-30); *Learning Resources* (p. 20); *Communication* (pp. 28-30); *Our Use of Volunteers* (p. 28); *Lines of Communication* (pp. 28-30); and *Student Safety* (pp. 31-32).

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook

1.05 EVALUATION OF STATEMENTS: The school will have mission and philosophy statements that have been developed by appropriate representatives of the various stakeholders and a shared evaluation process that periodically reviews the effectiveness, relevance and quality of the statements.

Our mission and philosophy statements are in need of revision to ensure that they are effective and relevant to current educational thought and that they are meaningful to all members of the school community. The mission and philosophy will be revisited and rewritten, in the coming years, to maintain a true reflection of St. Thomas More Catholic School and its commitment to Christian values and high academic standards.

SUMMARY: MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

The mission statement is relevant to our school at the present time. The terminology may be restructured to make it easier to state and understand; however, what is said will remain. One addition that will be made, due to school name change, will be a statement which incorporates a parish, home, and school partnership.

Challenges:

The 3rd sentence in the philosophy statement will be updated to reflect current educational practices. Now it states “whole-language school,” while current educational best practices and our own curriculum embrace a balanced literacy curriculum which is interdisciplinary, whole-language, and phonics focused.

The mission and philosophy statements need to be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Schools may incorporate a Religious Identity component (if applicable), or parts of another self-study to deepen their reflection within the Mission and Philosophy standard. MNSAA encourages schools to consider this implementation to both enhance and personalize their self-study process. Some jurisdictional offices require their schools to complete a religious identity standard.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

The Planning and Implementation of Learning

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) **Narration of Compliance**: For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*
- 2) **Indicators of Compliance**: Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.
- 3) **Strengths and Challenges**: After completing each of the criteria, identify a summary list of strengths and challenges related to the broader standard category.

Criteria

2.01

CURRICULUM HANDBOOK: The school will have a written comprehensive curriculum handbook that outlines the standards or criteria for students to successfully complete the prescribed educational program; the school's curriculum handbook will be sequentially organized with a demonstrated correlation between grade levels and course topics.

Currently teachers have an interim curriculum document that outlines the curricular themes for each subject, grade level and specialty. This handbook was developed collaboratively by the teachers and is organized by grade level or specialty.

This curriculum document will be enhanced by the curriculum maps that are currently being written. These curriculum maps are also organized by subject and grade level and are being written by teachers in grade-level teams. They list the content, skills, and assessments for each unit of study and are linked to national standards. These curriculum documents outline the criteria of our school's academic program.

Indicators of Compliance
Completed Curriculum Maps, accessible through the school intranet (onsite)
Interim Curricular Themes Document
Curriculum Binder

2.02

USE OF HANDBOOK: The school will demonstrate that the written curriculum guides instructional practices.

The curricular documents (curriculum themes and curriculum maps) contain St. Thomas More Catholic School's academic goals that guide instructional practice. These documents show the scope and sequence of each subject and provide continuity across grade levels. They aid teachers in lesson planning and integrating curriculum across subjects, as well as assist new faculty as they learn our school's curriculum. These documents help students, teachers, and parents understand what the children are learning and how they will progress academically.

Indicators of Compliance
Completed Curriculum Maps, accessible through the school intranet
Interim Curricular Themes Document
Weekly lesson plans for the 2007-2008 school year
Curriculum Binders

2.03 CONTENTS OF CURRICULUM: The school's curriculum will provide for at least the following subject areas: basic communication skills (including reading, writing, literature, and fine arts); mathematics and science; social studies (including history, geography, and government); health and physical education.

St. Thomas More Catholic School provides instruction in math, science, language arts (including reading, writing, speaking, listening, spelling, and literature), social studies (including history, geography, and government), religion, health, music, art, physical education, technology, library media, and Spanish. In addition, band and choir are offered to students in grades 4-8.

There are also two Educational Resources Teachers who work with students individually or in small groups. In grades K-5, the Educational Resources Teacher focuses on remediation and enrichment. In grades 6-8, the Educational Resources Teacher primarily assists students with organizational skills and assignment completion.

Indicators of Compliance
Interim Curricular Themes Document
Weekly Lesson Plans for the 2007-2008 School Year
Curriculum Binder

2.04 VARIETY OF INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES: The school will utilize a variety of instructional practices that accommodate varying learning styles and needs.

Faculty at St. Thomas More Catholic School believes the best way to reach all learners is to use a variety of teaching methods and resources. These include: a teacher mentor-mentee program, teacher-created curriculum (both individually and collaboratively created), and integration of textbooks and trade books. Most faculty members have practical knowledge in Differentiated Instruction and an integrated approach to language arts instruction. This knowledge allows teachers to accommodate varying learning styles and differing student needs.

During instruction, teachers use small and large group discussion, partner work, debates, dramatizations, literature circles, peer teaching, science laboratory equipment, manipulatives, supportive teacher resources, and technology.

Authentic learning takes place during field trips in our community. Learning also occurs as students host community activities such as History Day, Science Fair, Research Fair, Learning Fair, American History Wax Museum, World Tour, Pioneer Day, Senior Buddies, Storytelling Night, and the Garage Sale. In addition, 7th grade students participate in a one week trip to an Environmental Learning Center, and 8th grade students participate in a four day trip to Washington, DC.

Faculty members plan collaboratively in order to make learning meaningful and interdisciplinary. Cross-curricular connections are made so that a topic can be explored in more than one subject area. In this way the learning becomes relevant and real for the student.

Indicators of Compliance
Completed Curriculum Maps, accessible through the school intranet
Weekly Lesson Plans for the 2007-2008 School Year
Curriculum Binders

2.05 CORRELATION WITH MISSION/PHILOSOPHY: The school's curriculum and instructional practices will reflect the mission and philosophy statements of the school.

We promote academic excellence through our rigorous, well-rounded curriculum. At the base of this curriculum are the core subjects. These core subjects are taught in both discipline specific and cross-curricular manners. Skills and concepts are reinforced and expanded as students move through our academic program. Our core classes are enhanced by additional curriculum in Spanish, physical education, music (both vocal and instrumental), technology and library/media. We also offer after-school activities such as: Destination Imagination, Chess Club, Choir, Mad Scientists Club, Brain Busters, community theater, and a variety of extra-curricular athletic activities.

We promote active and responsible Christian leadership through student participation in daily prayer, and planning and attending masses and prayer services. In addition, students participate in numerous service projects, including Birthday Boxes for the Hallie Q. Brown Food Shelf, food drives, clothing drives, various fundraisers to benefit charities, and Sponsor-a-Family Christmas drives.

The self-worth of each child is promoted through our buddy program, where upper grade and lower grade classrooms buddy together to help students form friendships across grade levels and participate in activities together. We also have a grade 3-5 Student Service Team and a grade 6-8 Student Council. Both of these organizations are service oriented and encourage the contribution of each child to their community. All adults in the building model interactions which respect and value the contribution of each individual and the value all bring to our community.

Indicators of Compliance
School Philosophy and Mission Statements
Weekly Lesson Plans for the 2007-2008 School Year
Curriculum Binders

2.06 AWARENESS OF RESEARCH / PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: The school's written curriculum will reflect an awareness of current research and professional practices.

St. Thomas More Catholic School's written curriculum is drawn from national and state standards, current best practices, and textbooks. The teaching staff is continually looking to strengthen the curriculum. Teachers are in the process of creating curriculum maps that correlate to national standards for each subject. These maps better allow the teachers to identify strengths, gaps, overlaps, and redundancies both at grade level and between the grades. Currently, a variety of sources are used for religion. The expectation is that by 2009 all grades will have a religion curriculum that follows recommendations outlined in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis Religion Standards. Teachers regularly attend workshops and in-services to gain insights for updating or modifying the current curriculum.

Indicators of Compliance
Professional Development Summaries for each Teacher
Completed curriculum maps, accessible through the school intranet
Weekly lesson plans for the 2007-2008 school year

2.07 **2.07 EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION:** The school will have an established collaborative process for the ongoing evaluation and development of the curriculum handbook, instructional practices, and educational resources.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is in the process of developing curriculum maps that will allow for continual evaluation of the curriculum, instructional practices, and resources. A schedule was developed to systematically complete all maps. At present, K-5 mathematics has been completed and science is in process. Specialists have completed grade 2, 5, or 7. The administration and teachers are in the process of developing a system for the review and use of these maps to continually revise the curriculum.

Indicators of Compliance
Completed Curriculum Maps
Weekly lesson plans for the 2007-2008 school year

2.08 **TECHNOLOGY:** The school will use technology, and have a written plan for providing growth in this area, to meet curricular goals in teaching and learning.

St. Thomas More Catholic School teachers use technology to meet curricular goals by integrating technology into the curriculum at all grade levels. A full-time technology coordinator administrates the technology network, teaches technology classes to grades K-8, and provides technology support to faculty and staff. In addition to instructional purposes, faculty and staff also use technology for personal productivity.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has two Technology Labs available for student use. Technology Lab 1 has 26 computers and Technology Lab 2 has 24 computers. There are also computers available in most classrooms. In addition, a portable laptop station with 24 laptops and a printer is available for checkout. The Library Media Center has 9 computers for student use. The school has two mobile LCD projectors and one permanent LCD projector, as well has high speed broadband Internet access in the technology labs, the Library Media Center, and all classrooms.

Students and curriculum are at the center of St. Thomas More Catholic School technology implementation. The technology coordinator and teachers continue to assess the technology applications that are available at St. Thomas More Catholic School and to assess the uses within their curriculum. St. Thomas More Catholic School does not have a written technology plan that outlines future goals for technology integration and staff development.

Narration of Compliance
Inventory of Technology Resources

2.09 **SPECIAL NEEDS:** The school will have a written process for identifying, assessing and prescribing services for learners with special needs; in addition, the school will provide an educational program for advanced learners.

St. Thomas More Catholic School works in conjunction with the St. Paul Public Schools to help students with special needs. Students may qualify for an IEP with St. Paul's District based on the St. Paul's Special Education Team's assessment of the student.

The teaching staff of St. Thomas More Catholic School initiates the process by identifying a concern and implementing interventions. If the interventions are not helping a child, a conference with parents is held to discuss the situation. Based on a mutual decision between parent(s) and teacher, a referral to the St. Paul Public Schools is made. The St. Paul Public School's Special Education Team assesses the child's ability in order to decide if an IEP should be put into place. A team meeting is held to discuss the results of the assessment and a decision is made to determine what types of services are needed for the child.

St. Thomas More Catholic School also creates Individual Accommodation Plans for students who may not qualify for special education services. The school has two Educational Resources Teachers to enrich curriculum for advanced learners and remediate curriculum for those students in need, as well as many volunteer tutors that assist the students on a daily basis.

In addition, the school also has a guidance counselor for grades K-5 and a St. Paul Public guidance counselor for grades 6-8.

St. Thomas More Catholic School curriculum is created to meet the needs of all students through differentiated instruction. Lesson plans, activities, and projects are designed to accommodate all learners. There are also after school enrichment classes offered to students. Several examples include Brain Busters, Science Enrichment Program, Chess Club, and Homework Tutoring. The goal of our curriculum is to meet the needs of all learners.

Indicators of Compliance
Completed Curriculum Maps, accessible through the school intranet
Weekly lesson plans for the 2007-2008 school year
Individual Education Plans in student cumulative files.
Accommodation Plans in cumulative, teacher, and ERT files

2.10 EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: The school will have classroom environments that are conducive to learning.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has a discipline philosophy stated in the Student-Parent Handbook.

The discipline philosophy promotes life-long learning and promotes respect for oneself, peers, and adults. It holds the children accountable for their words and actions. Each teacher adapts this philosophy appropriately for each grade level and teaching style. Several classrooms have the classroom rules posted for all children to see.

As stated in the Student-Parent Handbook there are positive and corrective consequences. Such positive consequences include Happy Notes from teachers on a weekly basis to acknowledge students for their good behavior and work completion. Such corrective consequences include Stop, Think, and Plan sheets in grades K-5. In grades 6-8, corrective consequences include a detention for serious problems. In

addition, if a major offense occurs for any student in grades K-8, parents will be contacted and appropriate steps will be taken.

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook
Examples of Classroom Expectations
Stop, Think, & Plans
Pink Slip
Detention Slip
Happy Note

SUMMARY: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

The school provides a rigorous, well-rounded curriculum.

The faculty uses a variety of teaching methods and resources.

Students work collaboratively with classmates and periodically across grade levels.

The school community is strong and very involved in celebrating learning.

Curriculum and instruction is enhanced by the cadre of volunteer tutors who work in partnership with our teachers and students

The extensive library collection supports the curriculum.

Challenges:

Curriculum maps need to be completed for all subjects.

A comprehensive curriculum handbook needs to be developed.

A regular curriculum review cycle needs to be followed in order to review learner outcomes, instructional practices, and new curricular materials.

The school needs to adopt and implement a consistent religion curriculum/ text in order to avoid gaps or repetitions in learning.

A K-8 art program needs to be implemented

A written technology plan needs to be written that outlines future goals for technology integration across the curriculum. This plan also must outline the professional development needed by faculty to fully implement this plan.

The philosophy statement needs to be revised.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 3: Learner Performance

Identification, Prioritization and Monitoring of Student Achievement

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) **Narration of Compliance:** For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*
- 2) **Indicators of Compliance:** Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.
- 3) **Strengths and Challenges:** After completing each of the criteria, identify a summary list of strengths and challenges related to the broader standard category.

Criteria

3.01

ASSESSMENT PROCESS: The school will provide a systematic and clearly understood process of learner assessment that includes at least one standardized testing instrument.

St. Thomas More Catholic School provides a systematic and clear process of learner-assessment based on the curriculum. In order to evaluate the whole child, the faculty provides both formal and informal assessment of students' understanding. Some examples of informal assessment that the K-8 teachers use are: daily work, student participation, checklists, and journals. In addition, K-8 teachers use formal assessments such as quizzes, tests, projects, reports and Learnia assessment tests.

In the 2007-08 school year, grades 3-8 are piloting Learnia, a computer-based, standardized testing instrument, to formally assess reading and math skills. This criterion-referenced test measures student knowledge and mastery based on grade-level standards. It includes a baseline test in the fall and measurement of progress at the end of the year. Teachers have the option of using benchmark tests throughout the year that are either teacher-created or pre-made.

Indicators of Compliance

Terra Nova Test Results for past five years
Samples of:

Teacher Checklists
Student Journal entries
Gradebooks
Tests, Quizzes
Projects/Reports

3.02

ASSESSMENT AND CURRICULUM: The school will have an assessment process that evaluates whether the learners are meeting the expectations of the curriculum handbook.

Teachers evaluate the learner's performance by using tools such as rubrics, teacher checklists, observations, student self-evaluations, and peer evaluations.

At St. Thomas More Catholic School assessments are based on the school's curriculum. The curriculum has evolved since the merger of the two schools seventeen years ago. It has been created by classroom teachers who believe the curriculum needs to be student and teacher-driven. Our written curriculum has

evolved through several forms to meet the needs of the school community. The school is currently in the process of mapping the curriculum. It is scheduled to be completed in another three to four years.

Indicators of Compliance

Samples of:

Rubrics
Teacher Checklists
Observation Notes
Student Self-Evaluations
Peer Evaluations

3.03 ASSESSMENT DEMONSTRATES ACHIEVEMENT: The school will have curriculum and instructional practices that result in positive student achievement over time.

As stated in the mission statement, St. Thomas More Catholic School “provides an academically excellent curriculum that promotes the self-worth of each child; and encourages active and responsible Christian leadership and service.”

From kindergarten through eighth grade, St. Thomas More students experience achievement by means of an interdisciplinary curriculum that spirals from grade to grade. Based on the faculty’s knowledge of child development, subjects and skills are continually revisited and enhanced. Teachers offer varied opportunities for learning based on best practices such as multiple intelligences, differentiating instruction, knowledge of how the brain learns, varied learning styles and experiential learning. The philosophy of teaching to the whole child drives instruction on a daily basis.

Learnia testing will allow 3rd-8th grade teachers to track student achievement in core subjects.

Our curriculum does an exceptional job of preparing students for life beyond their K-8 experience. Because of their strong academic preparation, many graduates qualify for accelerated courses in high school.

Indicators of Compliance

Letters of support from area Catholic high schools
Examples of DI unit/lesson
Learnia results that track a student
MI-centered project/lessons
Learning Styles-based assignments

3.04 ASSESSMENT RESULTS EFFECT CHANGE: The school will regularly evaluate the results from the learner assessment process, and if necessary, make changes in curriculum and instruction.

Based on students’ needs, teachers modify classroom instruction and provide individual remediation or enrichment. There are a number of ways in which teachers use assessment in order to affect change in their instruction:

- Assessment helps the teacher know if it is necessary to review material or spend more time on upcoming lessons. It serves to identify which students are in need of additional help as well as those who are ready for enrichment opportunities.

- Assessment tools are used to determine the instructional approach to be used.
- Assessment helps to identify what the student needs to learn.
- Assessment tells us if our teaching is “on target.”
- Assessment outcomes help with curriculum pacing.
- Observational assessment helps the teacher respond to a student’s needs at any given time.

The Learnia program will provide teachers with immediate data about individuals as well as the class as a whole. Evaluating this data has the ability to assist the direction of instruction in core subjects.

When necessary, teachers, administration, district personnel, and parents meet to develop Individual Education Plans or Accommodation Plans for students with academic needs. The effectiveness of these plans is evaluated continually.

Indicators of Compliance

- Learnia data
- Assessment vehicles such as rubrics
- Grade books, teacher checklists
- SPPS Pupil Performance Review Form
- STMCS Accommodation Plan form
- List of students with IEPs or Accommodation Plans
- Individual IEPs, Accommodation Plans in cumulative folders, as well as teacher files

3.05 STUDENT RECORDS: The school will maintain student records containing assessment documentation, in addition to other information required by law and as necessary for the operation of a quality educational program.

The school maintains a complete record file for all current students grades K-8. The information contained in these files includes attendance, yearly report cards, standardized test scores, any additional outside student assessments, IEPs or Accommodation Plans, medical information (separate file in nurse’s office), information from previous schools, Presidential and National Physical Fitness awards, and any other pertinent information regarding the student. It is the responsibility of homeroom teachers to update their students’ files at the end of each school year.

Teachers maintain a regularly updated record book or grade book to keep track of student progress.

Indicators of Compliance

- Cumulative Files (office)
- Nurse’s Health Files
- Attendance database (office)
- Gradebooks (avail. from individual teachers)
- Churchwerks database

3.06 ASSESSMENT RESULTS COMMUNICATED: The school will communicate learner progress to parents and the school community while respecting principles of confidentiality and respect.

St. Thomas More Catholic School teachers communicate learner progress many times throughout the year. K-8 teachers send home progress reports at the end of each trimester. Additionally, 5-8 teachers send home mid-trimester grade reports. Middle School uses Churchwerks online grading, which is updated frequently. Parents of

students can access Churchwerks from home to monitor student progress. Conferences for grades K-8 are student-led and held in the middle of each of the first two trimesters. Students go through a process of self-evaluation to communicate their progress to their parents and their teachers. End of the year Learnia test results will be sent to parents.

In addition to these formal reports, some teachers send home weekly update reports, happy notes, late lists, tests, and graded daily assignments. Teachers may also send e-mails or make phone calls to parents when needed. At the end of each trimester, middle school students who meet the requirements of the Honor Roll are recognized for their academic accomplishments. The Family Flyer often recognizes student achievement in all subject areas and in extra-curricular activities. Students are recognized for achievements throughout the year.

Teachers work to maintain a professional relationship with the school community. Proactively, team teachers or grade level teachers will meet to discuss student progress in order to enhance learning.

Indicators of Compliance
Report Cards/Progress Reports (onsite)
Other Indicators (onsite)
Churchwerks
Happy Notes
Late Lists (weekly)
Family Flyer
Documentation of meetings
Presidential & National Physical Fitness Awards

3.07 ATTENDANCE / TARDINESS: ^{LR} The school will have attendance and tardiness policies and procedures that are written, published, communicated and enforced; in addition, the school will in a timely manner complete annual enrollment reports as is required by the local public school district and the state, and maintain copies of such reports.

Attendance and tardiness policies and guidelines are published in the St. Thomas More Student-Parent Handbook and are enforced. Each fall, parents and students are to return a sign-off sheet indicating that they have read the handbook.

Attendance is recorded electronically each day and submitted to the office. It is also maintained in a database. Attendance is recorded on progress reports and added to the students' cumulative files at the end of each school year.

St. Thomas More administration completes all annual enrollment reports as required by the local public school district, the State of Minnesota, MNSAA and the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook
Enrollment Report to District and State
Attendance Database

SUMMARY: LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

The faculty seeks to use best practices to meet the needs of the whole child. Teachers keep updated by attending workshops and furthering their own education.

Teachers use a variety of assessment tools.

Communication between teachers and school families is exemplary.

Our school does an exceptional job of preparing students for life outside of the classroom.

By piloting the Learnia testing program with our third through eighth grade students, we are taking advantage of an innovative, computer-based assessment tool.

Challenges:

Our curriculum maps need to be completed, so that what is taught is recorded in a usable way. This will have a direct impact on the assessment of learner performance and how teachers communicate across grade levels.

We must take full advantage of our piloting experience with Learnia in order to use the results effectively in our teaching.

We need to continually explore new forms of assessment.

We need to regularly review progress report formats: what they include and what they convey.

We need to clarify and better manage the process for maintaining student IEPs and Accommodation Plans, as well as students' diagnostic testing results from outside providers.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 4: School Climate and Facilities

The Environment for Teaching and Learning

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) **Narration of Compliance:** For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*
- 2) **Indicators of Compliance:** Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.
- 3) **Strengths and Challenges:** After completing each of the criteria, identify a summary list of strengths and challenges related to the broader standard category.

Criteria

4.01

STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS: The school will communicate expectations for student behavior and will enforce a student discipline code that is supportive of the school's mission and philosophy, and conducive to learning.

At St. Thomas More Catholic School, the goal is to provide an environment where all students play a part in creating an atmosphere of peace and safety. In accomplishing this goal, the teachers and staff have created expectations for student behavior and for maintaining respect for God, others, and self. These goals are published in the Student-Parent Handbook. All families and staff members are expected to read this handbook. Families then return a signed form stating that they have read and clearly understand the materials in the handbook. These forms are on file in the office.

In addition to the behavior expectations that are found in our Student-Parent Handbook, many classes also create and post classroom behavior expectations. These expectations may take the form of class pledges created by the students, signed by all, and recited each morning along with prayer. Some classrooms also create and post lists of classroom rules regarding behavior and respect.

All staff members strive to guide every student at St. Thomas More Catholic School to a clear understanding of what is expected of him/her. The teachers and staff believe that it is important to have students who are self-disciplined and who accept responsibility for their behavior. In the case where corrective consequences are needed, parents are informed of these situations through a variety of disciplinary actions that are geared to the child's developmental stage. These consequences are intended to foster responsibility for actions and include plans for change and growth.

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook
Examples of Classroom Behavioral Expectations

4.02

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: The school will communicate and use a process for resolving conflicts and grievances within the school community.

St. Thomas More Catholic School uses the Student-Parent Handbook to outline policies for resolving conflict. The Grievance Procedure (Item IV) in the handbook clearly shows the steps to follow when seeking resolution.

The Administration requests that, whenever possible, all complaints, disputes, and disagreements be resolved person-to-person. When necessary, a person seeking relief should contact the respondent's immediate supervisor. The faculty and staff at St. Thomas More will work to quickly and respectfully resolve conflicts among students, parents, and faculty.

Teachers address conflict resolution skills through their curriculum and as situations arise.

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook
Employee Handbook

4.03 **SPACE CONSIDERATIONS:** The school and class enrollments are compatible with the capacity of the facility.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has ample space for its many needs. Classroom locations recently changed, so there are now hallways for K-1, 2-4, 5-6, and 7-8. There is a room designated for faculty meetings, which may also be checked out for other meetings or events. There is a Resource room, which is used by the counselors and Title 1 program. This year, a second Technology Lab was also added. Classroom teachers may take their classes there to work on projects, have access to the internet, or for standardized testing. The ratio of students to computers in the building is just under 3:1. There are also rooms for the main technology lab, music, Spanish, library, physical education, band, ERT (Educational Resources Teacher), and nurse. Kids' Kingdom, the after-school program, also has two rooms that they use in addition to the Dining Hall. Finally, there are faculty workrooms on the first and second floors.

St. Thomas More currently has two classrooms of each for all grades except 4th. Due to a larger group of students, there are three classrooms in 4th grade. Each classroom in grade K-5 has a maximum enrollment capacity of 22, and with principal discretion could enroll up to 25. The middle school classrooms have a maximum enrollment capacity of 25 students. At this time, all grades have openings for additional students.

Indicators of Compliance
School/Classroom Layout Map

4.04 **RESOURCES/ FACILITIES:** The school's resources, instructional materials, equipment, and facilities support the educational program.

St. Thomas More Catholic School's resources, instructional materials, equipment, and facilities support the educational program. These resources include, but are not limited to, textbooks, trade books, library books/media in the library media center, globes, maps, reference materials, audio visual equipment, teacher and student computers in the classrooms, manipulatives, art, science lab, computer labs, and physical education equipment in the gymnasium.

St. Thomas More also utilizes many educational resources to meet the needs of students. St. Paul Public School services are used for speech, OT, and LD. LDA (Learning Disabilities of America) has provided the Title 1 services for the past three years. There are two Educational Resources Teachers, as well as numerous

volunteers who are trained to work with individuals or small groups of students.

Indicators of Compliance
Classroom Inventories located in school office

4.05 LIBRARY / MEDIA: The school's library and media resources support the educational program.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has a Library/Media Center equipped to support the learning of students from kindergarten through eighth grade. The library also contains resources for teachers and the larger school community. There are over 17,000 items which are continually updated.

The Library Media Center is meant to enrich the educational programs of the school. Every homeroom or language arts class has a designated time for library during the week, and students are able to check-out materials regularly. Middle school students may also visit the library individually during their resource period at the end of the day. Additionally, students can use the Library Media Center for research and pleasure reading. The Library Media Center specialist assists students and teachers in finding appropriate materials for any given subject. The Library Media Center allows St. Thomas More to integrate the teaching of research skills into all parts of its curriculum and to promote leisure reading.

Indicators of Compliance
Computerized Library Catalog

4.06 PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE: The school facilities are safe, sanitary, and routinely maintained to assure effective working order and compliance with all legal and code requirements.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has worked very hard to improve the condition of its facilities. In the last year, many beautification projects have taken place. The front entrance doors have been restored. Glass has replaced wood panels on hallway doors to increase lighting in the hallways and visibility into each classroom. The hallway floors have been stripped and waxed. Walls have been painted and banners have been hung over each classroom door. All classrooms have been painted with accent colors and each room has a new area rug. The dining hall ceiling has been replaced and serving area has been updated. The office has been painted and rearranged in a student-centered manner.

St. Thomas More is currently working closely with parish administration and maintenance staff to create a schedule for efficient response to cleaning and maintenance issues. A request system for regular repairs and cleaning has been put into place.

Indicators of Compliance
Summary of Completed Maintenance Projects completed in past year

4.07 HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES: ^{LR} The school has a written plan in place and is actively addressing any health and safety issues reported to the school, or that the school is aware of or reasonably should know or should have known about.

St. Thomas More Catholic School provides a written plan for health and safety procedures in the Student-Parent Handbook. Current health and medical information

for each student is kept on file in the nurse's office. Each homeroom teacher is given a list of their students' medical needs. The teachers also have been given training in the use of epi-pens for students with anaphylaxis, as well as an in-service on students with asthma.

All students at St. Thomas More are required to provide proof of immunizations or appropriate documentation exempting the student from such immunization. Students are required to provide other such data necessary to ensure that the student is free from any communicable disease. This proof is a condition of enrollment.

St. Thomas More follows the Minnesota Statute regarding communicable diseases and blood borne pathogens, which states that students with a fever of 100 degrees or higher, or a student with vomiting or diarrhea, will be excluded from school until 24 hours after last fever or episode of vomiting or diarrhea. School personnel utilize standard/universal precautions for all body fluids.

There are staff members who are trained in first aid/CPR.

There are two counselors to meet the mental health needs of the students. Each counselor comes one day a week.

Our lunchroom provides a peanut-free table to provide a safe eating environment for students with peanut allergies when this is needed.

Indicators of Compliance
Crisis Management Plan

4.08 **CRISIS MANAGEMENT:** ^{LR} The school has written, published, and communicated policies and procedures for addressing emergency situations and regularly conducts drills and reviews policies/procedures with the school community.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has an established plan for major crises, including fire, tornado, and the intrusion of a dangerous person or persons. Each classroom has a written procedure for action in the case of an emergency. Visual directions for where to go during an evacuation or tornado are posted in each classroom, and directions for what to do in lockdown are kept in a blue folder by the phone in each room. All doors with windows exposing the classroom to the hallway have a cover that can be pulled down during a lockdown. The school has regularly planned drills for all these emergencies.

Every outside door remains locked during all hours of the day except when students arrive and depart. Visitors must buzz the office and identify themselves in order to enter the building. Video cameras have also been installed at the two main entrances to allow the office staff to see the visitors prior to granting them entrance. Once inside, they check in with the office staff before proceeding to their destination.

Indicators of Compliance
Fire Drill & Lockdown Logs for current year
Crisis Management Plan

4.09 RIGHT TO KNOW, BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS: ^{LR} The school annually provides professional training to its employees on “right to know” laws regarding the handling and storage of chemicals, blood borne pathogens, and other biohazards as required by OSHA.

St. Thomas More has contracted McNeil Environment Inc to provide blood borne pathogen training on a yearly basis. McNeil keeps record of the staff members that attend this training. Each teacher has gloves, bandages, and simple supplies used as protective barriers in the transmitting of blood borne pathogens.

OSHA Equal Employment Opportunity and Right to Know posters are clearly displayed in the staff lounge so that all employees have access to them.

The maintenance staff keeps bottles containing chemicals properly labeled and is working with staff to make sure all chemicals used in the classrooms are properly labeled. MSDS documents are available for staff information in the Maintenance office.

*Indicators of Compliance
Posted “right to know” (onsite)
Blood Borne Pathogen Training Documentation*

4.10 PRESCHOOL LICENSURE: ^{LR} The school will attain licensure through the Minnesota Department of Human Services (Child Care Centers) if operating an accredited preschool program (pre-kindergarten, early childhood, etc.).

NOT APPLICABLE

SUMMARY: SCHOOL CLIMATE AND FACILITIES

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

Students play an active role in determining classroom expectations and consequences.

Much care and effort has been put into restoring the school to its original grandeur.

Reconfigured space and the increased technology access meet the needs of the students and faculty of St. Thomas More Catholic School.

Families are proactive through volunteering and communication with faculty and staff.

Teachers use the variety of resources, equipment, and facilities that are available to support and enhance student productivity and life-long learning.

Challenges:

Develop an efficient schedule and plan for maintenance and cleaning.

Revisit and clarify emergency procedures, as well as provide opportunities for staff and faculty to update their CPR/First Aid certification.

Simplify and rewrite the behavior and discipline section of the Student-Parent Handbook.

Work to recruit new students and increase enrollment numbers.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 5: Community Relations

The Effort to Include All Who Have an Interest in the School

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) **Narration of Compliance:** For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*
- 2) **Indicators of Compliance:** Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.
- 3) **Strengths and Challenges:** After completing each of the criteria, identify a summary list of strengths and challenges related to the broader standard category.

Criteria

5.01

ORIENTATION: The school will provide an appropriate orientation for all new staff, families, students and volunteers. The orientation will include: school mission and philosophy, roles and responsibilities, programs, policies and procedures, and expectations for learners.

The mission and philosophy of St. Thomas More Catholic School is clearly stated on the school website, in the school handbook and the mission statement is posted throughout the building. A copy of the handbook, which includes the mission statement and philosophy, is given to all families at the beginning of the school year. Each family is responsible for reading it with their child(ren) and signing a form stating they have done so. The orientation process at St. Thomas More Catholic School involves:

New Family Picnic

This event is held at the end of August and allows newly-registered and prospective families to meet the current families of St. Thomas More Catholic School.

Teacher Workshop Week

New and veteran teachers come together during the week prior to the start of school to prepare for the upcoming school year. Some activities include: workshops, team meetings, curriculum mapping, full faculty meetings and “ice-breaker” sessions.

Meet Your Teacher Night

This event is held a few days before school starts. On this evening, tuition is paid and information about students’ health histories is obtained. Time is allotted for families to visit the classrooms and meet the teachers. Students are allowed to bring school supplies that will be needed during the year.

Back to School Night

This informational meeting held in September is for parents only. Parents are

introduced to the pastor, principal, members of the School Advisory Committee, Home and School and faculty and staff. Topics discussed include fundraising events, volunteer opportunities and a curriculum overview from classroom teachers. This event is an opportunity for parents to socialize. It is also meant to promote active parent participation.

Open House/School Information Night

This is held in January during Catholic Schools' Week for current and prospective parents to learn about the K-8 experience offered at St. Thomas More. Parents and students are welcomed by faculty, office staff, and a number of currently enrolled students. During the 2 ½ hour event, current and prospective families are able to visit classrooms, meet teachers and view projects displayed in the hallways. During the last portion of the evening, prospective families are invited to hear the principal speak about various opportunities provided by St. Thomas More Catholic School and are introduced to teacher council representatives who give information about the school.

Volunteer Opportunities

Parents are encouraged to volunteer for various positions on campus including: library helpers, lunch room assistants, playground supervisors, field trip chaperones, tutors, nurses, office/copy assistants, Art Adventure coordinators, room parents, athletic team coaches and managers, etc. Volunteers are required to pass a background check and complete Virtus training by Dec. 2008.

Virtus

All current employees are given awareness training of child abuse, mandated by the Archdiocese. As of December 2008, all school volunteers will also be required to have Virtus training.

Indicators of Compliance
New Family Welcome Packet
Workshop Week Schedule
Meet Your Teacher Night Invitation
Back to School Night Invitation

5.02 REGULAR COMMUNICATION: The school will maintain regular communication between the school and home.

The St. Thomas More Website can be found at: www.morecommunity.org. St. Thomas More Catholic School makes available year-round communication with all families through its website. The website is updated weekly and includes the following information:

- School video
- Announcements (including sports)
- News
- Family Flyer
- School and lunch calendar

- Handbook and resource information
- Churchwerks
- Parish information
- School forms

The Family Flyer is a newsletter made available every Thursday during the regular school year (August to May) and can be viewed in paper form or on the school website. The Family Flyer includes, but is not limited to:

- Announcements and reflections by the principal
- Committee announcements
- Community announcements and events
- Parish announcements and events
- Athletic updates
- Specialists' updates
- Grade-level announcements and forms
- Fundraising updates
- Enrichment opportunities

Individual Teacher Communication is sent home daily, weekly, or monthly through:

- Classroom newsletters
- Assignments sheets
- Homework and practice logs
- Individualized motivational sheets
- Emails (as needed)
- Phone calls (as needed)
- Discipline notices (to be signed and returned)
- Churchwerks (5-8)
- Progress reports
- Library overdue notices

Mid-trimester reports (Grades 5-8) are sent home between trimester report cards, resulting in detailed progress reports every six weeks.

Churchwerks (6-8) is an online program designed for parents and students to access at any time in order to view grades, assignments and individual progress.

The Parish Bulletin is available for community announcements on a weekly basis.

Indicators of Compliance
 School DVD
 Family Flyer
 Lunch Menu
 Individual teacher newsletters
 Signed permission slips (on file in classrooms)
 Discipline notices (in office)
 Progress Reports
www.ihm-stlukes.org
www.morecommunity.org

5.03 PUBLICATIONS: The school's written communication will help to develop informed relationships between learners, their families, the school, and the civic community.

St. Thomas More Catholic School uses written communication to keep the school community, parish, and larger community informed about school business. The St. Thomas More Catholic School Student-Parent Handbook is provided to families when they begin school. The handbook contains the school's mission and philosophy statements, along with policies and procedures. Each parent must return a signed form verifying that they have read the handbook and will comply with the policies contained within it.

St. Thomas More Catholic School's written communications include the following, but are not exclusive to:

Progress reports
Family Flyer
Student-Parent Handbook
Special announcements
News releases to local media
Church bulletin
Annual Report
Newsletters

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook
Family Flyer
Press Releases
Parish Bulletin
Annual Report

5.04 PARENT ORGANIZATIONS: The school will develop and promote organizations of parents involved in positively promoting the school and its mission.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is fortunate to have a very active and skilled parent community. We offer various opportunities for parents to give of their time and talents. They include: School Advisory Committee, Home and School, school volunteers, and classroom tutors.

School Advisory Committee: The School Advisory Committee's role is to advise the canonical administrator and principal on issues related to the school. The committee includes: the canonical administrator, the principal, and seven members. Members of the school or larger parish community will be selected to serve on this advisory committee through a discernment process beginning in the spring of 2008. Each member is assigned to a sub-committee such as marketing, development, and finance. Non-voting representatives include: the canonical administrator, the principal, a representative of the parish, the Home and School chair, and a teacher council representative. School Advisory Committee meetings are held the first Thursday of every month and are open to the public.

Home and School Committee: The purpose of the Home and School Committee is to facilitate and oversee the efforts within the school for fundraising and social events and the coordination of volunteers to staff events, for example, the eighth grade

graduation and teacher parties. Sub-committees and their events include:

- Grand Ole Day
- Wine Tasting fundraiser
- Auction
- New Family Welcoming
- Marathon
- The Annual Fund
- Book Fairs
- First Friday Coffee

Volunteers: At Meet-Your-Teacher Night parents complete a survey indicating their interest and availability to volunteer. From this survey parents are utilized throughout the building and school day. Parents volunteer to help with recess supervision, dining hall supervision and serving lunch; work in our copy center and nurse's office; volunteer as room parents, and as coaches and assistant coaches.

Building Volunteer Tutors: Parents, parishioners, and Jesuit novices are trained and coordinated by our Education Resource Teacher to work with individual students and small groups in all grade levels for both remedial and enrichment opportunities.

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook
School Calendar
Family Flyer
Event Invitations and Announcements

5.05 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT / PARTNERSHIPS: The school will promote involvement in community activities and events and will develop community partnerships with local and school organizations that sponsor and support educational projects.

St. Thomas More Catholic School is involved in many community activities and is proud of its association with a number of different organizations, including:

- Hallie Q. Brown food shelf
- Books for Africa
- School/Community Play
- Birthday boxes
- Valentines for shut-ins
- Senior buddies
- Dollar-A- Dud collection to various charitable causes
- Catholic Charities & Lutheran Social Services Sponsor-A-Family
- Seasonal musical events
- Boy/Girl Scouts
- Linwood Community Center

In addition, we are fortunate to benefit from partnerships with the following businesses:

- Kemps milk caps
- General Mills coupons

- Ink cartridge recycling
- Great Harvest Bakery
- Thomas Liquors
- Target
- Caribou
- Kowalski's Market
- Red Balloon Bookshop
- Skinner's Pub

5.06 **MARKETING/DEVELOPMENT PLAN:** The school will have a marketing/development plan in order to increase public visibility, foster community relations, and maintain necessary revenue and enrollment.

The School Advisory Committee of St. Thomas More Catholic School has a marketing and development subcommittees. The marketing committee's primary goal is to develop public awareness about the school and translate into increased student enrollment. The work to develop print advertisements, logos, press releases, as well as are involved in designing the school's new website. The development committee's primary goal is to organize fundraising initiatives including the Marathon for Non-Public Education, Wine Tasting, Annual Fund, and Auction Event. In addition, the development committee is beginning to develop relationships with alumni through yearly communication and outreach.

Indicators of Compliance
 Print Advertisements
 School DVD
www.lhm-stlukes.org
www.morecommunity.org
 Annual Fund Letters
 Letter to Alumni
 Auction Booklet

5.07 **ANNUAL REPORT:** The school will publish and distribute an annual report to parents and other stakeholders.

St. Thomas More Catholic School publishes an annual report in June that is mailed to its stakeholders and available in the school office. St. Thomas More Catholic Community also creates an annual report that is available upon request.

Indicators of Compliance
 Annual Report

SUMMARY: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

School information packets are sent home at the beginning of the year and information about St. Thomas More Catholic School is available year-round via the website.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has a well-written handbook, and regularly communicates with families through the Family Flyer and school website. St. Thomas More Catholic School has an active parent community willing to donate a great deal of time, talent, and treasure throughout the school year.

The variety of parent committees and volunteer opportunities ensures that all can contribute to the school in addition to and beyond financial contributions.

Parents have a strong sense of belonging and ownership of the school.

Challenges:

We are challenged to develop a plan to engage the alumni/alumnae of Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Luke's, IHM-St. Luke's, and St. Thomas More Catholic School.

We are challenged to establish and maintain a scholarship fund to reach and serve those in the parish and surrounding community who cannot meet the full cost of tuition.

We are challenged to develop a public relations plan to distribute to media outlets to promote note-worthy, good-news events of the school community.

We are challenged to inform the community of the new school name.

We are committed to increasing enrollment in the face of declining demographics and increased competition.

We must ensure VIRTUS training for all volunteers.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 6: Personnel

The Qualifications, Evaluations, and Development of the Faculty

INSTRUCTIONS

Narration of Compliance: For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*

- 1) **Indicators of Compliance:** Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.
- 2) **Strengths and Challenges:** After completing each of the criteria, identify a summary list of strengths and challenges related to the broader standard category.

Criteria

6.01

ADMINISTRATOR QUALIFICATIONS: The school will have principals/administrators who have Minnesota administrative licensure; or at least a minimum, have a masters degree in education from an accredited institution, are enrolled in such a program leading to a qualified degree within a five year period, or can demonstrate equivalency of such a degree.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has a full-time principal who is currently working on an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership through the Murray Institute at the University of St. Thomas. He will complete this degree and have a K-12 administrator's license in December of 2008. He also holds a bachelor's and master's degree in mass communication and has completed the post-baccalaureate teacher licensure program at the University of St. Thomas.

Indicators of Compliance

Copy of Teaching License and transcripts in the personnel files found in the principal's office

6.02

ELEMENTARY TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS: The elementary school's grade level teachers and those teaching math, science, social studies, or language arts will have Minnesota teacher licensure; or at minimum have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution.

The members of the elementary faculty of St. Thomas More Catholic School have bachelor's degrees from accredited institutions and seven have completed master's degrees. The faculty members all hold valid Minnesota teacher licenses with the exception of our 6-8 social studies teacher who recently moved from New York and is currently working on completing three classes to validate his Minnesota teacher's license.

Indicators of Compliance

Copy of Teaching License and transcripts in the personnel files found in the principal's office

6.03 ELEMENTARY SPECIALTY TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS: The elementary school’s specialists (world language, fine arts, technology, library, physical education, religions, etc.) will have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution; or at minimum be able to demonstrate proficiency in their teaching area.

Each of our specialist teachers has a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and some have master’s degrees in their field of specialization. All of them also hold a current Minnesota teacher’s license except for our technology coordinator.

Indicators of Compliance

Copy of Teaching License and transcripts in the personnel files found in the principal’s office

6.04 SECONDARY TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS:

Not Applicable

6.05 CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS: The school will conduct appropriate criminal history background checks on all individuals who are offered employment in the school.

All employees of St. Thomas More Catholic School undergo a criminal background check at the time of their initial employment.

Indicators of Compliance

Criminal Background Checks on all school employees can be found in the principal’s office

6.06 STAFF CODE OF ETHICS: The school will publish and maintain a professional code of ethics for all staff members.

A “Code of Ethics for Catholic School Teachers” from NCEA is included in our employee handbook. All employees are expected to adhere to this code of ethics and all employees are expected to sign the Pastoral Code of Conduct as part of their “Confirmation of Terms” each school year.

Indicators of Compliance
Employee Handbook

Pastoral Code of Conduct sign-offs found in the principal’s office

6.07 EVALUATION PROCESS: The school will have an evaluation process for all school personnel that includes: annual written reviews, clear expectations, formative feedback on performance, a clear relationship between evaluation and employment decisions, and suggested courses of action to improve performance.

The principal distributes expectations to all faculty and staff during Workshop Week in August. The principal also collects lessons plans from teachers each week and regularly visits classrooms to gather firsthand information about the quality of instruction and observe classroom management. Open lines of communication exist between the principal and faculty and staff and the principal speaks directly with members of the faculty and staff with both positive and constructive feedback. All

faculty set yearly professional practice goals and complete a self-assessment prior to their annual performance review.

Indicators of Compliance
Personnel Records in principal's office
Faculty & Staff Expectations
Performance Appraisal Forms
Job Descriptions
Employee Handbook

- 6.08 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF:** The school will have all teaching staff and administrators annually participate in professional development opportunities that are related to significant planning objectives and job responsibilities.

Faculty members of St. Thomas More Catholic School attend annual in-service training in the fall and throughout the school year. Faculty members complete interest surveys to determine the topics that will be offered through faculty in-services. Faculty members are also encouraged to attend local and national professional development opportunities and those faculty members who do not have a Master's degree are encouraged to complete graduate level coursework in education.

Indicators of Compliance
Current clock hours of each faculty member

- 6.09 BUDGETING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** The school will provide necessary resources in the budget for all staff to participate in annual professional development.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has been fortunate to receive approximately \$34,000 in Title II professional development money for this school year through the St. Paul School District. This professional development money is accessible to all faculty and is allocated to them based on individual professional development needs and interests as well as institutional needs and initiatives that are prioritized in our yearly professional development plan that must be filed with the St. Paul School District in order to access Title II funds.

Indicators of Compliance
Title II Budget Reports

- 6.10 PERSONNEL RECORDS:**

Personnel files are kept in a locked file cabinet in the principal's office. These personnel files include all required documents per directives from the office of Human Resources from the Archdiocese of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Indicators of Compliance
Personnel records found in principal's office
List of documents found in personnel files

SUMMARY: PERSONNEL

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

Administration and faculty are well qualified for their positions and are committed to best practices.

One third of our faculty has advanced degrees and several are currently working on a Master's degree.

The teaching experience of the professional staff is a balance between short (less than five years) medium (5-10 years) and long term (greater than 10 years) classroom tenure.

Faculty members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of professional development opportunities, and they are committed to continuing education in order to further develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities working with students.

Sufficient money is available through Title II so that faculty members can work on advanced degrees and attend both local and national workshops and conferences.

Personnel files are well-maintained.

Challenges:

Reduce turnover among younger teachers who have less than five years of teaching experience; particularly at the middle school level.

Provide a forum and allot time for faculty to share the information they garner from attending workshops and conferences.

In the future, allocate money in the school budget for professional development in the event Title II professional development money decreases significantly.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 7: Leadership and Governance

The Responsibility for the Educational and Organizational Effectiveness

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) **Narration of Compliance:** For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*
- 2) **Indicators of Compliance:** Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.
- 3) **Strengths and Challenges:** After completing each of the criteria, identify a summary list of strengths and challenges related to the broader standard category.

Criteria

7.01

ADMINISTRATOR: The school will have an onsite administrator who is responsible for the day-to-day administrative leadership and management of the school.

St. Thomas More Catholic School has a full-time administrator who is responsible for the day-to-day leadership and management of the school. His high visibility and involvement in the day-to-day activities of the school, along with open communication, enable him to personally connect with various stakeholders of the school, including students, parents, faculty and staff. He works in consultation with the Teachers' Council that is comprised of teacher leaders from the K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and Specialists teams. In addition, the school administrator works closely with the pastor, parish administrator and other members of the pastoral staff.

Indicators of Compliance
Principal's Job Description

7.02

JOB DESCRIPTIONS: The school will provide written position descriptions for all administrative staff, which include roles, responsibilities, and accountability.

All administrative staff members have job descriptions that clearly define the roles and responsibilities of their position, as well as to whom they report. Each administrative staff member is expected to sign-off on their job description and each receives a copy when they sign-off on their terms of employment for each school year.

Indicators of Compliance
Faculty-Staff Job Descriptions

7.03

GOVERNANCE: The school will have a governing body to which the administrator is accountable.

Up until January of 2008, St. Thomas More Catholic School had a two-tiered governance structure that was comprised of a Board of Directors and a School Board. With the merger of Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Luke Churches to form St. Thomas More Church, the governance structure of the school will revert to a single-tiered governance structure since the school is sponsored by a single parish. The new School Advisory Committee will continue the work done by the former Board of

Directors and School Board, but they will do so in an advisory manner. Over the course of the 2007-2008 school year, the current school board is developing a new set of bylaws that will outline the new school advisory committee's membership and sub-committees.

Indicators of Compliance
School Board Meeting Agendas & Minutes 2007-2008

- 7.04 GOVERNANCE OPERATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT:** The school has established written roles and responsibilities for members of the governing body and provides opportunities for orientation, ongoing development and training.

Under the two-tiered governance structure that had been in place, there were written bylaws and procedures that outlined how the Board of Directors and School Board functioned. As the school reverts back to a single-tiered governance model, new roles and responsibilities, as well as sub-committee responsibilities, need to be written. They will reflect the advisory nature of this group of parent and parish leaders.

Indicators of Compliance
Proposed Guidelines for School Advisory Committee
Old School Board Bylaws
Parent-Student Handbook

- 7.05 BUDGET:** The school will have an annual budgetary process and budget that is consistent with the achievement of its goals; in addition, the school will produce an annual budget and financial report, and will make it available to stakeholders.

A preliminary budget for the upcoming school year is prepared and shared with the school board prior to its being approved by the parish. Once enrollment numbers are finalized in September of each school year, the budget is amended to reflect the current financial reality of the school. The former two-tiered governance structure included a separate school finance committee that reviewed monthly financials and assisted the principal in developing each year's budget. As a single parish-sponsored school, the parish finance committee will assume responsibility for reviewing monthly financials and working with the principal to develop a school budget. Representatives from the School Advisory Committee will be appointed to serve on the Parish Finance Committee. The school's budget is published each spring as part of the school's "Annual Report." In addition, monthly financials are shared with the current School Advisory Committee and these statements can be viewed by any stakeholder of the school. The school regularly undergoes an audit by an independent accountant. The last audit took place during 2005-2006.

Indicators of Compliance
2006-2007 Budget
2006-2007 End of the Year Financials
2007-2008 Budget
Year-to-Date Financials
Auditor's Report
School's Response/Actions to Auditor's Recommendations

- 7.06 TUITION AND FEE SCHEDULE:** The school will develop and communicate a tuition and fee schedule.

The principal, in consultation with the school finance committee, develops a tuition and fee schedule each year. A letter is sent out in January informing parents of the

tuition and fee schedule for the upcoming school year. In addition, the tuition and fee schedule is published in the Student-Parent Handbook and on the school's website.

Indicators of Compliance
Tuition/Fee Schedule
Annual Tuition Letter
Student-Parent Handbook

7.07 COMPENSATION STRUCTURE: The school uses a communicated compensation structure for determining faculty salaries and benefits.

St. Thomas More Catholic School currently has a "Step and Lane" system that compensates faculty based on years of service and educational background. This compensation structure is reviewed annually, and faculty members receive a copy of the "Step and Lane" grid with their employment information letters each spring.

Indicators of Compliance
Written Salary Schedule for Teachers

7.08 EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS: The school has written, updated employee handbooks or published and communicated policies and procedures that affect school faculty and staff.

The school publishes an employee handbook that is given to all full and part-time employees. This comprehensive handbook details policies, procedures, and expectations of all employees. This handbook is updated yearly and distributed to all employees in the fall. All employees are expected to sign-off indicating they have received a copy and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook.

Indicators of Compliance
Employee Handbook

7.09 IMMUNIZATION RECORDS: ^{LR} The school annually obtains and maintains records of state- required immunizations on its students; the school enforces state immunization requirements.

The school nurse, who is provided by the St. Paul School District, reviews immunization records each fall. Those students who are not in compliance with the state-required immunizations receive notification from the school nurse and/or the school principal that immunizations must be current according to state law in order for continued enrollment at St. Thomas More Catholic School.

Indicators of Compliance
Immunization Records located in nurse's office
Examples of Letters sent out to those not in compliance

7.10 ADMISSIONS POLICY: The school will implement admissions policies and procedures in accordance with legally, ethically, and professionally acceptable practices, including a statement of nondiscrimination.

The admissions process and nondiscrimination statement can be found in the Student-Parent Handbook. School personnel closely follow the policies that are outlined in this handbook.

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook

7.11 PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOKS: The school will provide parents and students an updated, comprehensive school handbook that includes policies and procedures.

The school provides students and parents with a comprehensive handbook that outlines all policies and procedures. This handbook was revised and shortened during the 2006-2007 school year to be more clear and concise; however, further revision is needed. All families are expected to review this handbook and sign-off indicating they have read and understand the policies and procedures that are outlined in this handbook.

Indicators of Compliance
Student-Parent Handbook

SUMMARY: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

The school has a visible and engaged principal. His proactive and positive spirit enables him to work in partnership with all stakeholders of the school and parish to foster a strong and vibrant Catholic school.

The school maintains clear and detailed job descriptions.

The school has clear and detailed employee handbooks.

Immunization records are well-maintained and the “No Shots, No School” policy is enforced.

Challenges:

Job descriptions for administration, faculty, and staff should be reviewed and updated annually.

With the advent of a new single-tiered governance structure consisting of a School Advisory Committee, the roles and responsibilities of this group, as well as the selection process for membership composition need to be written and implemented.

Faculty and staff compensation needs to be improved in order to reduce turnover.

As the school reverts back to being sponsored by a single parish, long-term financial goals of the school will need to be developed in accordance with the needs and financial goals of the larger parish.

The Student-Parent Handbook needs to be revised so that it is more clear and concise.

Our school would benefit from the increased presence and engagement of the canonical administrator.

STANDARDS DOCUMENTATION

Standard 8: School Improvement

The Strategies and Tools for Improving the School

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) **Narration of Compliance:** For each criteria below (if requested), provide a concise narrative statement that describes how the school complies with the particular criteria. *Be mindful that documented evidence will be necessary during your onsite visit to verify compliance.*
- 2) **Indicators of Compliance:** Review the list of indicators (See Section C) for each criteria to provide ideas for documented evidence of compliance. Ensure that all essential indicators (found in italics below each criteria) are provided during your onsite visit.

Criteria

- 8.01 SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN:** The school has developed a written School Strategic Plan that identifies measurable, end-result objectives; strategies for achieving the objectives; and time-specific action steps for fulfilling the strategies.

The School's Strategic Plan is based on the school's self-study as well as parent, School board, and faculty input.

- 8.02 QUALITY OF PLAN:** The school has developed a written School Strategic Plan in conformity with the Quality Expectations of MNSAA.

The School Strategic Plan for St. Thomas More Catholic School is in compliance with the quality expectations of MNSAA. The strategic plan and the self-study document accurately reflect the current reality as well as the current needs of the school. The objectives, strategies, and action steps are set within a reasonable time frame so they are attainable and will benefit the overall school environment over the next seven years.

- 8.03 COMMUNICATION OF PLAN:** The school uses a process for communicating the School Strategic Plan, in addition to regular updates on progress, to the various stakeholders of the school community.

The School's Strategic Plan and its progress will be communicated to the various stakeholders through posters hanging outside the school office, the Family Flyer (our school's weekly newsletter), our school website, church bulletins, school & parish leadership meetings, and our school's annual report.

- 8.04 EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN:** The school has a process for regularly evaluating and further developing its School Strategic Plan.

The School Strategic Plan will be evaluated yearly. School Advisory Committee Meetings, as well as Faculty meetings and staff development time will be dedicated to monitoring the progress of achieving objectives in the current school strategic plan and determining if and when new objectives, strategies, and actions steps need to be put into place.