

KALAMAZOO AREA

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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# **Blue Ribbon Committee**

## **Summary Report**

**2001**

Blue Ribbon Summary Report  
Prepared for  
Bishop James A. Murray  
December 13, 2001

Blue Ribbon Committee was requested by the area pastors/school administrators in spring of spring 2001. The committees were formed and the first meeting was held at Bishop Murray's residence on June 28, 2001. During the following months the committees and subcommittees met on a regular basis. Summary reports from the subcommittees were presented and acknowledged by the entire committee on November 29, 2001. On December 6, 2001, the area pastors and school administrators met to discuss the reports. It was the consensus of both groups to move forward with a unification process.

At this time, we request approval of the following recommendations.

1. To aid unification, an area-wide board should be formed. It is recommended this board be composed of between 7 and 9 people, with a pastor representative and a representative from the Office of Schools. In addition, each parish with a school should have one representative on this board. The various representatives should represent all constituencies, including Hackett Catholic Central, finance, facilities, economic ranges, etc. It is suggested that each parish nominate a person from their community for each of the categories from which the Blue Ribbon Executive Committee will make the final selection.
2. To move forward with an annual appeal to benefit all Catholic schools in the Kalamazoo area with a portion of the appeal designated to funding the unification efforts.
3. To aid in the unification efforts, consideration should be given to hiring an Executive Director to oversee the unification process. The decisions regarding personnel, curriculum, facilities, and finances need day to day attention.
4. Interim guidelines need to be promulgated regarding budgeting considerations for next year's school operations.
5. A plan needs to be developed to synchronize the elementary curriculum in all four elementary schools.
6. An aggressive marketing and recruitment plan needs to be identified and properly implemented.

Other considerations which need further study.

A. If the appeal drive is unable to provide substantial additional funding, a formula should be developed for Catholic school support. Regional funding of Catholic schools should be considered.

B. Cost analysis of creating a central office for an Executive Director should be created.  
This analysis should also include support help, curriculum director, business manager, etc.

C. Develop and implement a program to educate Catholics on the importance and effectiveness of Catholic Schools. This could be parish-based or accomplished through area-wide marketing.

D. Professional Development regarding the curriculum and instructional methodology needs to be implemented over area-wide and followed up with performance measures.

E. Middle School concepts and standards need to be identified and implemented in grades 6-8 and/or consolidation at these grade levels.

F. Facility planning for major renovation and new construction needs to be studied.

G. Design and target a common teacher scale. Three of our schools are being financed partially by the low salaries of our teachers.

Respectfully submitted by the Blue Ribbon Committee,

Fr. Mark Vyverman, Chairman; Mrs. Margaret Erich, Fr. Robert Flickinger, Mr. John Dobratz, Mrs. Theresa Cyper, Mrs. Nikki Smith, Mrs. Colleen Takacs, Mr. Dave Rutten, Mr. Mathew Howard, Mrs. Doreen Thomas, Mr. Pete Livingston, Mr. Mark Weishaar, Mrs. Mary Jane Doerr, and Dr. Frank C. Wippel, Ed.D.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

SERVING

THE GREATER KALAMAZOO AREA

ST. AUGUSTINE CATHEDRAL SCHOOL  
600 WEST MICHIGAN AVENUE  
KALAMAZOO, MI 49007

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL  
930 LAKE STREET  
KALAMAZOO, MI 49001

ST. MARY SCHOOL  
929 CHARLOTTE AVENUE  
KALAMAZOO, MI 49001

ST. MONICA ELEMENTARY  
530 WEST KILGORE ROAD  
KALAMAZOO, MI 49008

HACKETT CATHOLIC CENTRAL  
1000 WEST KILGORE ROAD  
KALAMAZOO, MI 49008

**Mission/Purpose for the Advancement of Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools  
Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Committee**

**Mission Statement:**

*"Catholic schools are unique expressions of the Church's efforts to achieve the purposes of Catholic education among the young. They 'are the most effective means available to the Church for the education of children and young people.'" U.S.*

*Bishops*

The Kalamazoo Area Catholic Community must place emphasis on the importance of Catholic school education and sustaining a quality and unified institution, infused with gospel virtues and academic excellence, for the common good of our church and our society. In its dedication to excellence, the Kalamazoo Area Catholic Community will integrate faith with intellectual pursuit through well-designed programs supported by pastor support, sufficient resources and implemented by competent, dedicated staff. In order to meet the goals of our mission statement, each subcommittee recommends the following:

**Recommendation 1:**

*Facilities:* Based on a qualitative report of the strengths and weaknesses of the school/parish facilities, recommendations will be made for better use of the properties and buildings. (Please see report)

**Recommendation 2:**

*Finance:* Based on collected information, recommendations will be made on per pupil costs, teacher salaries, occupancy costs, overhead costs and a standard tuition scale and central pool for tuition. (Please see report)

**Recommendation 3:**

*Development:* To strengthen the identity of the Kalamazoo Catholic Community and to prepare a final Case Statement once final recommendations are provided by the other sub-committees. (Please see report)

**Recommendation 4:**

*Demographics:* Utilize enrollment, financial and staffing data to recommend effective recruitment and marketing techniques. (Please see report)

**Recommendation 5:**

*Curriculum:* To adopt a common curriculum. (Please see report)

**Recommendation 6:**

*Personnel:* A common teacher salary scale, methods to address teacher recruitment and retention, and the appointment of an Executive Director to implement consistent policies. (Please see report)

## **Blue Ribbon Committee**

### **Facilities Subcommittee Final Report**

#### **Overview**

The Facilities Subcommittee was composed of five lay people: Mark Weishaar, businessman; Gerard Hess, scientist; Gloria Spoeri, realtor; Timothy Eastman, school principal; and Margaret Erich, associate superintendent. The committee's purpose was to investigate and evaluate parish properties, including schools, held by the Kalamazoo area Catholic parishes and to make recommendations for the schools based on their findings. For this purpose, the properties held by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Catherine, St. Joseph, St. Mary, and St. Monica Parishes as well as Hackett Catholic Central High School, were toured.

A standard evaluation tool was used for each property. An informational table, based on this evaluation tool, is attached to this report. Specific findings for each property can be found in the *Synopsis of Site Visits*, which is part of the comprehensive Blue Ribbon Committee Report.

#### **Recommendations**

1. Before any decisions involving monies for capital expenditures are made regarding the existing properties, each pastor and principal should duplicate the visits made by this team to identify any concerns they may have about the team's findings. Then, a professional architect/contractor without ties to any particular property, should be hired to formally address structural issues. Implications
  - There would be a significant cost associated to having the property professionally evaluated. This should be borne by the four Kalamazoo parishes with schools, as well as Hackett Catholic Central, on an equitable basis.
  - In the comprehensive report, some buildings have been identified as "reaching the end of their useful life". This could indicate the need for consideration being given to consolidating students on fewer campuses.

1. All pending construction/renovation should be done only by licensed professionals who guarantee their work.

#### Implications

- There appears to be a history of "sweetheart deals" made to save money and perhaps circumvent existing building codes. We also have situations in which these special deals resulted in facilities not being able to be used for school purposes because of code violations. This is a waste of money and places our institutions at risk should any incident occur which results in litigation.
  - The additional cost of construction/renovation by a professional contractor must be factored into costs.
1. After considering the future expansion needs of Hackett Catholic Central, the committee feels the ARK should be moved to a new location.

### Implications

- HCC would be able to use either the land, if needed, or the building itself for future classroom needs.
  - There is available space in the old convent located on the Saint Joseph property for the ARK, although significant renovation to this structure would be necessary.
1. A joint feasibility study should be begun now to begin planning for future construction of either a new elementary school or major remodeling of existing facilities.

### Implications

- Two school buildings were identified as nearing the end of their useful life. This means either major funds must be put into them to keep them viable or a new building should be constructed. Both options will take extensive funds to implement. Joint planning now among the existing schools/parishes will save both time and resources in the future.
- A team, possibly composed of those doing the suggested feasibility study, should be working with the diocesan development office and/or other agencies to begin to build a cash reserve for capital improvements.

### **Summary**

In addition to the above recommendations, several other items were discussed by the committee and need to be considered prior to any renovations to existing structures or any new construction.

- Schools need to be placed where there are students. A demographic study should be completed prior to any new construction.
- Transportation of students needs to be considered prior to any merging of facilities or before beginning any new construction.
- The campus at Saint Joseph Parish is too small for new construction. If this site were ever considered for this purpose, some of the surrounding land would need to be purchased.
- The property owned by Saint Catherine Parish has great potential. The parish owns over 14 acres and sits in the middle of a large population base.
- The diocese owns five acres in the Oshtemo area which may be considered for future construction.
- The dollar amounts involved in construction/renovation can be enormous, and therefore impossible for this committee to accurately address at this time.

The Facilities Subcommittee has found this to be an extremely informative and valuable process. The committee would be happy to reconvene to accept new challenges and to assist in the development of any of their recommendations.

**Blue Ribbon Committee on Catholic Education  
Facilities Subcommittee  
Synopsis of Site Visits**

Site visits were performed by working groups of subcommittee members to Hackett Catholic Central High School on October 30, 2001, St. Catherine Parish, St. Joseph Parish and School, and St. Monica Parish and School on November 6, and St. Ambrose Parish, St. Mary Parish and School, and St. Augustine Cathedral and School on November 7, 2001. All site visits were prearranged and guided by an administrator or person(s) known by the administrator to be knowledgeable of the facility. For purposes of appraisal and comparison a standardized tour format was adhered to, formalizing issues of qualitative and quantitative observations (outline attached).

**Msgr. John R. Hackett Catholic Central High School.**

The site tour of Hackett High School took place on the evening of October 30, and consisted of a walking tour of the structures, and visual inspection from a distance of parking areas, athletic fields, and property perimeters. The tour was complete in approximately one hour and 20 minutes. The school administration has commissioned architectural drawings of proposed additions and improvements through the Bates Architectural firm of Kalamazoo MI.

The main visitors' entryway of Hackett High School is well demarked, readily accessible, and very attractively presented with attractive landscaping, a donor's circle with bench seating, and readily available and accessible visitors' parking. Administrative office areas are immediately positioned in the entry foyer, which is decorated with both traditional historical and commemorative artwork as well as tasteful student works.

Administrative offices are laid out with a logical flow, receptionists/administrative assistants present to provide information to visitors, additional workspaces behind partitions. Office furniture, telephone, public address systems, office equipment all of which appear to be of substantive quality. Individual administrative offices appear to be small but functional.

Hallways are very well lit, directions well indicated through appropriate signage, and a great variety of display cases and bulletin boards are dispersed throughout the complex. Student lockers in the corridors appear to be in good repair. Student restroom facilities are in good repair, and the drinking fountains are of adequate quality.

Classrooms are well lit, with minimal built-in storage and shelving. Desks and chairs are functional but many are approaching the end of their useful service life. Science laboratories are very well appointed; again additional storage space for laboratory equipment would be a plus. The Chapel is immediately accessible from the hallway and is visually very welcoming. The library facilities are very attractive; handicap accessibility is limited due to the floor plan. The computer laboratory is well equipped.



Minor issues are apparent with the 110 VAC supplied through raised power strips on the floor. The instrumental music room appears to be greatly utilized, storage rooms being used to capacity, with minor maintenance factors in evidence, worn carpeting damaged ceiling tiles etc. The Theatre auditorium is a remarkable facility.

The school entryway facing the main student parking area presents a somewhat confusing dichotomy. The majority of visitors attending music, theater, or sporting events, enter the building complex through this, a secondary entry. The lobby area does not present in an impressive manner, with soft drink dispensing machines rather than artwork and little directive signage in evidence. It is a utilitarian space, which serves pragmatic functions but little more.

The athletic locker rooms are in very poor condition. The gymnasium is in adequate condition with the requisite ongoing maintenance of the flooring. The bleachers in the gymnasium are in difficult condition and must be scheduled for replacement. Cafeteria facilities are nicely appointed, with new tables and seating. Kitchen facilities are well maintained and functional. Maintenance staff work/storage areas are cluttered, with seeming little inventory of infrastructure, replacement blower motors etc on hand. Condition of the heating plant boilers etc is addressed in the attachment.

Student parking areas are limited in space, and will require resurfacing. Athletic fields are under consideration for expansion/improvements. The School buses are parked outdoors, without garage facilities. Additional classrooms are housed in an annex building, along with additional overflow storage.

Overall consensus of the touring sub-team was that this is a well functioning facility with considerable useful service life. Maintenance issues are unremarkable, with capital improvement issues being addressed through proper channels.

### **St. Catherine Parish.**

The site tour of St. Catherine Parish took place on the afternoon of November 6, and consisted of a walking tour of the structures and visual inspection of parking areas and property perimeters. The tour was complete in approximately 25 minutes. The Parish administration has commissioned architectural drawings of proposed additions and improvements through the firm of Cox Medendorp Olson Architects of Grand Rapids MI. Technical specifications for property and physical plant were not available for the site visit.

The property is greater than 10 acres, and fronts with an expanse of lawn, garden areas, and a driveway onto Centre Street in Portage MI. The existing structures include a church building dedicated in 1969, a Rectory and guesthouse both of which are ranch-style structures, a utility storage shed, and a building used for Youth services, Stanley Hall.

Driveways and parking areas are recently resurfaced and well maintained, the entrance to the church building is well defined. Entry into the church building leads into a large and welcoming vestibule, which is used for overflow seating during services. The main worship area is attractive, with non-permanent seating for perhaps 750 congregants. The worship area is visually dominated by a pipe organ and music area. Seating surfaces are worn but all appears to be in good repair. Adjoining the vestibule are parallel hallways opening to 16-18 small (-150 sq. ft.) classrooms, used for religious education. Both hallways terminate in a common room (Marion Hall) with some commercial kitchen facilities and an additional double door exterior entrance. The walkout level of the church is composed of a conference meeting room with a conference table, storage, a small non-commercial kitchen area and administrative offices.

The Stanley Center is located at the Northern margin of the property. It is composed of a manufactured steel building of unit construction, to allow future modular addition. There are some administrative office spaces, storage, a small non-commercial kitchen facility, and a loft space utilized as a game room. The bulk of the building volume is dedicated as an auditorium space, with an unfinished concrete floor, and ceiling suspended natural gas unit heating.

Overall consensus of the touring sub-team was that St. Catherine Parish Facilities are functional, yet at the present time Parish needs have outgrown the facility capacities.

### **St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School.**

The site tour of the St. Joseph's Catholic Elementary School, adjacent buildings and the property upon which they reside, took place on the afternoon of November 6, 2001. The size of the property is approximately 2.75 acres, fronting on Lake Street. The tour was complete in approximately one hour and 10 minutes. The school is located in the center of the property. Also located on the premises are the Church, Rectory, Boiler Building, and a Convent which has been leased for non-diocesan business or vacant for some years.

The school is divided into two facilities—an elementary building (Rochford) and the middle school building (Bennett). The Rochford building was constructed in 1954, is housed in two stories and is approximately 11,000 square feet. There are eight classrooms in this facility each being approximately 1,080 square feet. Although this facility is almost 50 years old, it is inviting and shows very well. The student restrooms are adequate and functional. In addition, there is a unisex restroom for the administration.

The Bennett building, middle school building, was constructed in 1967 and is approximately 14,000 square feet. It is an attractive and functional facility and shows well upon entering. The administrative offices, consisting of the Main Office and Principal's Office, surround the entrance to the School. This allows for smooth foot traffic flow and security measures being addressed.

The middle school building has seven classrooms which include a music room, computer and science labs and child care room. Each room is approximately 840 square feet. The school also has a gymnasium with a tile floor. This large room is used as a community and all-purpose room. The

commercial kitchen is in good condition and passed its last inspection in September 2001. It includes stainless steel fixtures, industrial dishwasher, new refrigerator and three cast iron stoves.

The roof on the elementary school was installed in 1997. The middle school roof was replaced in 1990. Both were inspected in August 2001 and are in good condition.

The HVAC system for the elementary school is a Trane gas fired heating and cooling system and was installed in 1999. The middle school heating plant is a gas fired boiler that supplies heat to the church and school building. A chiller has been recently added to provide air conditioning to this building. Both systems are under a maintenance contract.

New, energy efficient windows were installed prior to 1997. Both buildings have additional energy efficient measures with their HVAC system. The technology aspect of both schools has been completely updated with fiber optic cable connecting the two buildings. A new phone system was installed in 2000 and upgraded in 2001. All classrooms have phones with voicemail capabilities.

The playground area is very limited. There is a small strip which is not paved adjacent to the parking lot. In this area, there are various playground structures which appear to be in very good shape. The parking lot is used for the other needs at recess.

St. Joe's operates the only Catholic preschool in the city. The enrollment is in excess of 30 students. They also operate a before and after school "latchkey" program and a full day summer program. The ages of the children are from 3 to 12.

The Church, Rectory, and vacant Convent occupy the balance of the property. During our tour of the Convent, it was evident that each member felt that this facility could be a very suitable replacement for the existing Ark located on Kilgore/Duke Streets. As the Convent building has been vacant for sometime, it is definitely in need of some major repair and renovation. However, the layout seems to be very workable for use as a refuge residence.

Overall consensus of the touring subteam was that this is a well functioning facility with considerable useful service life. The two school buildings have been upgraded, and maintained, and present a fine image when entering and touring. They are laid out well and seem to more than adequately meet the needs of the attending student body. The subcommittee had a very favorable image of their entire operation.

### **St. Monica's Catholic Elementary School.**

The site tour of St. Monica's Elementary School took place on the afternoon of November 6, 2001, and consisted of a walking tour of the school facility, adjacent buildings and the property upon which they reside, and visual inspection of the play areas and structures. The tour was complete in approximately one hour and 20 minutes. The size of the property is approximately 14.5 acres fronting on Kilgore Road. The elementary school occupies the southeast corner of the property, and is contiguous with the church. St. Monica's school is centrally located in comparison to the other schools we visited.

Visitor entry to the school is not well demarked, the main entrance doorway is to the west of the church entrance. Visitor parking at the front entrance of the school is limited. Traffic flow at the front entrance of the school is less than adequate. The administration has devised a system that is working and providing a safe environment for the students.

Administrative offices open off of the entry foyer, and a proposed security officer station is to be installed in the entry in the very near term.

The size of the entire building housing the school is approximately 60,000 square feet. Of that space, the school occupies approximately 47,221 square feet. This figure includes approximately 9,300 square feet in the lowest level which houses the cafeteria and commercial kitchen, library, computer lab and various storage areas. The building shows very well with good ceiling height, wide corridors and excellent lighting which was recently upgraded.

There are 17 classrooms which are adequately sized and capable of housing approximately 30 students per classroom. With the majority of the school being on one level, it is handicap accessible.

Windows in the building serve the purpose but the energy efficiency of the school would be greatly enhanced with replacements.

The school boiler was installed in 1962, is maintained on a routine basis and is in good condition. As shown on the attached report, the school's fire safety record and requirements are very adequate. The school appears to be very well maintained. The attached report also shows that they have reports on file indicating they meet health and safety requirements. As shown on the attached report, roof segments were replaced at various times. All seem to be in good condition and have passed recent State and local inspections.

On the grounds there is a Community Building which was built in 1998. It has 4,800 square feet and contains a large open room, commercial kitchen facilities, bathrooms and storage area. It is not currently used for school purposes.

With approximately 450 students at St. Monica's, there are no extra classrooms under the current configuration. The attached report indicates there are needs for additional space to house a music and band room, larger library, larger computer room, an art room, more classrooms, a science lab and more tutoring rooms.

There is a large amount of vacant property available, the majority of it being used for school playgrounds and athletic fields.

Overall consensus of the touring sub-team was that this is a well functioning facility with considerable useful service life. Maintenance issues are unremarkable, with issues of capital improvement pending declaration of philosophic intent from the diocesan level. The subcommittee had a very favorable image of their entire operation.

### **St. Ambrose Parish, Parchment.**

The site tour of St. Ambrose Parish took place on the afternoon of November 7, 2001, and consisted of a walking tour of the structures and visual inspection of parking areas and property perimeters. The tour was complete in approximately 25 minutes. The facilities consisted of the Church, Rectory/Office Administration/Youth activity rooms, and the Community Center. The size of the property is currently unknown but has been approximated at 8 acres. There is ample open space to allow for expansion or building purposes.

St. Ambrose Parish no longer has an operating elementary school. They do seem to have a unique mission of encouraging the gathering of the community students in their youth activity areas. All students are encouraged to become involved, regardless of their religious affiliation. For instance, the evening prior to our visit. Father Pelz had hosted the Parchment Soccer Team in a celebratory dinner. This parish represents a "true community parish".

The Community Center is a structure composed of the old church and the elementary school addition. The chapel had been built in 1954, the school classrooms were added in 1957. The school operations were terminated in 1968. A new church was dedicated in 1980. The old elementary school has been renovated, and the former worship area has been converted into a large hall with a commercial kitchen, to accommodate Church, youth and community events. It is a nice facility with several classrooms. The facility appears to be very well maintained.

In addition to normal rectory functions, St. Ambrose's rectory houses parish offices, a chapel, and several activity/classrooms in the lower level. The main level seems to be in good condition. The lower level seems to adequately work but there are several dehumidifiers and fans operating to keep the moisture level down.

Overall consensus of the touring sub-team was that this is a well functioning facility with considerable useful service life. The facilities are being thoroughly utilized to address the Parish's somewhat unique mission.

### **St. Mary's Elementary School.**

The site tour of the St. Mary's Catholic Elementary School, adjacent buildings and the property upon which they reside, took place on the afternoon of November 7, 2001. The facilities consist of the elementary school, an attached former convent building, Fr. Bart Parish Hall and the Church. The tour was complete in approximately one hour and 20 minutes. The size of the property housing these facilities is unknown but appears to be approximately 11-13 acres fronting on Charlotte Street.

Entry to the school is not well demarked. Entry doors are to the right of the disused main entrance to the former church. The entry foyer is properly a stairwell landing. Ingress to the classroom hallway is down a short flight of stairs. Administrative offices are housed at the base of the steps, beneath the historic church entry steps. The majority of the school is housed in the lower level of the old church. The current configuration has the eight classrooms, girls' and boys' restrooms, and

administrative offices located in the lower level. The library, auditorium, computer lab and old gymnasium are housed on the upper level. Because of lack of existing facilities, art is taught in the classrooms, music in the old gymnasium, band in the auditorium and science in the classrooms rather than in a lab.

The school building is very old. Although exact dates were not available, it was thought that the school had been housed in this building for 60 years and it was a church prior to that time. The building is not handicap accessible but rather grand fathered in.

The HVAC system consists of two boilers, one of which was installed in 1936. Because this boiler is so old, they do not make parts for it any longer. Therefore, high chemical treatment costs are incurred to keep it running. Apparently a new boiler has been approved to be put in.

The roof is in very poor condition. It has been patched but funds earmarked for roof repair/replacement were needed to change the fire and security systems to meet state fire code.

The disused convent building is contiguous with the classroom facility. Portions of the convent have previously served as classroom space for kindergarten classes, but current fire code restrictions have suspended that usage at present. The convent is not a sound structure and contains many structural and functional issues. Access to the worship area of the current church is through an indoor corridor.

The Fr. Bart Hall is a nice facility containing a gymnasium, kitchen, day care facility and before/after school student care room. Although the center is in very good condition, it is not able to be used for school programs and classes. When constructed, plans were not approved by the city/state. Therefore, it is not built to code for educational use, only for "social program use". Retrofit to achieve code compliance would be cost prohibitive. It is currently used for lunch programs, parish community functions (e. g. Bingo) and athletic events.

Currently, Comstock Co-op (a preschool program) in conjunction with St. Mary's and St. Mary's Bridge Program (before/after school care) are operated in the Fr. Bart Center. These are two wonderful, collaborative programs and the preschool program helps feed students to the elementary school.

The school grounds are very nice with ample room for parking and playground activities. There is room for additional buildings to be constructed on this site. St. Mary's has a single school bus of indeterminate age, which is stored in a garage structure.

\$160,000.00 were allocated to this school during the capital campaign. The school structure is very old and meets code only in a "catch as catch can" and "band-aid" manner. Health and safety issues must be a concern of parents with school children at St. Mary's.

Overall consensus of the touring sub-team was that the School Principal has done an outstanding job of "making do" with existing facilities. However, taking into account the age and condition of

the school, it is the consensus of the touring sub-team that putting additional funding into this structure does not appear to be prudent.

### **St. Augustine Cathedral School.**

The site tour of St. Augustine Cathedral School took place on the afternoon of November 7, 2001, and consisted of a walking tour of the structures, and visual inspection from a distance of parking areas, play areas and structures, and property perimeters. The tour was complete in approximately one hour and 15 minutes. The school is a portion of the greater Cathedral complex, and has associated a multiuse facility; The Crowley Center.

Entry to the school through the main entryway is not well demarked, the doors face West Michigan Avenue, and are positioned perpendicular to the entry-ramp of the Crowley Center. Access to the school entryway is through the parking lot. The entry foyer is small and decorated with student artwork. Little signage is in evidence to direct visitors to main administrative offices. School office and administrator's offices are separated by a corridor. The library is located immediately off of the entry foyer area, and presents attractively as a welcoming space for the student body.

Proceeding down a two-flight stairwell leads to a lower level composed of a corridor to two fourth grade classrooms and a separate access to the computer laboratory. The classrooms are large and well lit, student desks and chairs, and other furnishings are worn. Windows and flooring are showing signs of age. Corridors are lined with student lockers, some of which are in poor repair. Ceilings in the hallways are damaged and discolored, and generally in need of maintenance attention. The fourth grade hallway is decorated with student artwork and social studies projects. The computer lab is very well equipped.

Comfort and convenience of restroom facilities throughout the site is greatly variable, as is the access to and desirability of the drinking fountains. Access to the worship area of the Cathedral is out of doors. Classrooms for the other grade levels are on the ground and second floors of the building.

Student access to the Crowley center is out of doors. The Crowley Center has a room dedicated for use as a nursery, a Chapel of fair volume, restrooms, a meeting room, and a multiuse gymnasium/auditorium. Adjoining the auditorium are commercial kitchen facilities, and a theatrical stage is located at the North end of the gymnasium. There are bleachers in the gymnasium. The lower level of the building contains some disused athletic locker-room facilities. All facilities appear to be in good repair.

Outdoor play structures are new and in good repair. Outdoor play areas are limited. Parking lot surfaces are generally in good repair Visitor parking is "first come" at the school entrance, additional parking behind the school and at the neighboring chancery is not demarked. There are no school buses or bus garages. Exterior examination of the roofline of the school building reveals damage to fascia and soffit.

Overall consensus of the touring subcommittee was that this facility has many issues with maintenance and upkeep. The age of the physical plant, with the attendant issues of energy efficiency, safety, and the ambient environment presented to the student body was found to be troubling. The library, computer center, and multiuse Crowley Center are functional, yet the overall condition of the school building suggests that this facility is reaching the end of its useful service life.

### Blue Ribbon Committee on Catholic Education Facilities Subcommittee

Description:	<u>H.C.C.</u>	<u>St. Catherine</u>	<u>St. Joseph</u>	<u>St. Monica</u>	<u>St. Mary</u>	<u>St. Augustine</u>
Approximate Property Size	32 acres	10 acres	3 acres	15 acres	12 acres	6 acres
Buildings:						
School (square feet)	94,000	none	25,000	60,000	10-12,000	25-40,000
# of Classrooms	17	18 small	15	17	8	22
Gymnasium	yes	none	yes	yes	yes	yes
Auditorium (capacity)	475	no	no	no	no	no
Kitchen	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Other		activity building	unused convent	community building	separate gym & multi-purpose facility	separate gym & multi-purpose facility
Condition:						
Roof	excellent	good	good	good	poor	good
HVAC	good	good	good	good	fair	fair
Handicap Accessible	yes	yes	not all	yes	no	no
Technology Lab	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Possibilities:						
Daycare	no	possible	currently	no 1	no 2	possible
Preschool	no	possible	currently	no 1	no 2	possible
New school	not best use	possible	not necessary	entire school currently utilized	necessary	no

1 would need to expand current facilities for any increased services

2 would need to update current facility to code for any increased services



## **Finance Committee Report Blue Ribbon Committee**

**Committee members:** Jim Barnum, Margaret Erich, Matt Howard, Kevin Jusick, Tim Kilmartin, Steve Owens, Tom Ponto

### **Scope**

The finance sub-committee prepared this report using budgets, historical operating results and non-financial data made available by the parishes and schools. General trends appeared consistent enough to draw certain conclusions regarding the schools, as outlined in this report. It should be noted however, that there are inconsistencies in the comparability of information. The St. Mary's information included in this report was provided using a combination of historical and budgeted operating results for 2000/2001 and enrollment and salary information for fiscal 2001/2002. It was also noted during our review that the schools recognize revenues and costs using different accounting methods (certain revenues and expenses may not appear in each school's financial statement). The sub-committee did not consider or St. Catherine's religious education program or Hackett Catholic Central in this analysis.

### **Committee Findings**

A review of the historical financial operating results of the schools and parishes reveals that an inequitable portion of the cost of educating the children at three schools, St. Augustine, St. Joseph and St. Mary, is being born by the parishes and the schools' teachers. The trend of declining enrollment appears to be the primary driver of stagnant or declining revenues. Expenses are difficult to compare between the schools, but do not appear to be out of line. Overall the financial difficulties do not appear to be the result of significant mismanagement, rather a constant struggle of rising costs and the consequences of raising tuition. In order to shift the burden, the schools need to increase revenues. Raising tuition levels could increase revenues, but this strategy runs the risk of losing students by making the cost of education too expensive. The alternative would be to increase enrollment, but attracting new students is difficult since the schools are expensive, they lack sufficient capacity and they are located in older city neighborhoods where the demographics do not favor private education.

It is unlikely that St. Augustine, St. Joseph and St. Mary will be able to continue their current operating practices without further undermining the parishes. The schools are not operating in financial equilibrium due to insufficient enrollment. The key indicators of fiscal health generally reveal the schools are educating children in the Catholic tradition by overburdening the parish budget and significantly under paying its employees. If corrective actions are not taken, teachers will continue to be compensated at non-competitive levels, parish subsidies will continue beyond the level recommended by the Diocese, maintenance and other capital improvements for the schools will continue to be deferred, tuition will increase beyond a competitive level and most importantly the quality of the education will suffer.

**Finance Committee Report**  
**Blue Ribbon Committee**  
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**Recommendation #1:** Consolidate St. Mary, St. Joseph, St. Augustine, and St. Monica at the Cathedral location (St. Augustine) and the St. Monica location with the following objectives for the surviving two schools (St. Augustine and St. Monica):

- To invest limited resources to create two outstanding academic programs and facilities
  - Capital investment in a central physical plants
- To improve cost efficiency by providing the critical mass enrollment that will result in efficient student/teacher ratios
- To establish tuition charges that will be affordable to a higher percentage of Catholic families
  - Standardize tuition rates based on ability to pay
  - Standardize scholarship evaluation
- To compensate teachers at a level that approaches the public schools
  - Reduce employee turnover
  - Improve employee morale
  - Fairly compensate performance
- To limit parish subsidies to levels that are sustainable for the future
- Maintain neighborhood presence (St. Augustine and St. Monica are centrally located)
- Centralize administrative functions
  - Accounting
  - Accounts payable and purchasing
  - Payroll and benefits administration
  - Tuition collection and administration.
  - Marketing
  - Fund development

**Recommendation #2:** If a conclusion is reached that it is premature to consolidate the schools or there are inherent space limitations, then very specific performance criteria with clear deadlines should be established for each school for at least the following operating factors:

- Enrollment critical mass
- Student/teacher ratios
- Tuition rates
- Teacher compensation
- Parish subsidy as a percentage of total school budget
- Building repair and maintenance reserve

These six categories need to have established baselines and benchmarks (minimum goals for the next year). If the schools are unable meet the minimum expectations in these categories then the Diocese and the parishes need to respond accordingly.

**Recommendation #3:** Regardless of the consolidation decision, the Catholic grade schools should consider consolidating administrative functions (marketing, accounting, purchasing, payroll, tuition collection and scholarship assessment) in one office. Additionally, consistent accounting practices should be followed to make financial information comparable.

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**Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools**

Key Indicators	St. Augustine	St. Mary	St. Monica	St. Joseph	Total	Average
Average Class Size	15.1	8.78	25.1	14.6	N/A	17.65
Full time teachers	20.5	6.9	21.3	8.8	57.5	N/A
Students	272	79	452	168	971	N/A
Cost of education per student	\$3,500	\$5,000	\$2,600	\$2,900	N/A	\$3,200
Tuition paid per student	\$2,031	\$1,675	\$1,260	\$1,100	\$1,440,000	1,483
Total school expenses	\$950,000	\$400,000	\$1,200,000	\$500,000	\$3,100,000	N/A
Parish subsidy	\$320,000 <sup>1</sup>	\$260,000 <sup>2</sup>	\$594,000 <sup>3</sup>	\$300,000	\$1,474,000	\$369,000
Parish budget	\$980,000	\$490,000	\$1,180,000	\$890,000	\$3,540,000	\$885,000
Subsidy to school exp.	34%	65% <sup>4</sup>	50%	60% <sup>5</sup>	N/A	48%
Percentage of parish budget	33%	53% <sup>6</sup>	36%	34%	N/A	37%
Average teacher salary	\$22,843	\$22,714	\$32,944	\$19,975	N/A	\$26,130
Average salary per student	\$1,722	\$1,984	\$1,552	\$1,046	N/A	\$1,547

<sup>1</sup> Includes deficit and special Christmas appeal

<sup>2</sup> Includes school operating deficit

<sup>3</sup> Includes St. Catherine Subsidy of \$169,000

<sup>4</sup> Exceeds Diocese recommended level of 50%

<sup>5</sup> Exceeds Diocese recommended level of 50%

<sup>6</sup> Exceeds Diocese recommended level of 40%

## **Development Subcommittee**

Subcommittee members: Peter J. Livingston, Mary Jane Doerr

### **Recommendation No. 1:**

#### **Conduct an annual appeal to support Catholic schools in the greater Kalamazoo area.**

**Target:** Within ten years, the annual would provide funds equal to 25 percent of the annual operating budget for Catholic schools in the greater Kalamazoo area. The annual appeal would initially hope to provide funds equal to 10 percent of the annual operating budget. It would be planned that funds from the annual appeal would increase annually at the rate of 1- 1/2 percentage points until the target level of 25 percent was achieved.

Parishes in the greater Kalamazoo area would provide funds equal to 25 percent of the annual operating budget.

### **Recommendation No. 2**

#### **Energize and Utilize the Kalamazoo Regional Catholic Schools Foundation.**

In addition to supporting the annual operating budget, each annual appeal would designate 10 percent of the funds raised to an Endowment. If an annual appeal raised funds in excess of the targeted support for the annual operating budget, those funds would also be set aside in an endowment.

### **Recommendation No. 3**

#### **Establish a Development Council for the Kalamazoo Regional Catholic Schools Foundation.**

The primary function of this council will be to raise funds for the Kalamazoo Regional Catholic Schools Foundation.

### **Recommendation No. 4**

**Develop and implement a program to educate the (a) the effectiveness of Catholic schools within Catholic schools this community as lo (a) within this community (is well as nationally), (b) the importance of preserving and fostering the growth of Catholic schools (and not merely Catholic education) within this community (as well as nationally) and (c) the responsibility that we as Catholics bear with respect to school choice In this community (as well as nationally).**

Catholic schools provide a caring and faith-filled environment that is supportive of all students. The clarity of mission and ejective discipline found within Catholic schools produce a safe and orderly environment that promotes academic development and faith formation. That said, our Catholic schools must be preserved for the common good of this community and our Church.

Catholic parents who decide not to send their children to Catholic schools--in this community and elsewhere--increasingly cite lack of availability and lack of adaptability as the primary reasons for their decisions. It is our collective responsibility to provide Catholic parents in this community with the opportunity to choose schools--indeed Catholic schools--that will best help in their task as Christian educators. We cannot allow lack of availability or lack of adaptability to act as barriers to the fundamental parental right of school choice.

## **Demographics Subcommittee for the Advancement of Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools**

### **Recommendations to Blue Ribbon Committee**

Committee Members: Mary Jane Doerr, JD Dobritz, Jerry Hess

Summary:

#### **Catholic Schools**

K-8 enrollment has gone from 1,252 students in (96-97) to 1,015 students in (00-01), an 18% decrease. Grade 9-12 went from 510 in 996-97) to 477 (a 6% drop) in (00-01). Some schools saw a more dramatic drop, but all schools have lost students.

#### **Religious Education**

Religious Education programs educate an additional number of students. Parishes in the Kalamazoo area with schools had a total enrollment of 269 in grades K-8. (St. Monica's in not included in the total). Parishes without schools had an enrollment of 1,414 student K-8.

An additional, 274 students attend Religious Education programs in the outlying parishes in Vicksburg and Mattawan.

#### **Baptismal Records**

Baptismal records for the past six years show an overall decrease, though in some parishes there were increases.

	96	97	98	99	00	01 YTD(Nov.)
Totals	372	389	356	358	359	320

#### **Survey**

Surveys were distributed to parishes and clergy covering attitudes and beliefs toward Catholic Schools. 826 returned surveys have been processed and tabulated. All pastor surveys were returned.

Not all parishes handled the surveys in the same way so there is an imbalance in the parish responses. Most parishes put them in the pews and asked people to fill them out prior to Mass, then

collected them. Their response rate was highest. One parish asked only parents to fill them out, another distributed them in the bulletin, one just had them in the pews with no instructions. The results of the survey are encouraging and positive. 654 respondents agree or strongly agree that Catholic Schools are an essential part of the Churches mission. 644 agree or strongly agree they are needed more now than 25 years ago. 656 agree or strongly agree that they are worth the costs. (see p.14-18)

Based on the numbers and attitudes we found, we present the following recommendation:

#### Recommendations:

1. The Kalamazoo area Catholic schools needs a strong recruitment program for all its schools.
  - Work as a system to present a strong statement of the value of Catholic Schools.
  - Adopt the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's School Recruitment program.
  - Mandate a Recruitment committee for each school that will carry out the activities of the Milwaukee plan.

# St. Augustine

<b>Enrollment</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Pre-Kindergarten					
Kindergarten	26		25	25	41
Grade 1	41		23	25	29
Grade 2	35		26	25	27
Grade 3	44		33	26	28
Grade 4	42		34	33	29
Grade 5	42		45	34	33
Grade 6	31		38	50	35
Grade 7	48		45	37	44
Grade 8	<u>32</u>		<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>
<b>Total</b>	341	352	304	290	301
<b>Financial</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Tuition	528,000	552,755	559,690	571,300	557,806
Fund Raising	-	-	3,662	n/a	n/a
Parish Subsidy	<u>200,000</u>	<u>200,000</u>	<u>202,350</u>	<u>227,880</u>	<u>232,880</u>
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$ 728,000	\$ 765,702	\$ 752,755	\$ 799,180	\$ 790,686
<b>Cost per Student</b>	\$ 2,135	\$ 2,096	\$ 2,502	\$ 2,756	\$ 2,627
School Endowment	0	0	0	0	0
Parish Income	\$ 631,190				
<b>Staff</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Full-Time	19	21	21	19	20
Part-Time	2	1	1	5	6
Religious	1	1	1	0	0
Non-Catholic	3	3	3	7	4



# St. Joseph

<b>Enrollment</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Pre-Kindergarten	38		33	40	35
Kindergarten	20		20	26	14
Grade 1	18		20	20	25
Grade 2	19		23	17	10
Grade 3	18		16	18	15
Grade 4	20		21	10	18
Grade 5	14		21	17	9
Grade 6	19		14	19	15
Grade 7	21		13	14	18
Grade 8	<u>11</u>		<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>14</u>
<b>Total</b>	198	168	194	192	173
<b>Financial</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Tuition	155,000	152,000	162,000	192,443	243,573
Fund Raising	-	20,000	23,500	-	16,250
Parish Subsidy	<u>218,744</u>	<u>236,000</u>	<u>236,644</u>	<u>224,215</u>	<u>214,946</u>
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$ 373,744	\$ 408,000	\$ 422,144	\$ 434,658	\$ 476,769
<b>Cost per Student</b>	\$ 1,841	\$ 2,428	\$ 2,143	\$ 2,276	\$ 2,756
<b>School Endowment</b>	0	0	0	0	42,000
<b>Parish Income</b>	\$ 470,774				
<b>Staff</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Full-Time	19	21	21	19	20
Part-Time	2	1	1	5	6
Religious	1	1	1	0	0
Non-Catholic	3	3	3	7	4

# St. Mary

<b>Enrollment</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Pre-Kindergarten					
Kindergarten	21		9	10	7
Grade 1	18		20	6	12
Grade 2	14		16	16	5
Grade 3	20		18	17	11
Grade 4	25		11	15	8
Grade 5	25		22	10	13
Grade 6	24		20	14	11
Grade 7	24		19	13	9
Grade 8	<u>17</u>		<u>20</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	188	187	155	114	86
<b>Financial</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Tuition	217,200	211,714	227,070	222,495	145,000
Fund Raising	16,000	2,500	4,000	2,700	3,700
Parish Subsidy	<u>197,446</u>	<u>211,714</u>	<u>162,000</u>	<u>204,562</u>	<u>n/a</u>
Total Budget	\$ 419,246	\$ 423,428	\$ 393,070	\$ 427,057	*
Cost per Student	\$ 2,230	\$ 2,264	\$ 2,504	\$ 3,713	
School Endowment	0	0	0	0	0
Parish Income	\$ 248,545				
<b>Staff</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Full-Time	10	10	9	10	10
Part-Time	2	2	3	4	4
Religious	1	1	1	0	0
Non-Catholic	1	1	1	1	1

# St. Monica

<b>Enrollment</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Pre-Kindergarten					
Kindergarten	56		56	51	49
Grade 1	57		60	52	46
Grade 2	59		60	60	47
Grade 3	59		54	54	56
Grade 4	61		58	43	47
Grade 5	60		57	58	45
Grade 6	58		60	51	58
Grade 7	56		58	58	50
Grade 8	<u>59</u>		<u>59</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>57</u>
<b>Total</b>	525	530	522	482	455
<b>Financial</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Tuition	691,654	741,623	773,669	790,000	818,428
Fund Raising	58,250	33,250	21,750	16,872	17,000
Parish Subsidy	<u>440,008</u>	<u>432,763</u>	<u>449,750</u>	<u>460,000</u>	<u>432,510</u>
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$ 1,189,912	\$ 1,207,636	\$ 1,245,169	\$ 1,266,872	\$ 1,267,998
<b>Cost per Student</b>	\$ 2,262	\$ 2,278	\$ 2,385	\$ 2,600	\$ 2,787
<b>School Endowment</b>	\$ 13,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000
<b>Parish Income</b>	\$ 829,873				
<b>Staff</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Full-Time	23	22	26	26	26
Part-Time	4	5	3	3	3
Religious	1	1	1	1	0
Non-Catholic	4	3	2	1	0

# Hackett Catholic Central

<b>Enrollment</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Grade 9	139		141	118	125
Grade 10	134		122	129	117
Grade 11	127		119	111	125
Grade 12	110		117	111	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>510</b>		<b>499</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>477</b>
<b>Financial</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Tuition	975,000	1,220,000	1,366,000	142,000	1,505,000
Fund Raising	889,911	895,500	857,660	915,660	193,000
Parish Subsidy	53,089	51,000	33,726	5,000	-
Common Ministry	<u>450,000</u>	<u>450,000</u>	<u>407,200</u>	<u>375,000</u>	<u>425,000</u>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$ 1,918,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,165,500</b>	<b>\$ 2,257,386</b>	<b>\$ 2,340,660</b>	<b>\$ 2,098,500</b>
Cost per Student	\$ 3,753	\$ 4,263	\$ 4,533	\$ 4,990	\$ 4,399
School Endowment	\$ 653,405	\$ 807,471	\$ 1,003,832	\$ 1,133,123	\$ 1,618,000
<b>Staff</b>	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Full-Time	29	29	30	32	29
Part-Time	3	3	2	3	4
Religious	0	0	0	1	1
Non-Catholic	10	10	11	13	13

## Baptismal Records

Baptisms for the past six years show a mix of increases and decreases:

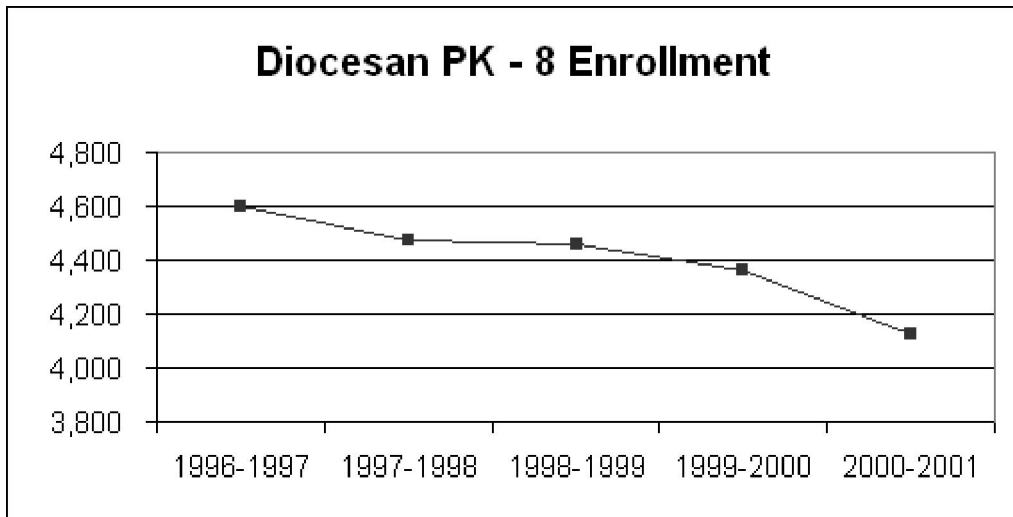
<b><u>Parish</u></b>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001 YTD</u>
St. Ambrose	17	23	14	13	11	10
St. Ann						
St. Augustine						
St. Catherine	95	87	69	76	86	74
St. Joseph	94	70	94	93	104	100
St. Mary	20	18	7	3	14	4
St. Monica	88	97	95	98	71	57
St. Thomas	<u>58</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>75</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>320</b>

## Parish Religious Ed. Programs

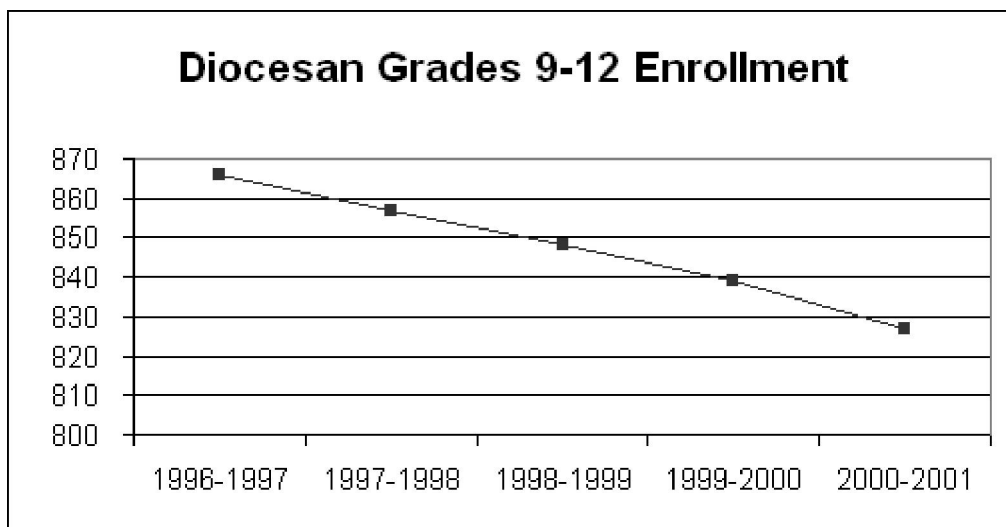
<u>Parish</u>	<u>Number in Religious Ed.</u>	<u>3 yrs.</u>	<u>4 yrs.</u>	<u>5 yrs.</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>	<u>6th</u>	<u>7th</u>	<u>8th</u>	<u>9th</u>	<u>10th</u>	<u>11th</u>	<u>12th</u>
St. Jude, Gobles	36	n/a	n/a	5			3	4	2	3	4	4	7	3	1	
St. Ann, Gull Lake	214			31	33	28	32	31	29	44	30	36				
St. Augustine, Kalamazoo	85				8	15	6	7	9	20	20					
St. Joseph, Kalamazoo	170		5	7	19	25	20	22	22	9	13	8				
St. Mary, Kalamazoo	34	7	7	4	3	0	0	1	0	0	4	8				
St. Thomas More, Kalamazoo	82			3	12	10	8	3	3	5	9	9				
St. John Bosco, Mattawan	166			9	15	19	21	20	19	25	18	20				
St. Margaret, Otsego	195	11	16	15	12	29	22	19	21	19	16	15				
St. Ambrose, Parchment	132	4	3	7	15	7	10	16	10	20	16	13	11			
St. Mary, Paw Paw	248			15	26	26	18	18	18	32	27	31	37			
St. Catherine, Portage	1,006	47	64	94	106	109	90	108	95	88	80					
Immaculate Conception, Three Rivers	126			2	7	3	9	5	12	12	14	20	17	14	7	
St. Martin, Vicksburg	123			<u>14</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	
<b>Totals:</b>		69	112	206	278	296	574	275	251	526	269	181	75	21	11	

# Diocese Enrollment

<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>1996-1997</u>	<u>1997-1998</u>	<u>1998-1999</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>
PK - 8	4,597	4,474	4,456	4,361	4,129



<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>1996-1997</u>	<u>1997-1998</u>	<u>1998-1999</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>
Grade 9 - 12	866	857	848	839	827



## **Public School Enrollment**

### **K - 12**

Kalamazoo	13,000
Portage	8,337
Parchment	2,340

### **Total County Population**

2000	238,603
1990	223,411
1980	212,378

### **2000 Census Figures:**

Children	age 5-9	in Kalamazoo County	16,453
	age 10-14		16,254
	age 15-19		20,363



**Curriculum Committee  
for the Advancement of Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools**

Recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Committee  
November 2001

**Committee Members:** Sister Mary Ann Dalton, Colleen Takacs, Mary Hendricks, Sharon Wade, Sharai Lee, James Lewis, Joyce Morris, Monica Geurin, Gerry Kuhlman, Doreen Thomas, Molly Williamson

**Recommendation 1:**

Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools should adopt a common curriculum beginning Fall of 2002.

Additional Implications of Recommendation 1

- The common curriculum should be aligned with state and national standards/benchmarks.
- Adoption should begin with the common diocesan-developed social studies curriculum, being piloted during 2001-2002. In addition, pilots for the common diocesan mathematics curriculum should be implemented in the Kalamazoo area during 2002-2003, while work continues on the development of a common diocesan curriculum in the other two core content areas (English language arts and science).
- A regular cycle for curriculum development, review and adoption of instructional materials textbooks should be established that is common to all Kalamazoo area Catholic schools.

Timeline and Cost

- Beginning Fall 2002 - and ongoing - up to 10 teachers (2 per school) will be released one half-day per month throughout the school year to work on curriculum with the diocesan curriculum coordinator. (School Year 2002-2003 - \$2,500 for 10 teachers x 5 days @ \$50 per day for subs). Possible funding source: Title II and Title VI.
- Adoption of instructional materials (Ongoing/Fall 2002 - no new allocation, use existing budgets). Possible additional funding source: Title VI.

**Recommendation 2:**

All Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools should provide professional development for school staff on the new diocesan curriculum.

Additional Implications of Recommendation 2

- At least one representative from each Kalamazoo area Catholic school should serve on the diocesan curriculum development/review team.
- A team of trained staff developers should be established at each Kalamazoo area Catholic school to support the implementation of new curriculum and promote appropriate instructional strategies by all teachers.
- Teacher and principal centrals should contain after school time for professional development (between 3-5 hours per month).
- Schools in the Kalamazoo area should strongly consider a common calendar to facilitate joint

professional development and planning.

#### Timeline/Cost

- Timeline/Cost for release time for Kalamazoo area representatives already covered in Recommendation 1.
- Staff developers in most cases would be representatives who have already been granted release time for curriculum work. (Beginning Fall 2002 - no additional cost).
- Compensation for after school professional development time in contract (to coincide with new Personnel Committee pay scale more in line with public school compensation and responsibilities).
- Materials for professional development (Cost variable). Possible funding source: Title II and Title VI.
- Calendar review/changes - possible student transportation issue on some days, recommend consideration of common calendar whenever possible without public school bus conflicts).

#### **Recommendation 3:**

All Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools should administer the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests at all grade levels offered.

#### Additional Implications of Recommendation 3

- Classroom assessments should be aligned with curriculum and instruction.

#### Timeline/Cost

- MEAP administration (Begin 2002-2003 school year, no new costs anticipated)

#### **Recommendation 4:**

All Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools should designate a full-time curriculum coordinator to serve as a consultant to the schools and to continually work to update and monitor implementation of the standards-based curriculum.

#### Timeline/Cost

- Additional half-time for curriculum coordinator beginning Fall 2002. (Sr. Mary Ann Dalton is already half-time.) See current diocesan budget for appropriate coordinator compensation and office costs.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools should implement a middle school curriculum based on national guidelines to meet the unique needs of preadolescents.

#### Additional Implications of Recommendation 5

- Middle grades students need opportunities for socialization, curriculum exploration and service to address their developmental needs. The "middle school concept" (which refers to standards that incorporate a rigorous, broad-based curriculum and a nurturing, developmentally responsive environment) needs to be implemented for all sixth through eighth grade students.

- The creation of a separate middle school facility strongly deserves further consideration.

#### Timeline and Cost

- All middle grades teachers and principals should participate in professional development and planning related to the special needs of middle grades students and implementation of appropriate instructional strategies, course design, etc. (Summer 2002 - \$5,000 (5 days teachers @ \$100 per day stipend plus \$2,500 for middle grades expert trainer from Eastern Michigan University).
- Implementation of middle school curriculum (Fall 2002 - cost of materials and ongoing planning time - use current budget allocations).
- Complete feasibility study for creation of Kalamazoo area middle school Fall 2002 - see Facility Committee recommendations).

**Personnel Subcommittee for the Advancement  
of Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools  
Recommendations to Blue Ribbon Committee**

**Committee Members:**

Sue Copeland, Margaret Erich, Shirley Garzeloni, Mike Hageman, Dannie Hickson, Dave Rutten, Julie Wheaton, Kathy Zant

**Recommendation 1:**

Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools over the next three to five years should move toward a common teacher salary scale.

Additional Implications of Recommendation 1:

- Hackett's salary scale is the highest, and likely will become the target scale. The structure of Hackett's scale including number of steps and frequency of step increases should be compared to scales of public and other private schools in the Kalamazoo area.
- Common salary scales must be accompanied by shared and consistent implementation policies.
- Funding will require one or more of the following:
  - Implementation of common tuition scales
    - § Parishioner rates to all registered Catholics
    - § Appropriate Parish subsidies from non-school parishes
    - § Non-parishioner rates which are/are not subsidized
  - Increased charitable giving by parents
  - Identification of significant other outside revenue sources
  - Implementation of reasonable and effective cost efficiencies including class sizes and building utilization.

**Background:**

Each Catholic school in the Kalamazoo area currently operates independently. Teacher pay rates are determined by the pastor and/or local advisory board based on funds available. All but one school have formal teacher salary scales. Pay rates between schools differ significantly for teachers with similar degree and experience levels. Application of the scale including determination of prior teaching experience credit also differs significantly.

Pay and benefits for part-time staff are also significant issues. The case of the band teacher is a good example of the problem to be addressed. The same teacher offers band and instrument instruction at each of our schools, and is therefore part-time at each. Her total hours for the Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools make her full-time, but no school covers her health care and other benefits. As we share staff across schools to expand offerings and improve efficiency, this becomes a system-wide justice issue.

**Recommendation 2:**

The major step in addressing teacher recruitment and retention is implementation of a fair, equitable, just and consistent salary scale. Other steps which may be required, particularly in certain subject areas, include offering hiring bonuses, finding other additional paid assignments, funding staff development opportunities and promoting strong, capable administrative leadership.

**Background:**

The growing shortage of qualified teachers is well understood. Because Catholic schools provide a unique learning environment, teachers are often willing to make reasonable financial sacrifices to teach in our schools. Reasonable is generally understood to be about 80% of comparable public school salaries. This measure is particularly important for new young teachers who are starting families. To recruit the best and most qualified, we need to identify creative reimbursement solutions which do not violate the integrity of the common salary scale.

**Recommendation 3:**

To implement consistent policies and to improve efficiencies, an Executive Director should be appointed for Kalamazoo Area Catholic Schools

Additional Implications of Recommendation 3:

- Appointment of a system-wide Local Advisory Board
- Creation of a reporting structure for the Executive Director which promotes system-wide consistency in decisions and operations
- Development of a Job Description to identify responsibility, accountability and decision authority.

**Background:**

Consistent implementation of system-wide concepts requires common directions, strategies and concepts rather than parochial perspectives. System-wide leadership at some level is required to accomplish system-wide cooperation, teamwork and efficiencies. System-wide leadership could be centralized, decentralized, or somewhere in between depending on the goals to be accomplished by the system. System-wide leadership, as a minimum, might provide some level of shared support (e.g., \$xxx per student). At the other end of the spectrum, system-wide leadership might provide many shared services, both educational (e.g., curricular direction, textbook selection, etc.) and business (accounts payable, tuition collection, development leadership).