

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE



ST. JAMES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Strategic Planning Comes to St. James Elementary School

Background

In 2004, leaders in the Diocese of Trenton recognized that a strategic plan was needed to address fundamental reasons for enrollment decline, to take a long-range view of the viability of Catholic education, to ensure the mission of Catholic schools would be carried out with the best possible stewardship, and to coordinate pastoral planning for parishes with planning for schools. As a result of the diocesan process launched in January 2005, schools within the Diocese were closed and consolidated with other schools. However, St. James did extraordinarily well and the Diocese made no substantial recommendations to our school at that point. Now, the Diocese is requiring each of the remaining schools within the Diocese to prepare and submit their own strategic plans. This means that we are required to determine our vision for the future and to form a plan for how the school will achieve that vision.

The Mission of the Strategic Planning Team

The mission of the strategic planning process and the strategic planning team is to:

- ❖ Identify 3 - 4 areas of opportunity for improvement;
- ❖ Formulate measurable goals for addressing those improvement opportunities;
- ❖ Create specific action plans for achieving those goals; and
- ❖ Implement a system for monitoring, measuring and reporting our progress made toward realizing our goals.

Strategic Planning Team Members

Along with Mrs. Dolan, six parents have volunteered for this project. The team members are Larry Mulcahy (chairman), Karen D'Amore, Joe DeLeo, Katy McGuire, Judy McGurl and Paula Pangilinan. In addition, one of the second grade teachers, Miss Rose, is our team's liaison to the faculty and staff.

Status as of September 2007

We are currently ahead of many other schools in beginning our strategic planning process. We already have a team in place, and it began meeting in August 2007. The Diocese has provided a suggested strategic planning framework, which was formulated by a consulting firm that has been working with the Diocese for a few years. The Diocese is giving each school eighteen months to prepare and submit its three-year strategic plan. However, it is likely that our plan will be ready for submission considerably earlier than eighteen months.

Beneficiaries of Strategic Planning

The strategic planning process is going to benefit our school and our children. It makes sense for us to think of St. James School as a business to ensure its long-term viability. We all want to see St. James continue to thrive for many years to come. Ultimately, our students will be beneficiaries of the process.

Next Steps

One of the most critical tasks ahead is identifying the 3 - 4 areas of opportunity for improvement upon which we will be building our school's improvement goals. This phase is critical and it requires input from parents, faculty and staff. In the coming months, we expect to be reaching out to parents and faculty through a variety of channels, which may include written surveys and meetings to solicit your input. You'll be hearing more about that within the next couple of months. The strategic planning team is committed to keeping the parents, faculty and staff informed of developments through periodic updates in the WINS envelopes, as well as in the Royal Reporter. If you have any questions or interest in the strategic planning project, please contact Larry Mulcahy (chairman) at 732-842-9170.