

St. Thomas School Sanford, Maine



Five-Year Strategic Plan Academic Years 2007-2008 through 2011-2012

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St. Thomas School

St. Thomas School is a Catholic pre-kindergarten through sixth grade school offering instruction to approximately 200 students.

Mission Statement

St. Thomas is the parish school of St. Therese of Lisieux Parish and in service to its cluster parishes. In partnership with the family, we are dedicated to nurturing the personal development of the whole child. Our mission is to instill Catholic values, foster self-discipline and promote academic excellence in the spirit of a caring and affirming community.

Rationale

Our “Five Year Plan” is a never-ending, evolving document. Various necessities and goals for the school surface continuously and are categorized and prioritized. Each category is revisited annually in July, the beginning of the new fiscal year. Those projects which have been completed are removed from the list. Those still in process remain and are so noted. Newly identified and other less pressing projects are added or carried over and prioritized depending on urgency. Timelines are noted where appropriate.

Funding for projects is dependent upon the category. Building projects may be funded through the Capital Fund Account or if of a more transitory nature, may have been budgeted as a repair for that year. Staff development and curricular items are often underwritten through federal Title monies or through town funding. Sometimes, there are a combination of sources including grants and donations. (The school has just hired a part-time development director/grant writing person.)

Responsibility for project completion is so noted. Projects unassigned are the responsibility of the administration with the guidance of the School Board.

Core Values

The St. Thomas School is committed to the following core values:

1. Service as the Parish School

St. Thomas is the parish school of the Sanford/Springvale Catholic community and in service to its cluster parishes. It is the direct ministry of the parishes and is financially supported by them in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.

- As a Catholic school of St. Therese of Lisieux Parish, to provide all children of the parish the opportunity for enrollment.
- To provide tuition subsidies through the parish to all students whose families meet the conditions of the Family-Parish Contract.
- To further financially assist those families for whom even the subsidized tuition rate is a hardship through participation in the Scholarship Fund.
- To welcome students from other cluster parishes and other students according to the guidelines of the Admissions Policy.

2. Partnership with the Family

Parents are the first and foremost teachers of their children. The staff in cooperation with parents strives to further enrich the education of the students.

- To promote family involvement in the school by supporting the “Family Participation Program” thus providing a sense of belonging.
- To enhance communication between families and the school.
- To continue to organize school activities that directly involve families, thus drawing families into the school on many occasions.
- To provide special occasions where parents, relatives, friends, parishioners and clergy can participate.

3. Personal Development of the Whole Child

Nurturing the personal development of the whole child includes spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth. Each student is accepted as a unique individual with gifts and limitations. The staff will help each child to recognize and develop his/her own gifts to the highest potential.

- To promote self-esteem by providing opportunities to celebrate personal successes in both the classroom and the school community.
- To utilize academic support services for students.
- To provide necessary resources to assist staff and families to help each child to value him/herself.

4. Catholic Values

St. Thomas is a Catholic school community that lives, exemplifies and fosters the teachings of the Church. The Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity provide the firm foundation for these teachings.

- To initiate children into the sacramental life of the Church and personal and formal prayer.
- To encourage family participation in the weekly celebration of the Eucharist.
- To offer a program of religious activities that will enrich the students’ spiritual lives through Masses, prayer services and retreats.
- To communicate and foster love, kindness and service to others.

- To encourage the spiritual growth of the staff through reading, reflection, religious education and shared experience.
- To be respectful of other faiths.

5. Self-discipline

Self-discipline is an exercise in the formation of conscience. It is the ability to control one's own actions in living Christian values. It enables oneself to be responsible for his/her actions.

- To help students to recognize their own dignity because they are created in the image of God.
- To help students to respect the dignity of others.
- To teach students that they are accountable for their personal behavior.
- To reinforce appropriate standards of conduct and dress.

6. Academic Excellence

Academic excellence is the ideal whereby students strive to reach their full, personal potential in all academic endeavors.

- To develop a curriculum guide and Local Assessment System defining learning results aligned with state standards to be achieved at each grade level.
- To provide valid educational materials which meet the standards of the curriculum guide.
- To provide opportunities for staff development in teaching methods that acknowledges the diverse learning styles of our students.
- To utilize standardized testing that begins in second grade to inform instruction.

7. Caring Community

A caring community encourages and promotes an atmosphere of respect and acceptance among all students and adults.

- To provide opportunities for students and staff to be responsive to each other's needs.
- To teach and nurture safety, good manners, politeness and a caring attitude.
- To continue in-house, cross-graded programs which encourage religious attitudes, academic peer support and community wide involvement.
- To enhance our involvement in community through participation in Church, government, arts, career development and school functions.

8. Affirming Community

An affirming community recognizes in word and actions the Christian, academic, social, creative, athletic and behavioral achievements of all students and faculty.

- To invite family members, parishioners, alumni and friends of the school to share their gifts and talents, experiences and careers.

- To participate in outreach ministries.
- To collaborate with diocesan Catholic schools and other educational institutions.

9. Communication

Sharing the Catholic spirit of St. Thomas School is the responsibility of students, families, staff, parishioners and clergy. This spirit should be reflected in the lives of all who are connected with the school.

- To publish, explain and internalize the goals and objectives of the Mission Statement that should be included in every official school publication.
- To provide timely information regarding school activities.
- To foster communication among parents, staff, board and council members.
- To promote and publicize the school and its programs.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROJECTS

I. Policy

Goal:

To bring into compliance all St. Thomas School policy statements that reflects our canonical status.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To reassign classroom space and equipment for school year 2007-2008 programs.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration.*
 - b. *Timetable: August 2007.*

2. To edit the “Student/Family Handbook” to better reflect:
 - Parent & Parish Involvement, including their contracts.
 - Improved orientation for new families and to begin the new school year with a flourish!
 - Recent changes in the parish and cluster organization.
 - Renew comprehensive attention to the “uniform code.”
 - a. *Responsible Party: School Board, PTO and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: As soon as possible.*

3. To complete the components for school accreditation.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Accreditation Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: School year 2007-2008.*

4. To research and pursue funding for Guidance and Special Education Services.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Development Director.*
 - b. *Timetable: School year 2008-2009.*

5. To complete our Wellness Program.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Wellness Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

II. Enrollment

Goal:

To increase enrollment and growth of the program of St. Thomas School to ensure succession and the future well being of the school.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To complete preparation for and initiate a new recruitment program.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Development Council.*
 - b. *Timetable: Fall, 2007.*

III. Finance and Development

Goal:

To strengthen the financial interests of St. Thomas School and promote the school in order to obtain additional support, both human and financial.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To budget stipends for “extra curricular” programs.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/Budget Process.*
 - b. *Timetable: February 2008.*
2. To assess and upgrade/replace current fundraising programs.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Development Council and PTO Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Spring, 2008.*

IV. Catholic School Identity and Community Development

Goal:

To increase community awareness of the St. Thomas School and to foster mutually respectful relationships with the towns of Sanford and Springvale, with the parish and with the cluster.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To continue to enhance the promotion of the school including:
 - Greater publicity of student achievements to the alumni and community.
 - Additional information on the website.
 - Increased white space in the news media.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Development Council/Marketing Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Goal:

To optimize use of existing space and study the feasibility of developing new space as defined by enrollment, curriculum and staff needs.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To consider a plan for further “defining” the parking area.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: August 2007.*

2. To recarpet one (1) classroom on the first floor.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: August 2007.*

3. To consider installing safety glass in the doors of the second floor classrooms.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Fall, 2007.*

4. To consider additional exterior lighting.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Fall, 2007.*

5. To repoint the chimney.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Fall, 2007.*

6. To consider enhanced ventilation for the classrooms for the warm months.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Spring, 2008.*

7. To abate the remaining asbestos tile in the administration office and kindergarten room.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Summer, 2008.*

8. To recarpet one (1) classroom on the first floor and the office.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Summer, 2008.*

9. To consider a plan of action for the roof and yard drainage systems.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

10. To refurbish the lawns and upgrade other items on the grounds.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

11. To construct a backstop for the baseball diamond.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Undetermined.*

12. To construct a flat surface for “wall ball” – possibly part of the backstop.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration/School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Undetermined.*

SPIRITUAL ENHANCEMENT

Goal:

To foster an environment of spiritual unity based on Christian values at St. Thomas School and in the parish.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To enhance communication between the parish and St. Thomas School.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Pastor, Principal and School Board.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

2. To continue to incorporate Christian ideals in the overall learning experience.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Principal, faculty and staff.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

3. To enhance the liturgical life of the student body through an active participation at parish Masses on a regular basis.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Families, Pastor, Principal, and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

CURRICULUM & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Goal:

To further develop an academic program that provides well-rounded education designed to allow all students to master the fundamental skills necessary to succeed in learning.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To continue writing curriculum for all of the disciplines in preparation for accreditation.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: Fall, 2007.*
2. To review the format of our “report cards” in the light of the MLR’s.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: Spring, 2008.*
3. To continue to evaluate our textbook status as aligned with the “Maine Learning Results” where applicable.
 - 2007/2008: Social Sciences.
 - 2008/2009: Religion.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: As indicated.*
4. To continue integration of the “Maine Learning Results:”
 - Course attendance, in-house collaboration and in-service trainings.
 - Development of Local Assessment Standards.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*
5. To compare current standardized testing and implications with the NWEA.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*
6. To consider the possibilities of a “Gifted & Talented Program.”
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration and Faculty.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

TECHNOLOGY
(Refer to detailed Technology Plan)

Goal:

To promote the uses of technology in the school library and classroom for enhanced learning.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. To publish the curriculum on the website.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Accreditation Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: Fall, 2007.*

2. To continue to upgrade our LAN (local area network) to provide:
 - New equipment.
 - In-house bulletin board.
 - Connections to the library catalog.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Technology Coordinator and Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

3. To continue to provide more services on our website, such as links to:
 - School Board: agendas, minutes, recent policy statements.
 - Development Council and PTO.
 - Curriculum package and links to the Maine Learning Results.
 - Parish website with a reciprocal link to the school.
 - Chamber of Commerce.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Technology Coordinator and Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

4. To continue to analyze, upgrade and catalog all software.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Technology Coordinator and Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

5. To complete an e-mail address book of all families and consider e-mail notices home.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Administration.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*

6. To continue to look to alternate sources of technical support.
 - a. *Responsible Party: Technology Coordinator and Committee.*
 - b. *Timetable: Ongoing.*