

# Saint Joseph the Worker School

Established 1883

## Strategic Plan January 1, 2016-Present (2022)

2091 N. Winn Road  
Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48858

[www.bealcityparish.org](http://www.bealcityparish.org)

## Introduction by Pastor/Principal

January 1, 2016

Dear Families of Saint Joseph the Worker Parish:

All of you may recall in February 2015, the Pastoral and Finance Councils, Stewardship Commission, School and Parish Strategic Planning Committees came together to begin assembling a strategic plan for the Parish's future. In *Planning Tomorrow's Parishes*, Bishop Joseph Cistone has asked all parishes in the diocese to develop such plans.

During this planning process, I often asked the question: *Why Plan?* Perhaps the most possible outcome of planning is that it helps me and the parish to distinguish between the urgent and the important. What planning does is to establish for us what is actually necessary, so we can prioritize for the best use of our time and resources of the parish.

To see this bold vision come together for the betterment of our community, it is clear that our work is really cut out for us. We have a wonderful vibrant community; however, at this juncture in the life of our parish and school, there is no time for us to be complacent. Jesus Christ and His Gospel proclaimed in the church are needed now more than ever! Drawing upon the words that inspired Bishop Cistone's Pastoral Letter – *A Future Full of Hope* – we must live the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "*For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Please to give you a future full of hope.*"

The plan has been developed, now we must act! As a parish leader, I would like to invite you to be a part of the implementation process, where you will have the opportunity to build on the current state of our parish and offer your time, talent, and treasure to the success of our parish. This cannot be the work of a few but many! Thank you for your support and generosity.

My heartfelt gratitude now goes to the Parish and Finance Councils, Stewardship Commission, the Parish and School Strategic Planning Committees for their hard work and sincere dedication during the planning process. Your leadership and the gifts you offer the parish are invaluable and your insights into the life of our parish are important as well. God bless each you.

Saint Joseph the Worker, pray for us!

Yours in Christ,



Father Ricky M. Varner  
Parochial Administrator

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

St. Joseph the Worker School is regarded with a sense of pride and admiration by St. Joseph the Worker Parish and Beal City Community. In the current economic climate, Parochial schools are facing many challenges in regards to enrollment and finance, it is crucial to be prepared for an ever-changing society. St. Joseph the Worker School has developed a strategic plan to determine the strengths, opportunities and challenges being encountered in our school, so that we may prepare for a future filled with hope, success and optimism. The plan also identifies opportunities for growth and continuous improvement.

The plan includes the revised mission, vision and beliefs of St. Joseph the Worker School. During the planning process much prayerful thought surrounded the mission of St. Joseph the Worker. The Parish Community, defined as both the Church and School are crucial to the success of each other. Therefore, one mission statement was developed to embrace the "Parish Community" philosophy.

The planning process began with collection of data, which included surveys from students, teachers and parents. The Parish was also offered the opportunity to give input through a survey that was mailed to each Parishioner's home. This process led the team to set goals in the following areas: Finance, Communication, Enrollment and Curriculum/Faith Formation.

Our school is a kindergarten through sixth grade Catholic School and our students are able to practice their faith in a safe and loving academic environment. St. Joseph the Worker is able to offer small class size and affordable tuition due to the generous support of our Parish Community. One hundred percent of the students currently enrolled in St. Joseph the Worker are practicing Catholics; this is unique in today's parochial schools. However, this also allows the opportunity to embrace the concept of diversity and reaching out to others.

High academic achievement has been realized by our students as evidenced by their success once they move to the public school for the remainder of their junior high and high school education. Many of our students continue their education to achieve degrees from higher learning institutions. The academic success of our students is due to the ambition of our students, parental involvement and excellent teaching staff. St. Joseph is fortunate to have long-term teachers with an average of 15 years.

The school is financially dependent on the Parish and strategies have been developed to assist in becoming more financially independent. The School Commission will be actively involved in creating additional fund-raising activities, out-reach to alumni and grant writing.

Communication between parents, students, teachers and administration is an area the surveys indicated improvement was needed. Strategies are included to develop a communication plan which will not only help with correspondence between parents and school but also in the areas of marketing and enrollment. Use of up to date technology programs will be implemented to allow more real time communication to occur.

Enrollment has declined over the past five years. It is partially due to the fact that families are not having as many children and many of the young people in our community have moved from the area to further their education or seek employment. It is extremely important that we retain the students currently enrolled, ensure a welcoming environment to others and be open to diversity.

As a Catholic School, curriculum and faith formation are at the forefront when developing goals. St. Joseph the Worker will begin to develop baselines for math scores and then begin to develop strategies for best practices to increase student's scores in this area. Development of a comprehensive writing plan is a goal in the next academic year. This goal was created based on feedback by educators, students and parents because of the need to become better writers in college.

There has been considerable time, energy, collaboration and discussion about this plan and the future of St. Joseph the Worker School. A huge thank-you to the school strategic planning committee: Heather Curtiss, Paul Gross, Mary Hauck, Deb Kampf, Charla Miller, Angela Reihl, Paul Smith, Julie Ward, and Father Ricky Varner. Input from the teachers and school commission were also much appreciated. The vision from Diocesan Superintendent, Mary Ann Deschaine made this process a reality and her leadership is valued and appreciated.

## **MISSION**

**Saint Joseph the Worker Roman Catholic parish and school encourages its members to live fully the message of Jesus Christ. Inspired by the Holy Spirit through faith, love, sacraments, and service, our parish family will be a community of lifelong achievers and a center for academic excellence.**

## **VISION**

Saint Joseph the Worker School will continue its long standing commitment to providing the highest quality Catholic education to its students. Our students will represent Christian behavior in the greater community by daily living the values of the Catholic faith. We recognize there are significant trends impacting our lives which challenge educational values as well as our definition of what it means to be Catholic.

With ever changing societal values, the availability of a solid, affordable, Catholic education is more important than ever. We must continue to provide our young students with the tools and direction they need to grow amid these challenges. We encourage parents/guardians to fulfill their role as the first educators of their children.

Saint Joseph the Worker School has developed a strategic plan to guide the ongoing evolution, direction, and development of our school. This plan is a living document with long term initiatives. The plan will be assessed, modified, and improved upon based on its impact and effectiveness on an annual basis. What will not be modified, however, is the unwavering commitment expressed in our Mission Statement.

Saint Joseph the Worker Catholic School believes. . .

- In partnership with parents, we are committed to unlocking the full potential of each individual student, to develop confident and independent learners.
- We respect the dignity of the individual person and are sensitive to the needs of our diverse community, welcoming all; we journey together with Christ, celebrating God's love in our lives.
- We promote a safe, caring, supportive learning environment.
- We journey together to address the needs of the whole child, in cooperation with families and communities.
- Faith formation is a continuous collaboration between the school, family and parish community.
- Our Catholic school plays a critical role in promoting Gospel values, authentic social justice, environmental responsibility, human solidarity and the common good.
- Teaching and learning should be rooted in research and evidence, aware that the 21st century fluencies of digital literacy, creativity, innovation and collaboration are essential.

- We provide an affordable opportunity for an excellent Catholic education.

## **SCHOOL PROFILE/HISTORY**

For 138 years, the parish of Saint Joseph the Worker, Beal City, has provided a Catholic Education for our young people. It began in 1883 when Adolph Hunt held classes in Religion and Reading in the first church built by the early Settlers. Since all was in German, people referred it as “the German School.” In 1901 when the Grand Rapids Dominican Sisters began here, most classes were in English. Despite fires consuming the first two church buildings and many hardships, parishioners somehow have managed to continue to expand the class offerings to area people. Saint Philomena (the former name of this parish) held its first high school graduation in 1925. In 1960 the parish and school changed from Saint Philomena to Saint Joseph the Worker.

Today in the present building, constructed in 1948 after fire burned the other school building Quality Catholic Education continues. There are 91 students in Grades Kindergarten through Sixth. Their dedicated teachers are: Aylssa Moomey (Kindergarten), Elizabeth Wila (Grade 1), Traci Lambert (Grade 2), Anne Sprague (Grade 3), Laurie Schafer (Grade 4 & Art), Carmen Bierschbach (Grade 5), Jason Liptow (Grade 6), Mary Smith (Technology and Music). Josette Lorenz is our secretary along with Heather Gross classroom aide. Lunch is provided by Tom Faber. Dave Faber maintains the buildings and grounds. Will Beers is our new Director of Religious Education and teaches Religion in grades 4-6 during our school day. Denny Lorenz is the principal and Father Tom Held is pastor.

## **PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Saint Joseph the Worker School has high academic standards for all students. Our successes include competitive standardized testing scores and a large percentage of students who are on the honor roll at Beal City Public School, inducted into the National Honor Society, in the top ten of their graduating class and are the valedictorian and salutatorian for their class. Our teachers incorporate the best practices in their classrooms to help the students with their academic achievement. Our goal is to meet the needs of our students through cooperative learning projects, games, discussions, differentiated instruction, and student engagement. Saint Joseph the Worker School also helps each student to become a disciple of Christ, so they may take what they have learned and make good decisions, to treat people fairly, and give back to their community. By marketing our school and increasing enrollment we can help the families of our parish continue the strong tradition of academic excellence and faith formation to ensure Catholic Education for years to come. **Mary Smith, with help of Will Beers are finishing an equipment video for the school to increase enrollment.**

<p><b>Initiative 1 Finance:</b>  <b>Develop a financial plan so that the school becomes less dependent on the parish budget.</b></p>	<p><b>Measures of Success:</b>  <b>Generate an additional \$15,000 in year one.</b>  <b>By year five we will generate \$25,000 per year in additional fundraising.</b></p>			
<p><b>1. Strategy</b>  <b>a. Action Steps</b></p>	<p><b>Target Date</b></p>	<p><b>Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Collaboration Needed</b></p>	<p><b>Status</b></p>
<p>School Commission will develop an additional fund raising activity during the academic year.</p>	<p>2015-2016</p>	<p>School Commission Pastor</p>	<p>Parishioners</p>	<p>50/50 raffle for 2015-2016 generated \$7,425.  2016-2017 - 50/50 raffle has generated \$8,013.  2017-2018 - \$8,298. 2018-2019 - \$8,298. <b>2019-2020 - \$6123 (COVID)</b></p>
<p>Working on a Golf Outing Fundraiser for 2021. It will be an annual event to generate money.</p>	<p>Summer or Fall 2021</p>	<p>Pastor School Commission Principal</p>	<p>Dick Figg – Pines Golf Course. Knights of Columbus – Steve Schumacher.</p>	<p>Goal to generate an additional \$10,000.</p>
<p>School Commission will develop a fundraiser to supplement teacher Salaries</p>	<p>Summer 2021</p>	<p>School Commission</p>	<p>Dick Figg- Pines Golf Course-Jessica Gross</p>	<p>Goal to generate 10,000-15,000 for teachers' salaries</p>
<p>Form a committee to develop an alumni giving campaign (mailing/online-Social Media).</p>	<p>2015-2016  New target date is 2016-2018</p>	<p>School Commission Pastor</p>	<p>Charla Miller Heather Curtiss Tom Gross JR. Rachel McClintic</p>	<p>Committee is starting to be formed; will be looking for more to join. Have hired Run 14, a marketing and advertising business run by a former St. Joe alumni to help get campaign off the ground. First meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup>.  2016-2017 – Small committee formed. Alumni Facebook page launched. Website launched in March. Alumni data based is being developed. There is a link to Our Sunday Visitor for on line donations. Kick off campaign in fall 2017!  2018 and 2019 – Alumni Open Houses were held at BCPS Homecoming time. We spotlight alumni 2 – 3 times a year on our Alumni website and Facebook pages. A annual newsletter is sent in June. We</p>

				added alumni to our Christmas Angel Campaign (2017-18 - \$265, 2018-19 - \$500). <b>2020 – COVID – no open house. Continue to update website and Facebook pages. We are still growing our data</b>
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				<b>base. We are spotlighting our alumni.</b>
Develop a contingency plan if enrollment drops to below 20 students in consecutive grades to transition to multi-age classrooms. Example: 10 in each grade. 6 in one grade and 10 in the next.	2015-2016  New target date 2016-2017	Faculty Pastoral Council Pastor	School Commission Superintendent of Schools	Meeting scheduled with Superintendent Mary Ann Deschaine on July 14 to begin planning. 2016-2017 Met with Superintendent in July of 2016. Grades K-2 will not combine. Grades 3-6 will combine if enrollment decreases according to criteria. Developing plan to address marketing, teacher qualifications, employment of qualified teachers. <b>Ongoing</b>
Promote endowment fund, long term giving, estate planning, tuition assistance fund	2016-2020	Finance Stewardship Pastor	Diocesan development office Charla  Paul Gross Jennifer Mackovjak Kristin Smith CCFMM	Reminders have been and will continue to be in the bulletin regarding all these giving opportunities. In March the school received a check from the Bishop Untner and William and Marjorie Falsey Endowment for tuition assistance. This will be added to the fund. Christmas Angel donations to the Endowment were \$1,633.

				<p>2016-2017 Christmas Angel donations to Endowment were \$1,657 and Tuition Assistance were \$2,999.</p> <p>We received a \$10,000 donation for technology from a person who is not affiliated with our school but promotes Catholic Education.</p> <p>2019 - 20 - Promoted in November the endowment with a flyer in the bulletin. Kristin Smith spoke after all Masses. Bulletin updates monthly about the endowment.</p> <p><b>2021 - Funerals - Need to get endowment information flyers to funeral homes and new envelopes printed. Continue promoting in bulletin.</b></p> <p><b>Capital Campaign – developing a plan to promote the endowment to use the interest</b></p>
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				generated to raise teacher salaries.
Maintain or increase Christmas Angels.	2015-2020	Principal	Parishioners	Total for 2015 - 16 - \$8,813 raised. \$7,180 allocated to textbooks and technology. Total for 2016 - 17 was\$11,252 with \$2,800 for textbooks, \$3805 for technology updates, \$2,999 for tuition assistance,

				<p>and \$1,657 for the endowment fund.</p> <p>Total for 2017-2018 -\$12,750. \$7063 for textbooks. \$3411 for tuition assistance and \$265 for alumni.</p> <p>Total for 2018-2019 - \$13,506.50. 412,006.50 for school/teacher wish list. \$1000 for endowment. \$500 Alumni.</p> <p><b>Total for 2019-2020 - \$11, 160. \$5,780 for textbooks and \$5380 for endowment fund.</b></p> <p><b>Total for 2020-2021</b></p>
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<p>Maintain or increase Christmas Angels.</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>Principal</p>	<p>Parishioners</p>	<p><b>10,530 Christmas Angels</b></p>
<p>Maintain or increase school auction.</p>	<p>2015-2020</p>	<p>Principal Auction Committee</p>	<p>Parishioners</p>	<p>Prior years: 2013 -&amp;70,004; 2014 - \$70,339; 2015 - \$84,047. 2016 - \$79,805. 2017 - \$77,071. 2018 - \$91,827.96. 2019- \$114,588.11. <b>2020 (online) – \$97,016.52</b>  <b>2021(online)-\$89,204.58</b></p>
<p>Develop a grant writing committee.</p>	<p>2015-2020</p>	<p>School Commission</p>	<p>School Parents – Sarah Doyle and Michael Sharrar</p>	<p>Still under development. Sara Doyle, a school parent and teacher at Beal City Public School will take the lead in developing committee. She wrote a grant for new playground equipment. We received \$850 for a ga-ga pit (dodgeball), soccer goals and baseball/softball backstops. 2016-2017 We received a grant from the Mt. Pleasant Community Foundation for</p>

				6,800 to purchase new laptop computers. <b>2020-2021 – Received grants from the Optimist Club for new soccer goals and Mt. Pleasant Rotary Club for a new laminator.</b>
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<b>Initiative 2 Communication:</b>	<b>Measures of Success: Better survey results in the area of communication</b>			
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<b>1. Strategy</b> <b>a. Action Steps</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Collaboration Needed</b>	<b>Status</b>
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Develop a policy for online payment of tuition, fees (enrollment/media) and lunches. Academic year (15-16/16/17) optional for tuition Academic year (16-17/17-18) required for tuition, implement lunch payments.	2016-2017	Finance Council Pastor Principal		One –third of our families are using Our Sunday Visitor for online payments of tuition, lunches, and fees. <b>2020-2021 – 98% of families are using online payments for tuition, lunches, fees, etc.</b>
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Develop Communication Plan – 1. Alumni 2. Parents 3. Parishioners 4. Friends of St. Joseph Tell our stories - Success stories of alumni -website -spotlight/newsletter	2015-2020	School Commission Pastor	Sacred Heart Parishioners Alumni	Have hired Run 14, a marketing and advertising business run by a former St. Joe alumni to help get campaign off the ground. First meeting on June 28 <sup>th</sup> . <b>2016-2017 – Small committee formed. Alumni Facebook page launched. Website launched in March. Alumni data base is being developed. On line giving available through Our Sunday Visitor.</b> 2018 and 2019 – Alumni Open Houses were held at BCPS Homecoming time. We spotlight alumni 2 – 3 times a year on our Alumni website and Facebook pages. A annual newsletter is sent in June. We added alumni to our Christmas Angel Campaign (2017-18 - \$265, 2018-19 - \$500). <b>2020 – COVID – no open house. Continue to update website and Facebook pages. We are still growing our data</b>
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Revise School Commission bylaws and structure to allow for subcommittees with non-commission members.	2015-2016	Principal School Commission Pastor	Pastoral Council	This was completed.
Implement Power School	2015-2016	Principal Pastor Faculty	Joe Judge Sara Doyle Jen Butkovich Josette Lorenz	Implemented this past year. Grade 3-6 using on line grading system. K-2 will use by 2018-2019 school year.
Implement REMIND	2015-2016	Faculty Principal Pastor	Sara Doyle	Implemented this past year.

<b>Initiative 3 Enrollment:</b>	<b>Measures of Success:</b> <b>Stabilize and increase enrollment</b>			
<b>1. Strategy</b> <b>a. Action Steps</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Collaboration Needed</b>	<b>Status</b>
Develop and promote a comprehensive marketing plan for the school. Outreach to home school students Outreach to preschool/daycare	2015-2016	School Commission Principal Pastor	Finance DRE/Faith Formation	Letters and brochures were sent to area preschools. Kindergarten Open House was advertised using local radio station ads. <b>Ongoing</b>
Retention Plan – develop a process to address students who are not registered for the upcoming academic school year.	2016-2017	Principal Pastor Faculty	Parent to Parent	Letter sent and a phone follow up.
<b>Develop a recruitment video and post success stories, videos on Facebook</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Mary Smith Will Beers</b>	<b>DRE/ School Commission</b>	<b>Finishing the video to post spring 2022</b>

<b>Initiative 4 Curriculum/Faith Formation:</b>	<b>Measures of Success:</b> <b>Participation in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.</b> <b>80% of students at 70% or higher on NWEA test scores.</b> <b>Technology and maintenance plan developed.</b> <b>Consistent writing program for Grades Kindergarten through Sixth.</b> <b>School parent survey reflects a more Christian environment.</b>			
<b>1. Strategy</b> <b>a. Action Steps</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Collaboration Needed</b>	<b>Status</b>

Incorporate Catechesis of the Good Shepherd into the school religion curriculum.	2017-2018	Principal Pastor Director of Religious Ed.	DRE – Janelle Stewart	Classes were held for Kindergarten this past year. As our DRE is trained for Level 11 and 111 they will also be incorporated into the curriculum. <b>2016-2017 Level 11 Atrium was incorporated into the curriculum for Grades 1 – 3.</b> <b>This program is no longer in use</b>
Analyze new math series and NWEA results to determine how results compare to diocesan and national standards.  Math scores on NWEA Math RTI	2015-2016	Principal Faculty		Teachers will complete this at the May/June Faculty Meetings to plan instruction for the 2016-2017 school year. 2016-2017 Math Pacing Guides developed to ensure curriculum is being taught and completed in all grades. Teachers using NWEA test data to drive instruction. <b>Ongoing</b>
Develop an ongoing financial plan to continue to support competitive and comprehensive technology and maintenance.	2016-2017  New target date 2017-2018	Pastor Finance Council Principal School Commission		Will be developed during the 2017-1018 school year. Developing a 2-year strategic plan for technology. Purchasing new laptop computers summer 2017 and an additional Smart board for the library.
Develop a comprehensive Kindergarten through Grade 6 writing program. Implementation – 2016 - 2017	2015-2016	Faculty Principal		K – 6 Teachers were trained in the MAISA Writing Program. Mentor Texts were purchased. This program was implemented this year.
Review Christian Expectations with parents and students to create a caring and safe environment.	2015 -2016	Faculty School Commission Students	Parents	This was done at the parent meeting in August. Taught and review with students monthly.

## VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Saint Joseph the Worker School will continue its long-standing commitment to provide the highest quality of Catholic education to its students. Our students will represent Christian behavior in the greater community by living daily the values of the Catholic faith. With increased student enrollment and funding, we can make a bigger impact in the lives of our students. Saint Joseph the Worker School, in its 133<sup>rd</sup> year, will continue its strong tradition of academic excellence and spiritual enrichment in this ever-changing world.