



# IMPROVING STUDENT LEARNING

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**A Self Study for:**

**E840 St. Matthew's Catholic School  
602 S. Main  
Kalispell, MT 59901**

***Continuous School Improvement Focused On High Achievement Of All Students***

**2015-2016**

## **Preface**

St. Matthew's Catholic School started the Accreditation process a bit apprehensively; however, it quickly turned to hope for our future. We have come to embrace this opportunity to grow in our mission to provide the best Catholic education to our students. Our mission as a parish school is to grow in our Catholic Identity and academic excellence as a community. We are blessed to be a part of a wonderful and supportive parish. St. Matthew's Catholic School has served communities in the Flathead Valley for nearly a century.

The process of the self study has been beneficial to St. Matthew's in aiding in the identification of goals and creation an action plan. It has also motivated us to continue to provide our students with a nurturing and enriching environment that teaches Gospel values and promotes academic excellence in the Catholic tradition.

St. Matthew's would like to thank Dr. Tim Uhl, our superintendent, for his guidance in this process. A heartfelt thank you to our staff and community for their enormous commitment and continued support of St. Matthew's. Finally, I would like to thank Fr. Rod Ermatinger for his unfailing support and for the Advisory Council's continued commitment to our students.

Warmly,

Lauren Smith, Principal

## **St. Matthew's Catholic School Mission and Belief Statements**

### **St. Matthew's Mission Statement:**

St. Matthew's Catholic School will provide a nurturing and enriching environment that teaches Gospel values and promotes academic excellence in the Catholic tradition.

### **St. Matthew's Belief Statement:**

We believe each child is a gift from God, and deserves to be loved and educated to become faith-filled, compassionate, courageous leaders.



# St. Matthew's Catholic School

## Schoolwide Learning Expectations

### **SPIRITUAL**

- + Developing a personal relationship with God
- + Praying for others
- + Loving God, family, Church
- + Gaining knowledge of Catholic beliefs, practices, prayers and traditions
- + Participating in prayer, liturgical, and sacramental experiences

### **ACADEMIC**

- + Setting foundation for literacy, writing, reading
- + Building a foundation for adding/subtracting and basic math skills
- + Reading for comprehension and pleasure and become avid readers
- + Thinking creatively, critically, and independently.
- + Meeting or exceeding curriculum standards
- + Using problem-solving strategies
- + Preparing for high school
- + Applying knowledge to real world issues

### **INTEGRITY**

- + Being honest and truthful
- + Being accountable and responsible for choices
- + Standing up for faith
- + Demonstrating respect of self, others, and God
- + Setting goals and work to accomplish them
- + Taking responsibility for actions and choices based on the teachings of Jesus.

### **NURTURE**

- + Caring for others
- + Working cooperatively
- + Communicating effectively and respectfully
- + Supporting and encouraging those around them
- + Being kind and accepting of others differences

### **TRUTH**

- + Gaining greater knowledge of God
- + Forming consciousness of right and wrong through Gospel values.
- + Reading scripture
- + Following Jesus – The way, the truth, and the life.

### **SERVICE**

- + Participating in service projects
- + Fostering a buddy system
- + Respecting all cultures and environment of God's creation
- + Demonstrating the Spiritual and Corporal works of Mercy

## **St. Matthew's Catholic School Staff**

Principal  
Administrative Assistant  
Registrar/Human Resources

Lauren Smith  
Charlie Sherrill  
Theresa Surynt

## **Teaching Staff**

Pre-School  
Kindergarten  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade  
2<sup>nd</sup> Grade  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
6-8<sup>th</sup> Social Studies  
6-8<sup>th</sup> Science  
6-8<sup>th</sup> Math  
6-8<sup>th</sup> English  
5-6<sup>th</sup> Religion  
Music  
Tutoring/Librarian/K-2 Computers  
K-8<sup>th</sup> PE & 3-4<sup>th</sup> Computers  
Art & Culture

Gretchen Knuffke, Ali Vosen  
Erin Mouat & Lauren Jones  
Lisa Brann  
Mary Wagner  
Laurie Kollmann  
Sherry Miller  
Sydney Schroeder  
Doug Manaker  
Myrna Matulevich  
Kimberly Weaver  
Rhonda Hawkins  
Sr. Judy Lund OP  
Kyle Tannehill  
Margaret Stell  
Philip Jackson  
Jennifer Griffith

## **Early Learning Center Staff**

Director  
Primary Teacher  
Primary Teacher  
Primary Teacher  
Primary Teacher  
Substitute Teacher  
Substitute Teacher

Roseann Herne  
Isabella Bush  
Nina Hill  
Kailey Parker  
Jenna Root  
KC Jochim  
Megan Brown

## **Parish Staff**

Pastor  
Parish Secretary  
Bookkeeper  
Pastoral Assistant  
Pastoral Assistant  
Pastoral Assistant/Music/Funeral Director  
Director of Religious Education

Fr. Rod Ermatinger  
Ruby Riener  
Angie Battello  
Peggy Schaffer  
Jeanne O'Connell  
Karen Weaver  
Sage Dorrington

Marketing/Fundraising  
Social Concerns  
Maintenance  
Maintenance  
Kitchen  
Kitchen  
Kitchen

Kim Cain  
Rod Stell  
Richard Oelrich  
Jimmy Smith  
Stephanie Hammett  
Stephanie Keeney  
Dustin Frey

### **School Advisory Council**

Fr. Rod Ermatinger  
Lauren Smith  
Scott Bruner  
Chaela Manning  
Mary Obermiller  
Mark Pirrie  
Julie Heaton  
Tami Barrett  
Mark Cross

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# CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

## A. HOW THE SELF STUDY WAS CONDUCTED

Dr. Pat Haggarty, the then-Superintendent, presented to staff and the School Advisory Council the process and need for the WCEA accreditation in December of 2013. The staff at St. Matthew's Catholic School started discussions on the ISL (Improving Student Learning) study and the entire accreditation process.

The staff started by analyzing our mission statement. We determined that the mission statement at that time was a belief statement and not a mission statement. During staff meetings and various emails, we developed and wrote a mission statement. At the time of developing a mission statement, we also discussed the School-wide Learning Expectations (SLEs). In December of 2013 we conducted a survey of the current 8th grade class and teachers. We simply asked them, "What do you believe it means to graduate from St. Matthew's?" From the feedback of those 8th grade students and teachers to this question we started the development of our SLEs.

During subsequent staff meetings, we created the acronym SAINTS and the meaning of each letter. We were able to look at what we were already doing and define it more specifically. We created SLEs for St. Matthew's that will be beneficial and support our purpose and mission. The School Advisory Council (SAC) discussed the creation of the mission statement and SLEs at multiple meetings. The SAC was involved in reviewing and having input on both.

In the 2014-2015 school year parents, students and staff completed the Improving Student Learning for Catholic Schools surveys. Surveys were emailed to families and teachers. 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students completed them online. K-3<sup>rd</sup> grades completed paper copies. Both families and teachers had access to paper copies if they were not able to complete them via online.

Committees were formed in the fall of 2014 to complete chapter three of the ISL. These committees were able to set their own meetings. In the spring of 2015, the Leadership team met multiple times and we had one large meeting where all committees were able to present their findings.

### Evidence

- School Staff meeting notes
- Large posters with notes on development of SLEs
- Committee meeting notes
- Leadership team notes
- Surveys and results
- SAC meeting notes

## **B. INVOLVEMENT AND COLLABORATION OF SHAREHOLDERS IN COMPLETING THE SELF STUDY**

*The school involves all shareholders in data review, analysis and dialogue about perceived accomplishments in the area of student learning, and in developing, implementing and monitoring goals for improvements in student learning.*

Involvement of shareholders started with a presentation by Dr. Pat Haggarty to the school staff and SAC. The principal and pastor then shared information with the parish staff and Finance Council on the WCEA Accreditation.

School staff was kept informed during regularly scheduled staff meetings in addition to extra staff meetings pertaining specifically to the completion of the ISL. The School Advisory Council was involved and kept informed during their monthly regularly scheduled meetings. The parish staff was informed of progress and asked for input during parish staff meetings. In February 2015 Dr. Tim Uhl attended a SAC meeting to discuss accreditation. In addition to meetings communication via email was also needed.

Committees were made up of teachers, parish staff, ELC staff, SAC members, and parents. The Leadership team consisted of the school secretary, pastor, principal, SAC member, teacher, and a parent. The Leadership team was intricately involved in reviewing and editing committee reports. The Leadership team also combined all listed goals and prioritized goals to select our final goals.

Parents, students and staff were asked to complete the Improving Student Learning for Catholic Schools with explanation of the accreditation process and the importance of their input. Results were shared with teachers, parish staff and the School Advisory Council. Parents receive a weekly school newsletter to communicate what is happening at the school. Periodically school news is shared in the church bulletin. A principal newsletter went out to address the accreditation specifically and to share good things happening at the school. During Catholic Schools Week an assembly was had for students and staff to highlight our mission and schoolwide learning expectations.

All school and parish staff was asked for input in the completion of the action plan. In the spring of 2015 we had a large all staff meeting and committees reported on their findings. At this meeting the group was able to comment and ask questions. At this time we reviewed and discussed our goals and action plan. A follow-up email went out asking for staff input. The Leadership team was involved in these meetings.

A plan to keep shareholders involved in the ongoing process has been discussed. A committee for each goal will be formed. It will be the responsibility of each committee to track goal completion and analyze the effectiveness of the school.

## **Evidence**

- Meeting notes from committees
- Rosters of committee
- Principal Newsletter
- Catholic Schools Week Powerpoint
- Action plan
- Survey and results

## **CHAPTER 2 – CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

### **A. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Catholicism in the Flathead Valley is traceable to 1888 to the baptism of Thomas O’Toole by Father H. Alleys, a missionary priest from Frenchtown. Only three years after the city of Kalispell had been surveyed and laid out, the first bishop of Montana, the Most Reverend J.B. Brondel, on March of 1894 appointed Fr. H.J. VandeBen of Butte to be the first pastor. In 1895 the first church and rectory was constructed on 4th Ave and 5th Street.

During the first few years, the territory for St. Matthew’s Parish was quite extensive and included the missions along the Great Northern Railroad from the Idaho border to Columbia Falls, MT. New missions were quickly formed in Whitefish, Somers, Jennings and Rexford. Eventually parishioners outgrew the small wooden church structure, some say as a direct spiritual result of the parish becoming a mission of the Dubuque Apostolate in 1908. Plans for construction of a new building were initiated under Father Francis O’Farrell, the pastor who would be the longest serving priest at St. Matthew’s.

Warren G. Conrad, President of the Kalispell Townsite Company, donated the half block of land for the new church. Ground was broken on April 2, 1910 and Bishop Carroll laid the cornerstone on June 5th of the same year. On September 2, 1911 the completed church was dedicated by Bishop Carroll.

By 1910, Bishop Carroll had requested that the Sisters of Mercy of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, come to Kalispell to discuss with the Hospital Association and the Chamber of Commerce the possibility of opening a new hospital. In July of 1910, Mother Mary Agatha, formerly Alice Mullany, along with Sisters Nicholas, Vencetia, Philomena and Clement, began the work of planning and constructing the hospital. It formally opened on May 30, 1912 with Bishop Carroll dedicating the building on May 31st.

Bishop Carroll then requested that the Sisters of Mercy open a Catholic school in Kalispell. Once again, Mother Agatha accepted the challenge and purchased a building on two adjacent lots on the corner of Main and Sixth Streets. A two-story addition and extensive remodeling of that building was completed during the year that followed and St. Matthew’s School was officially opened in 1917 with Sister Mary Barromeo at the helm. St. Matthew’s Parish provided the fuel to heat the building and many women of the parish donated items of food and clothing as well as furniture and money to outfit the school. The Sisters of Mercy were dedicated to the education of the young. The school began as a combination convent and school with boarders, grades 1<sup>st</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>. Grades 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> were added within the first four years.

The high school was discontinued in 1941. St. Matthew’s Parish bought the school and property from the Sisters of Mercy in 1956, and built a new (current) building on the site. In 1958 St. Matthew’s Catholic School began in the new building, which still houses the school today. In 1970 the people of the parish found it necessary to close the eighth grade, and in 1974, the seventh grade was closed. Kindergarten was added in 1976, and preschool classes were added in 1982. Seventh grade was added back in 2001, and eighth grade in 2002. St. Matthew’s Catholic School is currently pre-school through eighth grade.

The beautiful Flathead Valley makes up the community of St. Matthew's Catholic School. The valley has and is experiencing changes over the past decade. The valley has areas/neighborhoods of the "haves" and "have-nots". The Flathead Valley is approximately 5,000 square miles with 90,000 residents. The Flathead Valley consists of Kalispell, Whitefish and Columbia Falls, and Bigfork and Lakeside and other small communities. Kalispell is the largest town with a population of roughly 22,000, this is an increase in population of 48% since the year 2000. The median income for the Flathead Valley is \$46,581, the state of Montana is \$42,230 and Kalispell's median income is \$41,000. Kalispell's largest employer is Kalispell Regional Medical Center. In 2014 the median price for residences in Kalispell was \$200,450, in Whitefish it was \$285,000 and \$290,000 in Bigfork. The Flathead Valley attracts a lot of tourists with Glacier National Park, Flathead and Whitefish Lakes, and the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Since the recession began in 2008, the unemployment rate has increased, property values have decreased and the homeless rate has increased. Currently, there are approximately 300 homeless youth in the valley. These factors have an impact on all schools, private or public. Recently, it appears that St. Matthew's has experienced an increase in students coming from single parent or split homes. Teachers have had to adjust to less academic support at home. The number of students enrolled that are not at grade level has increased and there are not adequate personnel to help support teachers and students.

St. Matthew's Catholic School educates students from preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The enrollment in the fall of 2014 for K-8 was 162 and pre-school enrollment was 33 students. 18% of students qualify for free or reduced lunches. Pre-school students are not offered free or reduced lunches due to ½ day attendance. Tuition for 2014-2015 was maximum \$5,100 with 2 tier down levels for families with more than one child (second child \$4335, and third child and beyond is \$3060), with 52% of families receiving scholarship aid. Pre-School tuition for 2014-2015 was \$1,600 per child per year. There is no scholarship aid provided for Pre-School students.

The Flathead Valley has five Catholic churches. The parishes are Risen Christ, St. Charles, St. Richard, St. John Paul II, and St. Matthew's. St. Matthew's is the largest parish with 768 registered families. St. Matthew's Catholic School is located right next to St. Matthew's Catholic Church. This is a great advantage to our students as we are able to attend weekly mass, holy days of obligation, and participate in adoration. The student body consists of students from St. Matthew's parish as well as other Catholic churches in the valley. Over 90% of St. Matthew's students K-8th grade are catholic. And 16 out of 17 teachers are catholic. All teachers attend the annual Marian University classes. We are blessed to have one part-time religious sister on staff and involved parish priests. Our teachers have a minimum of bachelor degrees and some with masters degrees. The principal has a masters degree as well as an administrator's license.

Historically St. Matthew's students are very successful in high school and participate in many sports and activities. Kalispell does not have a Catholic high school so our graduates attend the local public schools. There were thirteen 8th grade students at St. Matthew's in 2011. Those students graduated from high school in 2015 and of the 13 students 11 of them graduated with merit distinction and honors. The public school district surveys the freshman class each year to gather information on preparedness for high school and overall experience in high school. The

data collected for the 2014-2015 freshman class indicated that St. Matthew's students feel very prepared for high school academically.

As a result of conducting student, parent and staff surveys it became very apparent that our students are receiving a faith-filled Catholic education. The results indicate that we are doing a very good job of teaching our faith and the power of the sacraments. St. Matthew's is very much considered to foster a loving family environment. Parents and students feel that teachers care about their students and strive to give their very best. St. Matthew's Catholic school is a great place to work and learn.

St. Matthew's has had a trend of a decrease in enrollment over the past decade. The economy had a direct impact on this as well as the increase in tuition costs coupled with the discontinuation of the discipleship program. In the 2006-2007 school year tuition was \$2100 and was raised to \$3900 for the 2007-2008 school year. In this same year the discipleship program began. This was a form of tuition assistance for families. For families that qualified, they were required to tithe 10% of their income as tuition. Enrollment for K-8<sup>th</sup> grades was 248 students. On average 61 families participated in this program each year while it was in existence. Tuition was raised to \$4000 for the 2009-2010 school year and then again the next year to \$4750. For the 2011-2012 school year, the discipleship program was discontinued because of lack of accountability and payment of families, and tuition was raised to \$4900. Enrollment dropped from 255 students to 204 students. Currently tuition is \$5100 with a multi-child tiered discount and enrollment has leveled out at 165 students K - 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Please see chart below for trends.

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Tuition</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
2006-2007	\$2100	
2007-2008 *start of discipleship	\$3900	248
2008-2009	\$3900	249
2009-2010	\$4000	255
2010-2011 *end of discipleship	\$4750	204
2011-2012	\$4900	179
2012-2013	\$4900	162
2013-2014 *start of tier	\$5100	165
2014-2015	\$5100	165

## **CHAPTER 3 – QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL’S PROGRAM**

### **A. ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHOOL’S CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

*The school is Catholic, approved by the Local Ordinary (Canon 803), provides authentic Catholic teaching, opportunities for community worship and participation in the sacraments, and promotes evangelization and service to the community.*

St. Matthew’s Catholic School recognizes its authentic Catholic identity by our students’ ability to demonstrate the school’s core values: spiritual and academic, calling for integrity and nurturing, truth and service, on a day-to-day basis. St. Matthew’s Mission Statement clearly establishes our Catholic identity and our mission to serve this parish community. Students and faculty celebrate their faith as evidenced by their involvement in liturgical services, daily prayer, ritual and traditions of our faith, and service to others.

Each school day begins with prayer and classes incorporate prayer throughout the day. School mass is celebrated each Friday. Every class, K-8<sup>th</sup> is scheduled to be the choir and the lectors. Student servers, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup>, are scheduled for daily Masses and funerals. Students attend daily religion classes that adhere to the USCCB framework using textbooks agreed upon by the diocese of Great Fall-Billings. All texts are evaluated and re-ordered or replaced in coordination with the diocese and the new Religion Standards which have been adopted by Montana Catholic Schools. Reconciliation is offered to students during Advent and Lent; ample opportunities are available during the week at St. Matthew’s Parish and at other parishes in the area. Students are also encouraged to participate in the parish and diocesan youth programs. During the year several traditions/rituals are provided according to the liturgical season. The Creative Hand project and May Crowning with the Living Rosary are 8<sup>th</sup> grade traditions; 3<sup>rd</sup> grade provides the Living Stations; 5<sup>th</sup> grade Las Posada; grades 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> play in the Holy Hoops Basketball Tournament. Every class participates in these activities.

Parents are invited and are encouraged to participate in all programs. A new venture this year is the seven-week session for 8<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents on the Dignity of the Person. An Advisory Board has begun to provide parental input. Parents are expected to participate in the Volunteer Hours Program, which allows them to be involved in various ways according to their time and talents.

St. Matthew’s faculty attends professional development that fosters and understanding of the tenets of our Catholic Faith. Faculty members are working towards certification through a diocesan program with Marian University. All staff members and volunteers participate in ongoing training through VIRTUS to ensure safe care for each child. All staff and faculty attend the Retreat Day at the beginning of the school year to renew their commitment. All School personnel participate actively in the programs and services that are part of the Good News of Jesus that permeate the year on a daily basis.

St. Matthew’s School is Catholic, approved by The Local Ordinary, Bishop George Leo Thomas, and provides authentic Catholic teaching, opportunities for community worship and participation in the sacraments and promotes evangelization and service to the community. Classes donate their time and energy to serve the homeless, the home bound, the sick, provide for special needs

for the parish Social Concerns, CRS, Guatemala diocesan missions, city and county outreach programs and recycling. Special emphasis is given to service during Catholic Schools Week.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

- Clearly defined Mission and Belief Statements that express the school's Catholic identity
- A vibrant program of service to the needs of the parish, the community and the world at large
- Emphasis on daily prayer, the weekly celebration of our school Mass and of traditional religious events that are shared with our parents

### **Goals**

- Increase parental and family involvement in faith formation
- Evaluate religion texts and curriculum according to the new diocesan standards and the Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Encourage brief pastoral visits to all classrooms on a weekly basis to strengthen the bonds of Faith and promote vocations through the pastor's personal presence
- Integrate new religion standards across the curriculum

### **Evidence**

- Prayer table on landing, used for Faculty morning prayer
- Daily morning prayer over loud speaker
- Adoration schedule times on Tuesdays and Wednesdays
- Crucifixes, statues of Saints and other Catholic symbols in classrooms and spaces in the school.
- Schedule of class assignment for Friday Masses and their buddy class for the school year
- Pictures of students participating in service projects, and Catholic rituals celebrated throughout the school year (found in classroom binders, and on various bulletin boards in the school)
- Large Rosary hanging in office, used for living Rosary at May Crowning
- Daily Religion Classes
- School Confession 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades

## **B. DEFINING THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE**

*The school's purpose is defined through the school's mission statement, philosophy, measurable Schoolwide Learning Expectations, Arch/diocesan curriculum standards (local curriculum standards where Diocesan standards don't exist), and other governing authority expectations.*

St. Matthew's Catholic School teaches grades Pre- Kindergarten through Eighth Grades. We also have an Early Learning Center for children ages 2-5 and a pre-school program for children ages 4-5. Our school's purpose is defined through our Mission and Belief statements as well as our School Wide Learning Expectations. Through our teaching of the Gospel values and Catholic traditions, it solidifies the connection to our parish, diocese and the Roman Catholic Church. Our mission statement doesn't include parents specifically, but implies that the parents believe in the mission or would not be sending their child to our school.

St. Matthew's started evaluating and defining our school's purpose in the fall of 2013. Teachers developed the Mission Statement and SLE's during after school meetings. After the teachers were in agreement, they were taken to the School Advisory Council for approval. The Mission statement and SLE's were approved for the next school year. The Mission Statement and SLE's are published in the student handbook, as well as the student's school planners and take home folders.

Teachers were grouped into three groups to define goals for each (K-2, 3-5, 6-8). **Spiritual** can be seen in our daily life through Morning Prayer and our focus on virtue and saint of the month. As well as weekly school Masses, Adoration and activities following the liturgical calendar. **Academic** is using the state standards as our guidelines. Student grades are monitored and accessible to parents using Sycamore grading system. Students also take MAP tests (Measures of Academic Progress) twice a year. The fifth and eighth grades take the ACRE test (Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education) every year. **Integrity and Nurture** are basic virtues we want to instill in all students to practice every day. We follow the **Truth** of God's Word and service through the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. Being honest, truthful, and caring is just a start to being a good person. Each class has **service** projects, but during Catholic Schools Week, we focus on the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. Other school-wide projects include the Guatemala Mission, Rice Bowls, and Sparrow's Nest (youth homeless shelter) fundraising.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

- Development of Mission Statement and SLE's
- Monthly Virtue and Saint Program

### **Goals**

- Communication with parents on the SLE' and roles in partnership with school and church
- Working with students to further understanding of SLE's
- Alignment with policies and curriculum set by Montana Catholic Schools

- Clear rubrics to measure SLEs

**Evidence**

- Calendar
- Weekly/Newsletter
- Curriculum binders
- Sycamore grading system
- Midterm and quarter reports
- MAP test scores
- ACRE test scores

### **C. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING TO SUPPORT HIGH ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS**

*The organizational structures of the school focus on high achievement of all students, and communicate student progress to all shareholders.*

St. Matthew's School Advisory Council, Priest, and Principal work together to promote the Catholic identity of St. Matthew's and to make sure the Catholic identity permeates the school environment. They have a crucifix in each classroom, a statue of St. Matthew, and a large rosary that hangs on the wall in the office. The priest leads the staff in an all day retreat in August to prepare them spiritually for the upcoming school year. He also leads the 8th graders in an all day retreat in May to prepare them spiritually for high school. They join in an all staff prayer circle in the morning and the school attends Mass each Friday of the school year.

The advisory council, priest, and principal focus on high student achievement by meeting monthly to discuss fundraising, curriculum needs, curriculum standards, enrollment plans, and marketing strategies. They also advise and plan for programs and structures that help guide their high achievement expectations. These are evident in the agendas for the monthly meetings. The priest and principal monitor the attainment of the School-Wide Learning Expectations. This is evident in the principal and priest's encouragement of the staff and students in their faith journey through planned events, such as staff retreats and student retreats. They are available to students and staff by their presence in the school and faith-based school events.

The advisory council, priest, and principal support an environment of high achievement of all students by discussing which standards to adopt, how to deal with the sensitive topics such as full implementation of the Common Core, and the benefits of current curriculum as well as possible future curriculum. This is evident in the agenda and minutes of the monthly meetings.

The advisory council, priest and principal are able to communicate student achievement to all shareholders. The shareholders are able to access the scores of our standardized tests, MAP, CRT and Iowa Basics. The students receive midterms and report cards every quarter. The school has a computer-grading program in which the parents can access their students' grades and assignments. They also have gathered feedback from parents and students who have gone on to be high achievers in high school and college.

They have a strategic planning process that includes a focus on supporting high achievement for all students. They meet to discuss the vision for the school and their plan and current progress to achieve their vision. They often discuss plans for further enrollment and development, and how to make St. Matthew's and Catholic education more marketable. These planning processes are evident in the agenda and minutes of their meetings.

## **Significant accomplishments**

- Monthly advisory council meetings
- Development of the School-Wide Learning Expectations
- Priest leads an all day staff retreat in August
- Priest leads an all day 8<sup>th</sup> grade student retreat in May
- All school Mass on Fridays

## **Goals**

- Improve knowledge of curriculum standards and curriculum needs
- Develop more effective marketing strategies to increase funding and enrollment
- Curriculum mapping for every grade and every subject
- Integration of new religion standards

## **Evidence**

- Meeting agenda and minutes
- Marketing plan, brochures, website
- Strategic plan for the school

## **D. DATA ANALYSIS AND ACTION TO SUPPORT HIGH ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS**

*The school uses educationally sound assessment processes to collect data. The school disaggregates and analyzes student performance data and uses the analysis as a basis for instructional/curricular improvement.*

St. Matthew's currently has one class of each grade K-8. Our Kindergarten is all-day, and our middle school (grades 6-8) is departmentalized, with specialized teachers rather than a contained classroom. We are starting the process of collecting data of our graduates who enter the two public high schools (currently there is no Catholic High School in Kalispell). The St. Matthew's class of 2011 (8<sup>th</sup> grade) will graduate in 2015. The class of 2011 consisted of 13 students all of which attended either Flathead or Glacier High Schools. Of those thirteen students eleven graduated with honors and distinction.

St. Matthew's School uses data analysis to target instruction and drive curricular change. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade take the ACRE test (Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education) every year, and we have data back as far as 2005. This test assesses students on their knowledge of the Catholic Religion in a variety of areas. This data is analyzed and given to our religion teachers to spot trends in faith formation, and used to modify instruction or drive curriculum decisions.

St. Matthew's School began administering MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) testing during the 2014-2015 school year. The test is given in the fall and spring in the curriculum areas of math, reading and language arts. The MAP test is adaptive. The test provides a raw score (RIT) and a percentile score that is convertible to a grade level. The test provides a growth target in the fall. After the spring test, a report is generated that identifies those students that met the growth targets. Student growth on the MAP test is tracked on yearly Academic Growth Report provided by MAPS. We look forward to the potential growth of our students through the analysis of this data. Before the start of each school teachers and the principal will spend time reviewing data to prepare for the school year. This time will be designated during retreat days before school starts. We want to challenge all students and then monitor progress year to year. Again, we look forward to collecting and reviewing data for each student to help their learning.

Disaggregation of data is not utilized very much at present. Much of our student population is ethnically similar, but assessing data for boys vs. girls, or economic groups may prove useful. Looking at data for specific groups could help identify trends in the data we are not seeing in the group as a whole, and could be used by classroom teachers to differentiate instruction for these groups.

Students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> take regular reading comprehension tests through Accelerated Reader (AR). They read a book at their reading level, and then take a 5-20 question test on what they have read. Teachers assess the data from students' AR reports to identify students that may need extra help in reading comprehension, or intervention.

Regular assessments are given in individual classrooms, and teachers analyze the data and use the information to adapt the curriculum to the students, supporting achievement for all students.

Grades are accessible to parents through our online grade-book at Sycamore Education. Feedback for students and parents is helpful through regular access to Sycamore.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

- Utilizing ACRE test results to assess Catholic Faith Formation
- Implementation of standardized adaptive MAP testing
- Accelerated Reader testing utilized
- Sycamore Online Grade Database

### **Goals**

- Disaggregation of MAP testing data
- Collect more MAP testing data, analyze growth progress
- Use testing data to increase differentiated instruction
- Better implementation of MAP testing program--investigating whether to administer the test 3x per year, for example
- Better use of ACRE test including a clearer process for disaggregating the data

### **Evidence**

- MAP Scores & reports
- ACRE results
- Accelerated Reader Reports
- Sycamore grade book example

## **E. HIGH ACHIEVEMENT BY ALL STUDENTS TOWARD CLEARLY DEFINED SLES AND CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

*All students make acceptable and measurable progress toward clearly defined Schoolwide Learning Expectations and challenging, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum standards.*

St. Matthew's Catholic School ensures high achievement by all students toward clearly defined Schoolwide Learning Expectations. Following the school's mission and belief statement, St. Matthew's strives to provide a challenging, coherent, and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results.

The Schoolwide Learning Expectations promote Catholic Values, follow the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, and set a standard for students of St. Matthew's to become spiritual Catholics, academic students, citizens with integrity, nurturing of others, Truth-filled Catholics, and citizens of service. Although the Schoolwide Learning Expectations are fairly new to St. Matthew's School, the staff at St. Matthew's has utilized these same SLEs in their teaching prior to actually introducing and incorporating the actual standards. In other words, the SLEs are a reflection of our present (and past) reality as well as our hopes for the future. We feel we have good benchmarks in place so we will be working on rubrics to measure our SLEs.

The Catholic Identity of St. Matthew's School is shown through a rigorous curriculum that is aligned with up-to-date standards that follow the Gospel values of the Catholic faith. Religion classes follow (will follow) the newly adopted standards as set forth by the Diocese of Helena. These standards allow for a thorough understanding of Church doctrine, practices, and history. The Bible is a primary source in many of the classrooms, and our priest, Father Rod Ermatinger, visits classrooms as well. In addition, Catholic values and beliefs are not only emphasized in Religion classes, but across the curriculum in academic and elective classes.

In order to insure continuity of learning for all ages, St. Matthew's follows many national or state standards and curriculums. In grades K-4 ABEKA Math is utilized, while in grades 5-8 CPM (College Preparatory Mathematics): Core Connections is used. Languages Arts is taught in grades K-2 using the Abeka Phonics curriculum while in grades 3-8 the curriculum used is Voyages in English. In areas such as Social Studies and Science curriculum is used following state standards. The school, however, does not have set standards across all grades. Therefore, setting standards across the grades, as well as curriculum mapping, is an intended goal. An obstacle to this development has been the controversy surrounding the Common Core standards. Discussions continue in regards to the Common Core Standards.

In addition to continuity of learning at St. Matthew's from grades K-8<sup>th</sup>, continuity of learning from St. Matt's middle school into the public high school should be considered. Cooperation and collaboration with local high schools greatly benefits St. Matthew's School in that the local district, at times, sets up certain curriculum to be followed by the high school and the local public middle schools. Without the cooperation between St. Matthew's and the local high schools St. Matthew's is kept "out of the loop" so to speak. Because of the fact there is no

Catholic high school in the area, the majority of St. Matt's students attend these same high schools. Therefore, when the public high schools work collaboratively with the local public middle schools in establishing a new curriculum to be followed, St. Matthew's students, at times, have found themselves when entering high school without some "inside" knowledge that the local public schools are using. For instance, the public schools established an acronym used in writing. It is only used in our local district, however. When students reach high school the teachers expect that they understand and know such acronyms. It through cooperation and corroboration with the local high schools that our teachers will be able to have a professional development hosted by the English Dept. Head this fall.

The classrooms at St. Matthew's School are filled with multiple learning activities such as singing, note-taking, lecture, art projects, essays, presentations, field trips, textual analysis, and labs not only provide an extension to the variety of learning experiences for students at St. Matthew's but also provide many opportunities for students to be actively engaged in learning. The use of assessments at St. Matthew's School is integrated into the teaching/learning process through the use of a variety of exams such as the following: diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Additionally, St. Matthew's School uses other forms of assessments which aid in the determination of reteaching. For instance, English teachers use peer evaluations and re-writes. These assessments are not only useful tools to help determine on-going curricular planning, but they help to identify students who are not making acceptable academic progress. These identified students are then referred to St. Matthew's tutor to enable them to achieve their academic goals.

In addition, St. Matthew's has integrated technology into student's everyday learning. St. Matthew's has become a GAFE (Google Apps for Education) school. Students in the upper grades (6-8) use Chromebooks or iPads in classrooms on a regular basis. Grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> are taught to use Google Docs, Drive, Slides, and Sheets. They learn to research, share, and collaborate on assignments. Starting in Kindergarten students are being introduced to keyboarding, word-processing, and powerpoint presentations. All classrooms utilize SmartBoards, and some use document cameras to aid in the teaching and learning process.

St. Matthew's continually strives to actively engage students in a variety of learning experiences following the SLEs and curriculum standards. The Schoolwide Learning Expectations have given St. Matthew's meaningful tools to measure student's learning results in the following ways:

#### Spiritual

- Attending Mass every Friday
- Students as Altar Servers
- Morning prayer, before lunch prayer, and at the end of the day
- The ACRE test is administered yearly in 5th and 8th grades
- Weekly Adoration
- Stations of the Cross
- Advent Prayer Assemblies
- Participation in Sacrament of Reconciliation twice a year
- Pre-game Prayer before sporting events

### Academic

- Students performing the readings at Mass
- MAP testing is now being utilized (Prior to this year CRT testing was administered)
- Set curriculums in some areas, state standards, ABEKA, etc
- Diagnostic, Summative, and Formative assessments
- Accelerated Reader Programs
- Creative Hand
- Memorization of prayers
- Great Books class
- Foreign Language
- Science Fair
- History Trips

### Integrity

- Disciplinary action when needed
- Monthly Virtues
- Caught in the Act

### Nurture

- Buddy system between upper and lower grades
- Holy Hoops - Combined 5-8 grade teams, alumni coaches
- Boot camp
- Math Tutoring/ Reading Intervention
- After-school study hall

### Truth

- Reading the Bible
- Scripture Journals
- Daily Prayer
- Morality Curriculum

### Service

- 4th Grade Service Projects
- 8th Grade Fundraising projects
- Buddy system - Mass, holiday projects, reading buddies
- Culture class
- Catholic Schools Week - Corporal Works of Mercy

St. Matthew's Catholic School has done an outstanding job of implementing SLEs that the school already follows. There is an abundant amount of evidence that reinforces this. In addition, St. Matthew's use of current technology with their move forward to becoming a GAFE (Google Apps for Education) school reinforces their determination to keep students' learning challenging and relevant in an ever-changing world. With St. Matthew's being a parish school, their Catholic identity is clearly exemplified in many ways such as regular attendance of mass, prayer, and weekly adoration.

However, there are some goals that should be addressed in order for St. Matthew's to continue with their tradition of academic excellence. Professional development for academic/curriculum

standards for the school K-8<sup>th</sup> grades is necessary. Curriculum mapping across the grades would allow for teachers to know what has been taught the previous year. Cooperation and collaboration with local high schools would be of great benefit to the student's at St. Matthew's School.

### **Accomplishments**

- Implementation of SLEs
- Current technology usage
- Morning prayer and Weekly Masses
- Monthly Virtues and Caught in the Act
- Great Books Class
- Numerous Service Projects
- After-school Study Hall for upper grades
- Science Fair, Spelling and Geography Bees
- Incorporation of Corporal Works of Mercy during Catholic Schools Week
- Creative Hand Project

### **Goals**

- Professional development and implementation of academic/curriculum standards
- Curriculum mapping across the grades
- Continued cooperation and communication with high schools
- Integration of new religion standards
- Creation of rubrics to measure SLEs

### **Evidence**

- Weekly Adoration Schedule
- Morality Curriculum
- MAP Test Scores
- ACRE Test Scores
- Reconciliation Schedules
- Scripture Journals
- New religion standards

## **F. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY TO SUPPORT HIGH ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS**

*The staff applies research-based knowledge about teaching and learning in the instructional process. Assessment is frequent and varied, integrated into the teaching/learning process, and informs curriculum planning.*

The St. Matthew's Catholic Elementary and Middle School staff models Catholic values by: teaching religion (using Catholic curriculum and the Bible), attending and participating in weekly Mass, sharing a school and parish employee morning prayer (except Friday which is Mass), meeting for morning Lenten meditation once a week during Lent, and attending a two-day retreat (with confession) prior to the beginning of the school year. Prayer is shared (with students) before lunch, at the end of the day, and when deemed appropriate throughout the day. St. Matthew's staff has an opportunity to pray at Adoration in our parish church each week with their students. Many of the staff are Eucharistic Ministers and some teach Religious Education classes for the church. Those who teach Religion are practicing Catholics. There is a credit course offered for catholic Educators in the Diocese of Helena each year through Marian University for religious professional development.

St. Matthew's Catholic School teachers are certified by the state of Montana. Currently there is one teacher on a plan to obtain a Montana teacher license from another state. The principal has an administrator endorsement. Staff development is promoted and encouraged through various options. The Northwest Montana Cooperative is available for Pupil-Instruction-Related (PIR) classes in teachers' respective content areas or grade level (e.g. annual Reading Conference). The staff is also encouraged and given support by the principal to take some class time to extend and enhance their professional development by visiting other schools/classes. The staff has attended Google, Chromebook, and SmartBoard training seminars for use in their classroom as proficiently as possible. Most teachers have SmartBoards and a Document Reader (e.g. Elmo) in their classrooms, and most students have access to iPads/chromebooks to enhance their learning. Teachers have attended training on the use of our online grading and reporting system (Sycamore), and SuccessMaker training, which is one of the tools used in the classroom and with tutoring for reading and math skills. Some preschool, support staff, and K-5th teachers have been trained in PAX *Good Behavior Game*, founded by the PAXIS Institute, and use it in the classroom. Also, twice a month the school principal conducts a staff meeting.

St. Matthew's Catholic School utilizes a variety of assessments for teaching and helping the student's learning process. Formative assessments include written and oral tests, daily work, homework, and reading logs for some teachers. Summative assessments include observation, oral discussion, and conferencing. Other assessments include: Fall and Spring Measures of Academic Progress (MAP testing), GATES testing (8th grade prior to high school), Accelerated Reader (end of 2nd grade-8th grade), content area quizzes/tests, oral work, quarterly report cards, discussion and conferences with both students and parents (SuccessMaker reading and math; Read Naturally Live; Kahn Academy). Student progress in academics is given support by: an after-school study hall two days a week, visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactical manipulatives,

parent tutors, and reading and math tutors. The school also utilizes World Books online, Discovery Streaming and the Google Institute for educational purposes. The 6th-8th grade teachers meet once a week, but regular level meetings (K-2; 3-5; upper/lower) are lacking. Matching assessment to the learning style of the students is assessed individually and but does not get addressed with as much detail as the staff would prefer.

St. Matthew's Catholic School's future direction in instructional methodology needs improvement on linking curriculum standards for all grade levels and incorporating a more direct scheduled evaluation system. The school has made an effort to incorporate the Schoolwide Learning Expectations (SLE's) into the format of a lesson plan and the teachers use the lesson plan to document where the SLE's are being integrated into student learning.

St. Matthew's Catholic School integrates technology into the teaching and learning process by using iPads (e.g. learning apps, AR testing), Smartboards (e.g. instruction, student use), Document Reader (e.g. lesson presentation, grading), keyboarding (e.g. 3rd grade - 8th grade), computer class (e.g. K-8th grade), computers/Chromebooks (e.g. student PowerPoint presentations, research).

### **Significant Accomplishments**

- Google training remains continuous and active
- In-house training on usage of online school reporting and communication
- MAP testing

### **Goals**

- Implement content/learning standards
- Teacher collaboration with all grade levels (e.g. K-8), and regular collaboration for level teachers (e.g. K-2, 3-5, 6-8)
- Use assessment data to generate curriculum and staff development needs
- Implementation & integration of MAP assessment program

### **Evidence**

- Google training: West Valley School, August 2014 (the majority of the teachers and administrator attended); GoogleFest 2014, Eureka, Mt (3 teachers attended); GoogleFest 2015, Eureka, MT (5 teachers, 1 administrator attended)
- Sycamore Education: grades posted quarterly; opportunity to communicate to parents, students, and teachers online;
- MAP test schedule: attached
- Pictures from staff prayer
- Record of AR tests taken by students

## **G. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT SPIRITUAL, PERSONAL, AND ACADEMIC GROWTH**

*Within the school's community of faith, students have opportunities to participate in support services and activities to assist them in accessing the curricular and co-curricular programs to achieve the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, Arch/diocesan curriculum standards (local curriculum standards where Arch/diocesan standards don't exist), and other governing authority expectations.*

At St. Matthew's Catholic School there are many opportunities for students to continue our school wide learning expectations, SAINTS (Spiritual, Academic, Integrity, Nurture, Truth, Service), outside the normal day-to-day classroom environment. Some of these activities include Holy Hoops, sports programs, band/choir, Creative Hand Project, He-Man and She-Ra Reading Club, Title One/tutoring, Missoula Children's Theatre, Cribbage Club, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade history trips, R.E. classes, Edge Youth Group, Great Books, and our annual talent show. Extra curricular activities are made available to all students K-8<sup>th</sup>. We strive to include our parents, staff, and parish members through these various activities as well.

One significant extra curricular event at St. Matthew's School is the annual basketball tournament called Holy Hoops. Holy Hoops is a weeklong tournament where our 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students are put on to teams and coached by St. Matthew's alumni from our two locals high schools. This event includes all the students and their families. Younger children help sell raffle tickets and concessions. Families and parish members watch games together and volunteer their time by making programs, selling t-shirts, taking photos, running the clock and many other tasks needed to run the tournament. Some of the children have never played while others are experienced players but regardless, they encourage and support one another and demonstrate integrity and good sportsmanship. Coaches support, encourage, and nurture their players to participate with a kind, competitive spirit and to "play like Saints."

All of our middle school age students have the opportunity to participate in organized sports programs throughout the school year including football, basketball, volleyball, and track & field. Our programs are coached by parents who have been Virtus trained and are volunteering their time. Coaches are expected to set examples of good sportsmanship throughout their season. All of St. Matthew's home sporting events begin in prayer together with all attendees.

St. Matthew's offers a variety of fine arts opportunities for all students. Local businesses display our students' artwork. Our students also participate in the Hockaday Museum of Art's Annual Art Show. Middle school age students have the opportunity to be a part of the band. All students are given the opportunity to be part of the Parish Children's Choir and Missoula Children's Theatre (MCT). The Children's Choir practices twice monthly and sings at one of our Sunday Masses each month as well as Easter and Christmas. This is a great opportunity for our students to be connected to our parish. Students who audition and play a role in MCT demonstrate courage and integrity as they have one week to learn and perform a play.

One of our successful service projects is for Kindergarten-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students. It is called the He-Man and She-Ra Reading Buddies Program. This is a group of boys and girls from Flathead High School who buddy up and listen to kids read, read to kids, and do various reading activities. A lot of the group members from Flathead are St. Matthew's alumni.

St. Matthew's has a Title One/tutoring program to assist students who are not at grade level. Our tutor works one-on-one and in small groups with students. We also use Success Maker, an individualized online tutoring program, within our classrooms. Our staff is aware that we need to offer more help to students who are not at grade level as well as create opportunities to enrich students who are accelerating. This is something we discuss often at staff meetings and are working on a long-term solution.

### **Accomplishments**

- Holy Hoops Basketball Tournament
- School Team Sports
- Fine Arts programs / Participation in local art shows
- He-Man/She-Ra Reading Buddies with Flathead High School
- Creative Hand Project
- Big Creek Science Trip
- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade History Trips
- Great Book and Speech & Debate
- Religious Education classes
- Middle and High School Youth Groups
- Children's Choir
- Band trip to University of Montana
- Caught-in-the-Act Program
- Los Pasados
- Missoula Children's Theater
- Cribbage Club
- Recycling Fashion Show
- Living Rosary and May Crowning
- Local, County and State Science Fairs
- Local, County and State Spelling Bee

### **Goals**

- To create a solid tutoring plan and maximize our Title 1 money
- Create a program to adequately meet the needs of our accelerated students

## **Evidence**

- Holy Hoops programs and pictures from newspaper
- Parent Volunteer Hour Log Book
- Parent/Student/Staff Surveys
- In the News Bulletin Board
- MCT Program
- Choir Planner
- Creative Hand Paintings in the Gym

## **H. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT HIGH ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS**

*The pastor, principal, and school board develop, implement, and monitor resources and plans to ensure and support high achievement of all students of the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, Diocesan curriculum standards (local curriculum standards where Diocesan standards don't exist), and other governing authority expectations.*

The pastor, principal, school advisory council, and finance council monitor the financial needs of the school to ensure the sustainability of the school.

St. Matthew's Catholic School follows the guidelines of the Diocese of Helena accounting procedures. The budget is first completed by the principal and bookkeeper, reviewed by the pastor and finance council before being sent to the Diocese for approval. The budget is completed by the end of April for the following year. St. Matthew's submits reports monthly to the finance council. The finance council includes the pastor, CPA's, attorneys and finance consultants. The budget is revised in October, depending on the enrollment of students, by the principal, bookkeeper and chair of the finance council. St. Matthew's Catholic School provides quarterly financial statements to the parish.

St. Matthew's Catholic School has four main areas of revenue, tuition from the students, St. Matthew's Parish tuition assistance, Flathead Association of Catholic Education (FACE) which includes auction and endowment funds, and the ACE scholarship program. A CPA on a monthly basis reviews all financial statements and corrections are made according to the recommendation. In case of financial emergency the school will ask for funds through the parish bulletin. The Parish contributes roughly 33% of ordinary collections to the school for assistance. Income also comes from tuition which is currently \$5100. We provide a multi-child tiered discount to families. The first child is billed at \$5100, the second at \$4335, and the third child and beyond at \$3060. Tuition is also calculated on a costs-based and needs-based system through a third party, FACTS. The school receives a contribution of approximately \$36,000 per year from FACE. We currently have been awarded 36 ACE scholarships in the amount of \$69,650. St. Matthew's also has a scholarship fund that was set up by a private donor called, Raising-a-Saint, which has about \$35,000. We host an annual fundraising Auction. On average the Auction raises about \$90,000 per year. The number one mission of the parish is to support the school financially and spiritually.

Along with financial support the school is also offered spiritual growth opportunities from various parish organizations. During Advent and Lent the parish puts on Missions, bringing in guest speakers to lead these Missions. Typically a part of these missions include presentation sessions geared toward our teachers and students. Another parish organization, Women of Grace, will arrange special retreats in which they offer for teachers to take part in. All our teachers and support staff take part in a day retreat lead by our Parish Priest at the beginning of the school year. Our 8<sup>th</sup> graders also are lead in two one day retreats by the Parish Priest during the school year.

The total budget is created once we have projected enrollment numbers to estimate tuition revenue and personnel costs. An incentive of a waived registration fee is offered in January

(during Catholic Schools Week) to have data as quickly as possible. We also host Preschool and Kindergarten roundup in conjunction with the Early Learning Center (ELC) in April. The ELC plays a vital role in the growth of our school enrollment and financially. In the 2014-15 school year 40% of our incoming Kindergarten class came from our ELC.

St. Matthew's principal, pastor, and superintendent are currently working with the Finance Council and bookkeeper to improve St. Matthew's teacher pay. The goal is to have our teachers at least at 80% of public school teacher pay in the Valley. This will help us in our recruitment and retention of quality educators. Currently a beginning year teacher is at 74%, a 10 year veteran is at 58%, and a 20 year veteran teacher is at 51% of the current public school teachers in the Flathead Valley.

The school works to keep alumni and families involved to maintain their support of St. Matthew's School. Two main resources we use to keep their support are through our Annual School Auction and the Annual Holy Hoops Basketball Tournament. The Auction is the school's main fundraiser. Along with bringing in financial support to the school the auction brings our parish, school and alumni communities together. Parts of school parent's volunteer hours are designated to the auction. Parents have a variety of opportunities ranging from being in the classroom to going out into the community soliciting businesses to helping decorating all of which make our annual auction a success. Families of our alumni and people from our parish community make up a majority of the guests at our auction. The annual Holy Hoops Basketball Tournament brings alumni and their families back to our school. Throughout the week you will see current families and alumni come together creating a strong St. Matthew's Community of Faith.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

- Budget "in the black" for the last two years
- Fund-A-Need for school improvements
- Accountability to follow budget
- Holy Hoops and grown alumni participation in our school

### **Goals**

- Maintain a balanced budget
- Create meaningful involvement of parents/families
- Continue to retain and grow retention of ELC Families entering into the school
- Create competitive teacher pay

### **Evidence**

- Signed approved budget by Pastor, Finance Chair and Bishop
- Quarterly financial statements
- Detailed financial report for fund a need
- Number of alumni that return to coach and volunteer at Holy Hoops