

Annual Report 2015 - 2016



ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC SCHOOL

"Do to others as you would have them do to you."
-Luke 6:31



Annunciation School is a Catholic parish school. We are a united and caring community of students, staff and parents committed to learning based on Christian values within our rich Catholic heritage. We provide our students with an outstanding religious and academic education, addressing the needs of the whole child.

Principal Cassidy



Dear Annunciation School Community,

Welcome to our first Annual School Report! Over the last few years, we have embarked on an amazing journey of strategic planning and visioning to continue the Catholic school excellence that the Dominican sisters began over 90 years ago. Education is changing, children are changing, yet our mission remains the same:

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This united and caring community strives to meet the needs of the whole child in each and every thing we do. Through the hard work and efforts of many staff, teachers, parents, students, parishioners and community members, we have many accomplishments to celebrate. We completed the first year as an International Baccalaureate candidate school, bringing inquiry and curiosity into our classrooms. Several facility projects are underway to improve our learning environment for students. Our graduates provided a strong model to our younger students – living our learner profile attributes as communicators, risk-takers, caring, principled, knowledgeable, reflective, and open-minded thinkers. Our school celebrated our Christmas season with a fantastic Christmas program; began the Lenten season with Carnival, and ended with our all school field day of celebration and community. During the year, students and staff participated in service projects and lived our theme to "Do to others as you would have them do to you".

Throughout the year, we celebrated many successes and comforted each other in times of sadness and loss. Our daily prayers kept us centered on what is most important – God, family and faith. We are blessed to have such a strong community.

In this report, you will find highlights of the work of this past year. You will also meet our new teaching staff. As we reflect back on 2015-16, we also look towards 2016-17 with an excitement and enthusiasm of the possibilities that lie ahead.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers. Annunciation community is one of a kind, a special place to be. Join me in celebrating our successes and praying for more in the year ahead.

God Bless,

Jennifer Cassidy, Principal



Congratulations to our 8th Grade Graduates



SAC Committee Year End Report 2015/16

Marketing Committee:

1. Created two billboards in neighborhood: Fall 2015, Spring 2016
2. Created 3 promotional videos
4. Hosted booth promoting school at SeptemberFest with giveaways, tattoos, and sold spirit wear
5. Planned/hosted Preview Night in November and created a survey and a iPad sign-in to gather information. Created ad for Southwest Journal prior to fall Preview Night and a second compilation video
6. Hosted a pop-up booth and went to several summer community fairs.
7. Co-hosted Okee Dokee Brothers performance with LADC pre-school
8. Planned/hosted MS Information Night in February

Facilities Committee:

Gym:

1. Ordered and installed gym upgrades for 2015 Fund-A-Need
2. Obtained bids and arranged for painting of gym (March 2016)
3. Obtained bids for refinishing gym floor (June 2016)
4. Worked with contractors to find source of water leak (Fall 2015)
5. Installed new bladder system east of building to address leak (Fall 2015/Spring 2016)
6. Worked with roofing experts to identify water issues with roof (fall 2015).

Auditorium:

1. New lights installed (Fall 2015)
2. New dimmers and light board installed (Spring 2016)
3. Electrical updated (June/July 2016)
4. New Curtains installed (July 2016)

Security:

1. Security cameras installed (Summer 2015)

Playground:

1. Investigated/researched parents' concerns about safety of ground material and alternatives in playground (Fall 2015)
2. Worked with vendor to obtain bid/plan for playground upgrade (Winter/Spring 2016)
3. Obtained bids for upgrading the blacktop surface, new striping, improved basketball hoops (Winter/Spring 2016)
4. New playground to be completed (Summer 2016)

Technology Committee:

1. Installed 20+ wi-fi access points throughout school
2. Installed infrastructure to move the computer lab from MS to 3rd floor
3. Added external amplified speakers to all classroom phones
4. Cleaned all MS promethean video projectors
5. Began IT asset inventory

6. Began review of telecommunications solutions and cost reduction
7. Assisted in application for CSCOE technology grant

Advancement Committee:

1. Created Advancement Committee to be a liaison between Director of Development and SAC.
2. Assisted in Fund-A-Need project
3. Worked with Development and APO to implement new Fund Raising Policy
4. Solicited ideas for volunteer awards
5. Worked with APO on Trivia Night funds

Policy Committee:

1. Created and approved new Fund Raising Policy
2. Updated uniform policy (Summer 2015)
3. Revised SAC Constitution and By-Laws
4. Reviewed/updated existing SAC Policy Manual
5. Created Operating Manual for school-wide policies
6. Created spreadsheet that lists all policies and indicates where they can be found (SAC handbook, employee handbook, student/parent handbook, school operations manual)

Long Range Planning Committee:

1. Reviewed Strategic Plan to ensure milestones are met on timely basis
2. Reviewed/Revised Employee Policy Manual

APO

Hospitality Events:

1st Friends Mixer, 1st Coffee, Pre-School Mixer, Breakfast with Principal, Preview Night, Middle School Preview Night, Grandparents Christmas Program, Staff Christmas Gifts and Party, Supported Project Fair, Teacher's Appreciation Week, State of the School, Kindergarten Round-up.

Fundraising Events:

APEX Fun Run, Winter Greens Sales, Barnes and Noble, Trivia Night, Pizza Luce

Provided funding for:

Fall Teacher Grants, Enrichment Grants, Mini Grants, Cards/Condolences/Celebrations, Billboard on 54th and Lyndale, AIM Higher Foundation, MISF Awards Dinner Tables, 10% Rebate to Teacher's Classroom based upon APEX Dollars Raised, New Auditorium Curtain and Lightening from APEX Money, Playground Fund from Trivia Night (\$20,000), Auditorium Upgrades (APEX Fun Run).

New Teachers



Rachel Wiehoff
Middle School Math

Hi! My name is Rachel Wiehoff and I am excited to be teaching middle school math at Annunciation! I just completed my second year as a middle school math teacher at St. Helena and before that I spent a few years as an accountant. I enjoy helping students build real world skills in math. I graduated from the University of Notre Dame and am a huge Fighting Irish fan! When I'm not cheering on the Irish, you can find me walking or running around Lake Calhoun, playing tennis and watching Minnesota sports.



John Pupkes
Middle School
Social Studies

Hello, my name is John Pupkes and I am very excited to have the opportunity to teach your children.

I earned my teaching license from Saint Mary's University; I am licensed in Social Studies, grades 5 through 12. Prior to beginning my teaching career, I worked as an entrepreneur in a variety of fields, primarily telecommunications. The last four years I have been teaching Middle School social studies and ELA at a Catholic Middle School in Eagan. My wife Jean and I have two children who

both attended Annunciation (Calvin and Sarah). I have coached youth soccer, volunteered as an adult leader for the Annunciation Youth Ministry and traveled with the AYM group on 3 impactful mission trips. My interests include biking, skiing, basketball, reading, canning fruits and vegetables, backpacking and running.



Alexandra Franco
Middle School Spanish

Hello, my name is Alexandra Franco and I'm excited to join the Annunciation Catholic School community. I was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela where I graduated with a Bachelor degree in Business Administration. I came to the United States twenty years ago and am blessed to have a wonderful husband Adam and a 14 yr. old son Adrian. My first language is Spanish, but I am fluent in English and have intermediate skills in French. I want to make a positive difference in my students' life through the Spanish language.

Learning about new cultures and being able to communicate in Spanish will help my students be more successful. For the past ten years I have been teaching and tutoring Spanish from Preschool through the Adult level of education. I enjoy music, travel, nature, long walks, spending time with friends and family and am an animal lover. I am a passionate Hockey Mom and most weekends, you can find me at the rink watching my son play hockey.



Beth Caldwell
Middle School Religion

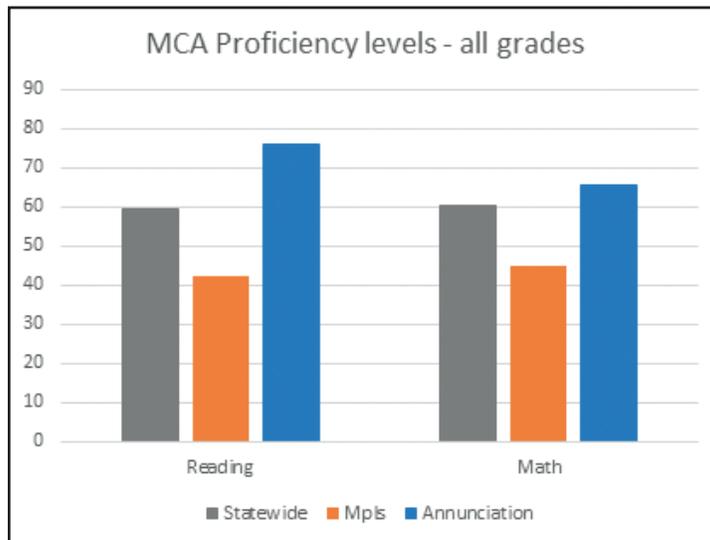
Hello Annunciation Families!

My name is Beth Caldwell and I am so grateful to be starting at Annunciation! I am a graduate of Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio where I studied Education and Theology. I also served for a year with NET Ministries on a parish team. I am from Raleigh, North Carolina and love going to the beach. I also love to paint, read, and be outdoors. I am looking forward to becoming a part of your community and grow in faith with all of you. I am so excited to meet you all and get to know you.

Annunciation School Achievements

As we prepared for summer mailings and sharing the MAP info, we had the opportunity to examine and reflect summary data. A few key stats we want to share – **96% of Annunciation 8th graders exceeded the national norms for math and reading.** These are truly incredible statistics! Many schools score in the 80th%, so to have our 96 percent of our graduates above the national norm is amazing! **Congratulations on this achievement! Our hard work is paying off!**

Here is a graph that shows how our students would match with students state-wide and in Minneapolis on the MCA tests. The NWEA MAP provides *projected proficiency.* **Based on this projection, our students were well above Minneapolis and above statewide across all grade levels for students meeting or exceeding proficiency. Our middle school students did exceptionally well – projecting proficiency at 86.8% for reading and 77.9% in math. Well done!!**



In March, 2016, Annunciation 7th grader, Lizzie N. was one of forty-nine spellers who qualified for the Minnesota Public Radio Regional Spelling Bee at The Fitzgerald Theater. Out of 46, only 8 were left when Lizzie went out in the 6th round. A great showing!!

Nine middle school students were selected by judges at the Annunciation Science Fair to showcase their work at the Twin Cities Regional Science Fair in February 2016 at the University of Minnesota. Congratulations to Annunciation 8th grader, Gabriel S. who won an Air Force Award at the Twin Cities Regional Science Fair with his "Engineering Mechanics" project titled "A.M. Radio Project At Electricity Wall". Way to go Gabe!

In October 2015, the Annunciation Chess Team had big successes at the Wolverine Open Chess Tournament for chess players in K – 8th grades. Four Annunciation students competed in the five round competition and earned the 2nd Place Team Trophy!

Annunciation's 6th annual WordMasters Challenge™ was a success! Two Annunciation students received "High Honors" for those students who have finished among the top 2% of all competitors at their grade levels, and 49 students were awarded an "Honorable Mention" for those who have finished in the top 10% in the country at their grade level.

Annunciation's Creative Arts Teacher Mary Strickland was featured on WCCO-TV locally and CBS Evening News nationally. Our Christmas Program wouldn't be as remarkable without the hard work and dedication of Mrs. Strickland, Mrs. Kramer and Mrs. Nesvig along with all the teachers and students!

In April 2016, thousands of students from around the country participated in the National Math Challenge Contest. 35 Annunciation students from our Math Challenge Enrichment program participated and William R. in 4th grade achieved the highest score of any student in our school, 19/20. Only 140 out of 7,253 4th graders nationally had a score of 19 or better. In addition, our students accomplished the following honors: Team Winners (The top scorers of each team – 5 students), National Honor Roll (the top 10% of students – 3 students) and Honorable Mention (the top 50% of students – 21 students).

The 5th grade Math Masters team took 2nd place in the Math Masters MN Team Competition! Three kids placed in the top 10 for the Individual Competition. 1st place - Griffin M., 6th place - Gordie N., 9th place - Evan S.



School Strategic Plan Update

Strategic Plan Objectives:

1. Position Annunciation School as a Catholic leader, recognized for educating the whole child.
2. Support learning and development of the whole child by ensuring an appropriate campus environment.
3. To better serve more students, develop a comprehensive plan for growing our enrollment to capacity.
4. Maximize student learning through continuous implementation of innovative and evolving curriculum, instruction, assessment and grading.
5. Create a supportive and engaging environment for staff that ensures educational excellence.

Objective 2: Support learning and development of the whole child by ensuring an appropriate campus environment.

Strategy 4: Continue developing and improving our student behavioral intervention practices.

<p>Action Step 1: Review current practices and research behavioral intervention best practices with a committee of teachers.</p>	<p><i>2015-16 – The Principal and staff identified a need to focus on building collaboration, consistency, and sense of team among teachers before selecting a new behavior program. Staff development and meeting time was dedicated to identifying and addressing current issues with school practices. The staff agreed that Responsive Classroom and Developmental designs, as a practice, have potential to work well. The goal was consistent enforcement by all staff. The Principal, Assistant Principal and staff spent numerous staff working sessions on this topic. Staff created an “essential agreement” focused on all staff following and enforcing our current practices. Follow up meetings and discussions provided check points and accountability for the process. Student behavior and practices showed great improvement. This strategy will be amended for 2016-17 school year. In addition, with the implementation of the IB program, Learner Profile Attributes were introduced and provide a framework for character development. At school assemblies, we introduced and celebrated successful students and staff who lived the profile attributes.</i></p>
<p>Action Step 2: Select a best practice solution for pilot implementation.</p>	<p><i>2015-16: Staff will continue to work together to strengthen behavior programs. Staff will be participating in a book study this summer on “Mindset” to continue to develop collaborative community to support school improvement.</i></p>

Objective 3: To better serve more students, develop a comprehensive plan for growing our enrollment to capacity.

Strategy 1: Periodically conduct a competitive analysis of Annunciation School in the context of current and emerging priorities of parents.

<p>Action Step 3: Review the MarCom study that was already done and add further analysis of potential students and communities we feel called to serve.</p>	<p><i>2015-16: As part of the CSCOE school grant, Annunciation School added an Enrollment Manager, a passionate parent who led our enrollment work with the Principal. The Enrollment Manager gathered data, created an Enrollment team, and worked with the Principal to create an enrollment plan. With the Enrollment team, the MarCom study was reviewed and data gathered from prospective families to learn more about family school choice. An end of year report was created and shared with leadership from data gathered this first year.</i></p>
<p>Action Step 4: Communicate results and new initiatives to all stakeholders.</p>	<p><i>2015-16: Information was shared with stakeholders as part of the State of the School address. More work is being completed this summer by the Enrollment team to add to the plan and initiatives. A complete plan and update will be shared next fall at the Principal Breakfast and in our weekly parent updates.</i></p>

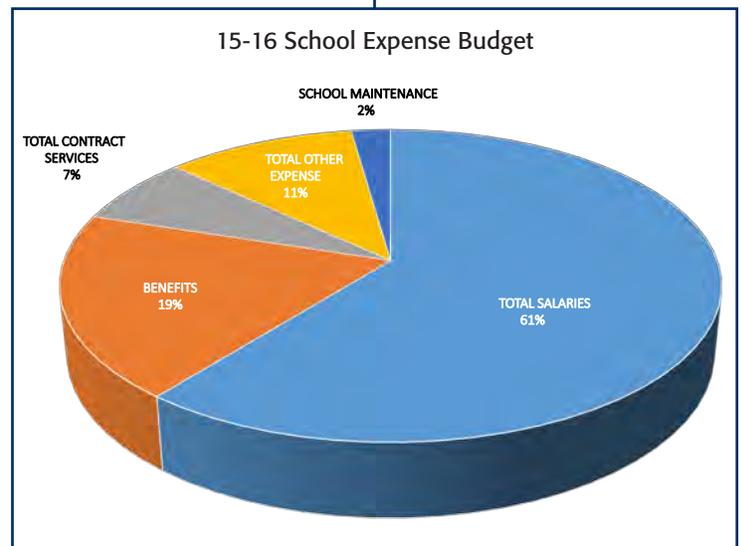
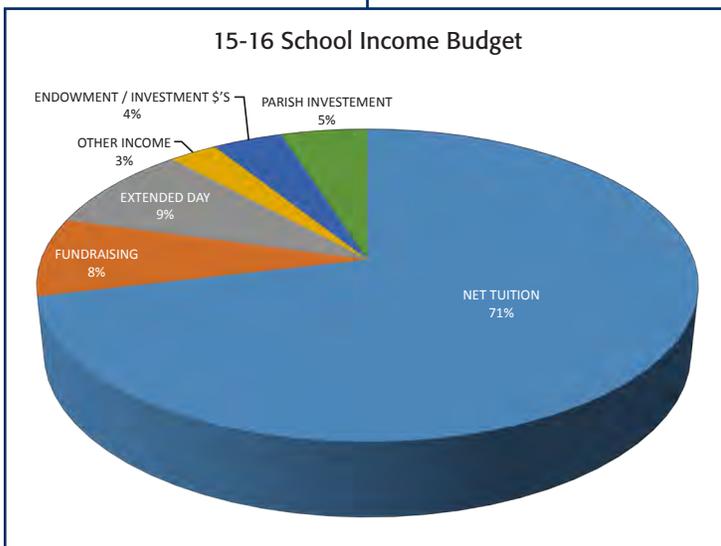
School Strategic Plan Update

Objective 4: Maximize student learning through continuous implementation of innovative and evolving curriculum, instruction, assessment and grading.

Strategy 1: Develop a new comprehensive curriculum handbook that is clearly informed by Catholic teachings.

<p>Action Step 6: Identify teaching staff and train them to lead the process of mapping the curriculum (area for 2015-2016 TBD) consistent with Common Core and State Standards.</p>	<p><i>2015-16: Teachers have taken leadership in reviewing curriculum, specifically in areas of math, science and social studies. Teacher teams have met to identify gaps and repetitions in our curriculum.</i></p>
<p>Action Step 7: Identify gaps/ repetitions from one grade level to the next and to align instruction w/ archdiocesan religion standards (curriculum area TBD).</p>	<p><i>2015-16: This year, the Principal, Assistant Principal, and staff reviewed the math curriculum. With the middle school math teacher as department head, along with the assistant principal as team lead, the staff reviewed state math standards in line with Annunciation Standards. After gaps or repetitions were identified, adjustments in our scope and sequence were made.</i></p>
<p>Action Step 8: Create a process and schedule for implementation based on the Archdiocese' timeline (TBD for 2016-2017 academic year).</p>	<p><i>2015-16: With this updated information, and considering the school's remediation and acceleration needs for students, several math programs were reviewed with one chosen for implementation next year. Staff development and training was scheduled for teacher support. A math committee was formed and will lead the implementation process.</i></p>
<p>Action Step 9: Identify teaching staff and train them to lead the process of mapping the curriculum (area for 2016-2017 TBD) consistent with Common Core and State Standards.</p>	<p><i>2015-16: The math committee was formed and provided stipends for summer work to plan the mapping and implementation of the math program.</i></p>

School Financials



IB COMES TO ANNUNCIATION!



The 2015-2016 academic school year began with the announcement that Annunciation had become a candidate in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The candidacy program continues over the course of a few years and implementation begins with the Primary Years Program (PYP) grades K through 5th. Aspects of the program have also been introduced into Middle School instruction. Together, teachers, students and staff are diving into what it means to become an IB school.

For the early grades, PYP is all about opening doors to learning by nurturing CURIOSITY and THINKING skills, by creating an exciting learning environment. The IB framework follows a Program of Inquiry, inquiry which creates curiosity, causing the students to wonder which then connects their thinking to a “big” idea. The lines of inquiry are explored through different units which are:

- WHO WE ARE,
- WHERE WE ARE IN PLACE AND TIME,
- HOW WE EXPRESS OURSELVES,
- HOW THE WORLD WORKS,
- HOW WE ORGANIZE OURSELVES, and
- SHARING THE PLANET.

A good example of this process at work takes us to Beth Sable and Terry Heer’s kindergarten classrooms recently. On the anniversary

of the birthday of Dr. Seuss, the children explored the unit “HOW THE WORLD WORKS” starting with the story of *Bartholomew and The Oobleck*. This is a charming tale of King Derwin’s page Bartholomew Cubbins who deals with the King’s mighty mistake of asking his court magicians to change what comes down from the sky (rain, snow, fog – boring) to something much more exciting, namely Oobleck. Sounds like a novel idea but it turns into a sticky, expanding, intrusive, gloppy mess! Dear Bartholomew saves the day by pointing out to the king that the whole error can be remedied with the simple words, “I’m sorry”. Teacher Beth Sable often tells her students, “Just because you’re little doesn’t mean you can’t do big things. Just as Bartholomew’s actions saved the day, your choices can have a big impact on the world!”

The value of humility is a mighty lesson in itself which Annunciation kindergartners learned, they learned that and so much more during their inquiry. In this unit, HOW THE WORLD WORKS, they dealt with the Central Idea: our choices impact the world. First of all they made OOBLECK, a common concoction of water, corn starch and food coloring. The end result interestingly enough is classified as a non-Newtonian fluid (meaning it has properties of both liquids and solids)! If you have never heard of that one, we can say with pride, Annunciation kindergartners now HAVE and they made some too!! They tapped into the power of observation using the 5 senses: they touched it, smelled it, looked at it, they passed on tasting it and in fact it didn’t make any sound. Teacher Terry Heer explains, “It comes naturally for children to explore their world with great interest and curiosity; it’s our job to help give meaning to their observations and questions.”

The activity allowed them to explore cross disciplinary themes. The story book involved literature. Measuring the ingredients involved math. Understanding the properties of different substances involved science. The impact of OOBLECK falling from the sky on King Derwin’s kingdom involved social studies. Having actual OOBLECK in the Annunciation classroom, on their desks, hands and everywhere involved one big, fat, fun, hairy mess!!