



Fort Smith Catholic Schools Strategic Plan

We would like to thank the hundreds of community members that helped and participated in the ISPD study for the FSCS (Fort Smith Catholic Schools). There were countless hours given by so many to look at the future and stability of our Catholic schools. We would like to especially thank our benefactors who underwrote the cost of the study, Donna Stec and Cindy McNally who prepared all the meetings and meals, and Bishop Anthony Taylor and Mrs. Theresa Hall for their approval and support of the study.

In consultation with the Superintendent's office, Parish Priests, ISPD and School Administrations these were the areas of recommendation to be addressed:

1) The closing of St. Boniface School was announced at a town hall meeting July 17, 2019. Although this was not a recommendation of the study, it has played a major role in the strategic plan of FSCS. At that time, FSCS worked to assist families with placing students at the remaining two elementary schools and helped teachers/staff find new positions. We were able to find placement for over 80% of students from St. Boniface at Immaculate Conception School and Christ the King School.

2) The changing of grade configuration at Christ the King and Immaculate Conception schools to Pre-K through 5th grade, and at Trinity Junior High to 6th – 8th grades will occur in 2021-2022, aligning with FSPS (Fort Smith Public Schools). Administrations at all schools have already begun looking at how that will affect areas such as curriculum, budget, staffing, and extracurricular activities to name a few. The Superintendent's office is assisting in looking at these issues. More information will be coming soon to parents at all schools regarding these changes.

We do know that at the end of the 2020-2021 school year, there will be graduations for 5th and 6th grades at the elementary schools along with graduations for 8th and 9th grades at Trinity.

3) Increased collaboration between the Fort Smith Catholic Schools. Beginning in 2019-2020, the administrations from each school have met monthly to look at the areas of: Development, Enrollment Management, Facilities, Technology, Tuition, Budgets, Communication and more to find ways to better collaborate and improve the state of Fort Smith Catholic Schools. The administrations will also meet two (2) times a year with the Pastors of the Parishes to review findings and developments.

You can already see some of the fruits of this collaboration with the first annual Catholic Schools Mass at Trinity during Catholic Schools Week. Additionally, we were also able to combine professional development funds to bring in a nationally recognized speaker on classroom management, Dr. Todd Whitaker in the fall and already have begun the process of doing the same for next fall.

This plan is evolving as we continue to prayerfully consider the future of Ft. Smith Catholic Schools. Thank you for joining us as we ask God's blessing on our students and our schools.

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