



**New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Commission on Independent Schools**

Report of the Visiting Committee

St. Joseph Regional Junior High School

Manchester, New Hampshire

April 3-6, 2016

Visiting Committee Members

St. Joseph Regional Junior High School

April 3-6, 2016

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SCHOOL DATA SHEET

School Name: St. Joseph Regional Jr. High School

Address: 148 Belmont Street

Manchester, NH 03104

Telephone: (603) 624-4811 _____

Date of Founding: 1925

Total Enrollment (at the time of evaluation visit): 71

	PS	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	PG	Totals
Male									14	25						39
Female									10	22						32
Day																
Boarding																
Homestay																

International students included in the above table who are not U.S. residents:

Day									0	0						0
Boarding									0	0						0
Homestay																

Number of Faculty: 7 full-time; 2 part-time

Number of Administrators: 0 full-time; 2 part-time

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INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1885, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC) is the nation's oldest accrediting agency. Since its inception in 1885, the Association has awarded accreditation to educational institutions in the six New England states that seek voluntary affiliation.

The governing body of NEASC is its Board of Trustees which oversees the work of four Commissions:

- Commission on American and International Schools Abroad
- Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
- Commission on Independent Schools
- Commission on Public Schools

The evaluation program which the schools undergo is a three-fold process: the self-study conducted by the school, the evaluation by the visiting committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study (Part II), and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee and the Commission. The Commission on Independent Schools oversees the entire process.

Each school is evaluated in terms of compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation*, the quality of *Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion*, and how well it is serving the needs of its students. Because each school is different, the base that under-girds the evaluation is the school's own statement of mission and core values.

The Visiting Committee would like to thank St. Joseph Regional Junior High School Principal, Denis Mailloux and the entire community at St. Joseph Regional Junior High School (STJ) for a warm welcome we received, from the moment of our arrival on Sunday evening through our departure on Wednesday. On Sunday, we arrived to meet excited students who toured us throughout the building. They were articulate, friendly and excited to share their school with us. Our welcome dinner gave each of us a chance to meet members of the STJ staff, members of Trinity High School (THS), STJ School Advisory Board, parents, students and the Superintendent and the Associate Superintendent of Manchester Catholic Schools, and Monsignor Frontiero, rector of St. Joseph's Cathedral in Manchester, NH. We were also impressed with the student led musical and theater performances by the STJ band and theater company.

Our accommodations were very comfortable and more than adequate. The hotel was organized and expecting us. They accommodated our needs even before we considered them. The location and the accommodations made our work more productive.

The entire community was incredibly flexible, gracious and hospitable in accommodating our committee at all times during the visit. It is clear to us that the school uses the self study process as a meaningful opportunity to reflect openly and seriously on their strengths while honestly considering the areas where further growth is needed. Because of their tremendous work with the self study, a great deal of our writing came directly from their well written narratives. Special commendation must be given to the co-chairs Brian Flaherty of Trinity High School and Pauline Martineau, of St Joseph Regional Junior High School for their leadership in this important process.

Process Followed by the School

The principal assigned self-study co-chair positions to the assistant principal of STJ and to the THS campus minister who had co-chaired the THS self-study in 2010.

The self-study process began with the organization of committees in March of 2015. Committees included STJ faculty and staff, STJ board members, THS faculty and staff, and STJ parents and students. Student, parent, faculty, alumni surveys were completed through Survey Monkey from March 2 to March 6. All faculty and students participated in the survey. Parent participation was...

All committee chairs met for an introduction to the self-study process with the self-study chairs, STJ faculty, THS participants and the principal at the THS cafeteria on March 4. A schedule for completion of reports was distributed at that time. A copy of the committee schedule and of instructions to the committees is included in the supplemental materials. Committee oversight was entirely the purview of the self-study co-chairs. Two STJ board members were unable to complete their work as committee chairs; therefore, the co-chairs completed their reports.

In January and February, drafts were presented to the STJ faculty for review and final edit. The faculty agreed that the self-study process had been appropriate and represented the school appropriately. A final copy of the self-study was presented to the board in March.

Self-study committee membership, meeting schedule, and procedures

The faculty and co-chairs reviewed the process through which the school conducted the self-study. All seemed to concur that the process was appropriate and produced a report that accurately portrays the school.

Overview of Findings

STJ is a school with a unique model. It is not part of a K-8 model and not a part of a 7-12 model. The model of STJ serves a group of children, who are in transition from childhood to adulthood, with an strong understanding of the special gifts and talents of this age group. This is a school where students are encouraged to risk, grow and try new things and allowed to struggle with the support of a caring faculty and staff. These students are challenged to become strong self sufficient Christ centered young men and women who are life long learners in a safe environment. They are encouraged to dream and lead while remaining innocent in an ever changing world. The Visiting Committee is proud to be a part of Catholic education after spending these four days with the gifted and mission driven community of STJ.

The self-study process has provided STJ with the another opportunity to reflect, discuss, and document the strengths and needs of the school to ensure its future success as a Catholic school. It is evident to the Visiting Committee that STJ community is always looking to improve and grow.

As a faculty and educational community, STJ has many areas of strength of which to be proud. There have been some weaknesses identified and that require attention. STJ recognizes the need to make changes wherever necessary and financially feasible.

After voting on all standards, the faculty assessment was that Saint Joseph Regional Junior High School passed five (1,4,5,9,15) standards with a rating of P1 (Meets the Standard: may have minor recommendations or issues for reflection). eight (2,3,6,10,11,12,13,14) of the standards with a rating of P2 (Meets Standards: do have a significant recommendations and issues for reflection).

THE STANDARDS

Standard 1 (Mission): There is congruence between the school’s stated mission and core values and its actual program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School’s Self-Assessment _____ P1

Visiting Team’s Assessment _____ P1

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

St. Joseph Regional Junior High School’s mission is comprised of the simple and profound principles that both ground and drive our school, its students, its staff, and its community. It is the sublime beginning and map of the journey, not the journey itself. Indeed, a member of the mission committee stated it well: “... the broad and deep nature of ...mission is regarded, to some large extent, like the Ten Commandments. One does not review and revise; one reflects and applies.”

*Ten years ago during the NEASC self-study conducted by St. Joseph Regional Junior High School, the mission, as stated in the self-study report at that time, was as follows: “St. Joseph Regional Junior High School provides a Catholic Education with C.A.R.E.—Concern for others, Academic excellence, **Respect for self and others in an Environment of caring.**” Five years ago the mission was revised, primarily administratively, for a seemingly insignificant but ultimately important purpose, i.e., to place greater emphasis on the Catholic faith that is the basis of all that we do here. **Hence, today, (The Mission Statement) St. Joseph Regional Junior High School provides a Catholic education with C.A.R.E.—Catholic Identity, Academic Excellence, Respect for self and others in an Environment of caring.***

The mission committee concludes that there is purposeful and evident congruence between the school’s stated mission and core values and its actual program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

All constituents embraced the Mission. It is evident that *students are happy, feel safe and appreciate and promote the positive, spiritual climate and culture of the school.* The academic program supports the Catholic identity through religion classes, prayer, and service projects. Students often expressed their love for their teachers, principal and classmates verbally and through actions. Students know what was expected of them and want to be their best selves as well as encourage others within the student body. It is evident that it is important and “cool” to C.A.R.E. The Catholic identity is first and foremost in the Mission and in all that they do. It is

evident to the visiting committee from the student lead school prayers. These prayers are God centered and heartfelt. It is evident to the visiting committee that these students have a connection with their Catholic faith and God.

The mission is visible and clearly stated in classrooms, hallways, handbooks and front lobby area. Students are involved in prayer and they attend Mass as a community. There are religious quotes, statues and symbols in every classroom and the two hallways. One visiting committee member heard from several staff about C.A.R.E and how they witness it each day. Students shared stories about day to day life that illustrated this love and inclusion of all students at recess, lunch and in academics. One young man stated that, at recess, a student was hit in the head by a football and the entire eighth grade stopped and ran over to see if the student was okay. This type of concern is not uncommon. Students appreciate the unique opportunities they have at STJ such as the activity period. This period allows all students to participate in something unique which taught them to appreciate the gifts and talents of their classmates.

The school's current mission statement was reviewed five years ago and redeveloped with the input of all faculty members, ensuring that the mission will remain relevant and accessible to the current community at STJ. The C in C.A.R.E was changed *to place greater emphasis on the Catholic faith that is the basis of all that we do here*. Our Catholic faith is the foundation of the education at STJ.

The school's student and faculty handbooks are mission-centered from page one, giving all constituents a clear understanding of the expectations each person has to actualize the mission of STJ through their various roles.

From the moment a student applies to STJ, the Principal meets with each applicant and their family to begin a relationship guided by the mission. Each child is seen as a child of God and this is expressed from the moment the Principal meets with the potential applicant. Administration and faculty encourage students to aspire to higher ideals and behavior through caring words, encouragement and loving firmness. There are very little disciplinary issues due to this approach.

In the eighth grade English class, the assignment requires students to create a city and work out all the details in a group of 4-5 students. The students love this assignment because it forces them to work with each other and understand each other's perspective and thoughts. They understand what they have learned and understand the value of respecting others in an environment of caring. The seventh grade English class writes letters to veterans thanking them for their service. Many students receive letters back and these letters are captured in a book each year. Students who write 15 letters receive a heart flag pin. These pins are worn with pride as are many other pins that are blessed and awarded at school masses. The Visiting Committee was impressed with the attention given to blessing a pin in an effort to value the holiness of the student. It is apparent that the school understands that this action is very special and unique to our Catholic faith. It is a teachable moment and a sign of the mission being integrated in all areas of the school.

Religion class is, not only strong through the use of Sadlier Religion series, but integrated through projects and discussions. The religion teacher creates units around moral and social justice issues. Students participate in service projects. Parents and students express their love for the soup kitchen project that takes place on the third Friday of the month.

Parents not only embrace the mission but trust the school. Parents have shared stories of teachers encouraging their child(ren) to strive for excellence with loving and consistent attention. They believe that this is the best educational experience for the spiritual, emotional and academic development of their child. At the welcome dinner, parents could not wait to share their love for the school with visiting members. Board members felt the same way and stated that was why they were on the Board, "to give back".

The Principal and teachers express their love for the students and often state the students are the reason that they work at STJ. Many parents note the extra efforts teachers make to help their child achieve and succeed. One parent noted to a visiting member that STJ's teachers were able to accommodate her daughter when the public system had given up, and she is now flourishing in high school due to their efforts. One teacher said, "It is easy to do more because we enjoy their company." Many teachers wear multiple hats including many teachers at Trinity High School because they want their students to succeed and have the best. Many teachers have been there over 25 years and cannot imagine being any place else. Some teachers have left public education to work in this environment. This school community lives out this mission daily and the mission permeates every decision, every action and every experience of St. Joseph Regional Junior High School.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school for not only posting the mission in each classroom and all over the building but living it out in word, deed and action. Even if a student can not quote C.A.R.E., they are able to express this with examples and many times unprompted.
2. The Visiting Committee commends all constituents for valuing the Catholic identity, caring for others, especially the students, and being willing to do whatever it takes to give these students the best.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the school for recognizing that middle school years can be challenging and filled with drama, angst and often disrespect, but at STJ it is different. There is a culture of love for God and others which is lived out and permeates every aspect of school life. The probable issues of middle school are mitigated through the school culture and Mission: C.A.R.E. This is a special and unique school.
4. The Visiting Committee commends the school that despite many challenges, it truly represents everything that is great about Catholic education. The whole child is educated in a God centered culture of love, academic excellence, high expectations, and joy. This school is a very special place and these young men and women will become life long learners with a love and commitment to God's people.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that all constituents continue to dedicate time to reflect on and discuss the mission of C.A.R.E. in all areas of the school community so that culture of STJ continues to flourish and be an example of junior high education in the Manchester area.

Standard 2 (Governance): The school has an appropriate system of governance that assures that the school remains true to its mission and that it has the necessary resources to support its present and prospective operations.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment P2 _____

Visiting Team's Assessment P2 _____

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

A diocesan school, STJ is governed by the Bishop of Manchester through his appointed representative, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. The diocesan advisory school board assists the superintendent in matters relating to Catholic identity, policy, finances, public relations, strategic planning, and development.

The superintendent hires the principal, usually with the participation of school advisory board members and other members of the school faculty and staff. However, Mr. Mailloux (principal of Trinity High School) was appointed to the position of principal of STJ by Bishop McCormack in 2010 without input from the school's advisory board. This appointment was intended to assist STJ through closer affiliation with Trinity High School.

The diocesan policy handbook describes the principal's role as the spiritual and educational leader of the school and steward of the school's resources. The principal is responsible for promoting the Catholic mission of the school and maintaining the program so as to enhance the religious life of the students, faculty and staff. He or she is to pursue excellence in the institution with respect to instruction and curriculum, develop/maintain the budget, and oversee financial reporting according to diocesan policy. Additionally, the principal is responsible for all administrative functions and for compliance with diocesan policies, all state and federal regulations, and all directives from the Catholic Schools Office (CSO).

The school advisory board offers advice and assistance to the principal in advancing the school's Catholic mission and Catholic identity, establishes local policies consistent with diocesan policies and procedures, develops, implements and monitors strategic planning, and supports the school through school advancement, public relations, marketing and board advancement. The school advisory board also usually participates in the search process in hiring a new principal.

The above description is based on diocesan policy. The nature of the current STJ board differs somewhat due to the school's recent history and public relations issues connected with the school's relocation. The following timeline may help make that history clear.

2009/2010:

- *The CSO conducted two meetings with STJ parents to inform them of the decision to move STJ.*
- *Those meetings were characterized by parent anger toward the CSO. Group opinion is always difficult to summarize. However, parents seemed most angry that they were not informed of the possibility of the school's relocation prior to the diocesan decision to do so. For many years, parents had raised money to support the school and improve facilities and felt their investment in the school had been disregarded by the CSO.*
- *The school was moved to its current location in the summer of 2010, at which time enrollment dropped from its 2009/2010 enrollment of 166 to 119 for the 2010/2011 school year.*
- *The diocese contributed approximately \$250,000 to renovate the St. Anthony School Building so as to help with the transition.*

2010/2011:

- *Enrollment: 119.*
- *Parent anger continued to grow, suggesting the school could expect a further drop in enrollment.*
- *Bishop John B. McCormack (now Bishop Emeritus) approached Trinity High School principal, Denis Mailloux, to request that he assist STJ by assuming the position of principal.*
- *Mr. Mailloux agreed to the bishop's request.*
- *Mr. Mailloux conducted two meetings with STJ parents to:*
 - *hear parent concerns;*
 - *explain that relocating STJ to its former location or to the Trinity High School site would not be an option for the foreseeable future;*
 - *explain, in general terms, the processes that would assure a quality experience for STJ students.*
- *Enrollment at the time of those meetings was forecast to be 63 for the 2011/2012 school year.*

2011/2012:

- *Enrollment: 89 with a budget based on 80 students.*

2012/2013:

- *Enrollment: 96.*
- *Considerations regarding a possible move included:*
 - *parents' apparent acceptance of the new site;*
 - *enrollment approaching capacity for the new site;*
 - *the state of the local economy;*
 - *state, city, and Catholic school enrollment trends.*

2013/2014:

- *Enrollment: 106*
- *Movement of the school to the THS remained a prominent STJ and Trinity High School (THS) board discussion topic.*
- *Economic conditions continued to prove discouraging regarding an attempt to raise funds needed to move STJ to THS.*

2014/2015:

- *Enrollment: 100.*
- *Rumors circulated among prospective parents regarding the closing of STJ due to low enrollment.*
- *The principal sent a letter to current STJ parents addressing the rumor. (See Supplemental Materials).*
- *Two plans have been submitted from THS to bring STJ onto the THS campus:*
 - *a separate building with classrooms and gymnasium/cafeteria for approximately \$6 M;*

- *renovation of a current THS building to house classroom space for STJ for approximately \$4 M.*

2015/2016:

- *Enrollment: 71*
- *7th grade class: 24. Increased marketing efforts may be bringing results.*
- *More information regarding possible improvement in enrollment will be available at the time of the NEASC visit.*

Observation/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The Visiting Committee observed that the faculty and staff of STJ endeavor to remain true to the school's mission. The very positive student and parent survey results and conversations with the committee speak to the overall effectiveness and success of the STJ school experience. The commitment of parents to Catholic education is strong. The faculty and staff give generously of their time and talents to offer a quality academic and co-curricular experience to their students. A visiting committee member was told by a retired STJ teacher during the opening dinner that she was thrilled to have the opportunity at dinner to praise her former colleagues for their dedication to the school and their students.

The School Board is an advisory board led by the principal, and the members are enthusiastic in their support of the school. The Visiting Committee reviewed an agenda of the School Board and noted that forecasting financing and enrollment, and reporting of Terra Nova scores was on the agenda.

STJ is a diocesan school. The Principal was appointed by Bishop McCormack in June, 2010. Faculty members were consistent in their praise of the Principal's leadership and commitment to STJ. The committee observed that the Principal and faculty consistently articulate the Catholic identity of the school. Religious artwork, statues and quotes are great evidence and prominent throughout the school. The current Superintendent and Associate Superintendent of Catholic Schools for Manchester have been very supportive of STJ and the principal.

The school has the basic resources to maintain and support its present needs. The administration has been reaching out to its feeder schools by conducting visits to area Catholic elementary schools to encourage future enrollment at STJ. Shadow days are planned both for elementary schools and individual students.

STJ has many strengths. The strong leadership, dedicated faculty, committed parents, and enthusiastic student body deserve to be recognized. The school recognizes that enrollment is a concern and must be a major part of the school's multi year planning process. Despite the fact that the School Board and the faculty had no input into the appointment of the Principal, every constituency of the school community has fully embraced his leadership and united it with the educational philosophy of C.A.R.E . that permeates STJ.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the administration, faculty, and staff of STJ for their continued dedication to the mission of the school and its students.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the administration for their aggressive efforts to increase enrollments.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the faculty, staff, and students for creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. Each member of the committee was impressed by this milieu and are convinced that visiting prospective parents and students must surely feel the same way.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that the School Board and the Principal continue to work with the CSO to develop a viable, comprehensive, multi-year planning process.

-
2. The Visiting Committee recommends that the school communicate the long range plans to current and prospective parents.

Standard 3 (Enrollment): The admissions process assures that those students who enroll are appropriate, given the school’s mission, and are likely to benefit from their experience at the school.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School’s Self-Assessment _____ P2

Visiting Team’s Assessment _____ P2

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

STJ conducts a thorough process of admissions to help ensure that accepted students are appropriate for enrollment in light of the school’s mission and program. Our parent/student/alumnae surveys reveal that 86% of our students and 83% of our surveyed alumnae believe that our admissions process results in enrolled students who are appropriate to the mission and benefit from their experience. 95% of our surveyed parents agree that our admissions process is easy to navigate and that their children are comprehensively evaluated.

Employing a variety of print and non-print materials, STJ presents an accurate description of its mission, organization, staff, program and facilities. Procedures and admissions materials are thoroughly presented in the application packet and on the school website. The admissions policy is clearly stated in the Parent/Student Handbook. There are specific policies and procedures for the application of financial assistance outlined in the application packet. The school’s mission and the nature of its Catholic identity are clearly presented in the application packet, in a personal student/parent interview, and during the annual November Open House.

STJ has a broad and accepting view of the variety of students who are appropriate for admission to the school. Student performance and the success of our graduates are formally and informally monitored to inform the administration of the need for adjustments in admissions procedures.

Those responsible for admissions and program communicate with the faculty to assure that the strengths and needs of new students are understood and that necessary resources are provided to accommodate them.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The school has a strong admissions program that encompasses many facets of the school community under the direction of the Principal. STJ administration along, with the admissions director at THS, are responsible for enrollment management. The admissions process at STJ is growing due to collaboration with the administration and admissions director. It allows all school stakeholders to provide STJ with a solid group of applicants. The Administration, admissions, faculty and parents are focused in one direction and moving the school forward in a united, mission-driven manner.

There are a variety of activities, programs, and procedures for recruitment and admissions. STJ has now implemented a program where administrators and students visit local feeder schools to talk about their experience at STJ. It allows students to, not only talk about their school, but also encourages students to come to STJ. STJ also encourages prospective students shadow for a day. This program, along with social media and pamphlets, are wonderful tools for STJ to increase enrollment.

The Administration, faculty, and school's surveys rank admissions as a top priority. Marketing and enrollment plans are being developed as a result of this study and needs of the school. These plans will continue to guide all constituents to grow admissions and enrollment. It is evident that there is a commitment to advancing the mission of STJ.

Another issue with enrollment is the school's current location. Many current and prospective families are concerned with the location of the school at this time. However, once inside, the overwhelming sense of pride for this little school grabs you and holds on tight! As one teacher told members of the Visiting Committee, "It's not about what's outside of the building, but about what's inside."

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school for their valiant efforts towards increasing enrollment.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the school for actively facing and fighting to increase the enrollment deficit while maintaining an excellent school program, culture and strong students.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the school for working with students and their families to make the STJ experience the best it can be.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee agrees with the school's recommendation to *continue to explore how print materials, social media and the website can be used to increase enrollment, especially in light of dropping enrollments in feeder schools.*
2. The Visiting Committee agrees with the school's recommendation to develop an exit interview that may glean information for admission procedures and program improvement.

Standard 4 (Program): The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that is appropriate to support the school’s mission and core values, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted. Program planning is informed by relevant research regarding how students learn and the knowledge and capacities they will need to lead purposeful and constructive lives.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
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School’s Self-Assessment

P1

Visiting Team’s Assessment

P1

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

STJ builds a solid foundation in academics for the adolescent by addressing the increased need for organization, personal responsibility and study skills. The program is designed to meet the individual needs of our students and prepare them for the challenges they will face as they enter high school. Upon graduation, our students move on to a variety of educational institutions including public, private, Catholic and boarding schools.

St. Joseph is the only Manchester-based Catholic school focused exclusively on the education of 7th and 8th grade students. Our students are encouraged to explore their interests within a structured curriculum designed to develop well-rounded individuals. Course offerings cover a wide range of disciplines, including:

- *Religion*
- *English*
- *Math*
- *Robotics*
- *Band*
- *Reading*
- *Science*
- *World Languages*
- *Social Studies*
- *Drama*
- *Art*
- *Physical Education*
- *Study Skills*
- *Logic*

Small class sizes allow teachers to concentrate on individual students. Teachers work closely with parents to help ensure that every child's needs are addressed in the most appropriate manner. Homework is also posted on the homework hotline, giving both parents and students another tool to bring about academic success at STJ. Our academic programs allow the flexibility to educate the individual and to prepare students for positions of leadership in an ever-changing global community.

The majority of the teaching and administrative staff has over fifteen years of experience in the education profession. Beyond education and experience, our faculty and staff are devoted to STJ and its mission of providing the very best educational experience for all of our students.

STJ offers numerous extracurricular activities. These activities provide students with opportunities to interact with their peers in competitive and thought-provoking environments that help them grow physically, emotionally and intellectually. Through participation in these groups, students learn valuable leadership and teamwork skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

The school's sports programs boast some impressive championships. There are many sports teams at STJ, allowing students the opportunity to pursue their interests while in a caring school environment.

- *Sports teams include:*
- *Basketball*
- *Soccer*
- *Softball/Baseball*
- *Skiing*
- *Cross Country Running*
- *Hockey*
- *Track*

STJ offers many clubs that meet during school hours, allowing every interested and academically eligible student access to these programs. Students are encouraged to take active roles in STJ student government. Student Council provides leadership opportunities within the student body and acclimates students to the political process.

Students have an integral role in determining the content of clubs. STJ's clubs and sports represent a wide spectrum of interests. The teachers, staff, administration and extended school family including clergy and coaches offer the most comprehensive educational experience for all of our students.

Present and Past Clubs and Organizations:

- *Community Service*
- *Skiing/Snowboarding*
- *Yearbook*
- *Art Club*
- *Student Council*

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The Visiting Committee was greeted, given tours and entertained by talented, articulate students on Sunday night. Students sat at dinner and shared their overwhelming love of their school and community. On our tour, the committee was wowed by the art work on the ceilings of each classroom. Students have used the ceiling tiles of drop ceilings to show off their amazing talent. This art work is everything from sports and music figures

to remakes of famous paintings. When students were told that they needed to move from their building 5 years ago, they wanted and needed to bring the ceiling tiles with them so that they could continue their school legacy no matter what building they were in.

There are many and varied activities going on in this small school community. Students have many options to be involved. Drama, art and music are embedded into the day allowing for students not to have to choose between sports and the arts. Many students were heard to say that they would have never been involved in the arts if it were not part of the day. The music teacher lets the students choose the music, but challenges them to learn the music before he composes all the other parts. The leadership roles encourage independence and the charsm of the school.

Apple tvs are in many of the classrooms and are used in conjunction with overall best teaching practices. If technology will help the students learn best, then that is what is used. Technology has not become the be all and end all of these classrooms where hands on activities, lecture, board work or which ever method will work best for their students is used by this faculty.

Students work collaboratively as seamlessly as they do individually. Students are encouraged to share their ideas and are valued for their learning not their failing. Students feel safe and are encouraged to have a voice. Work on projects take place within the classroom or during their activities period. Students have made videos to instruct a math lesson, are involved in not only the acting but also the directing of the school musical, create art work for display in their school and for charity and they have a true love of learning.

The mission of the school is evident even in the students' attitudes in sports. The school was just awarded the sportsmanship award which is voted on by all the coaches in the league. The mission is truly lived in each program that the school has.

The rent of the current location (\$70,000.00) is prohibitive to the advancement of the program. If STJ did not have to put out 1/3 of it's tuition to rent, that money would be able to be put into the budget for programming needs. They would be able to dream of what is possible for future programs.

Religion classes are incorporated into the academic program in accordance with the Diocese of Manchester. Catholic teachings and values are incorporated in all academic disciplines and all aspects of school life and activity. Students learn about the history and tenets of our Catholic faith and have ample service opportunities to put their faith in action.

The academic program demonstrates continuity from year to year through the use of curriculum maps. Teachers often meet to review and revise these maps. The administration reviews the Terra Nova results and the teachers use this data to improve or change the curriculum. Teachers have expressed a desire to grow in instructional practices with professional development. Many teachers pay out of their own pocket. There are many opportunities online and on social media as well as those offered at THS. They are encouraged and welcomed at THS.

The school programs should be celebrated and promoted. The quality and caliber of the program is evident in each and every student.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school for its many and varied programs and activities provided to the students on such a limited budget.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the school for allowing the students to have a voice in their own academic experience.

3. The Visiting Committee commends the school for the constant review and improvements of the academic program.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends the school continue to find a more viable location for the school to be able to grow in both size and program.
2. The Visiting Committee agrees with the school's recommendation to schedule a regular formal forum for discussion of students and their needs.
3. The Visiting Committee recommends that the STJ staff take advantage of the professional development opportunities at THS and other avenues.

Standard 5 (Experience of the Students): The school actively considers individual students and has developed plans, policies, programs, and pedagogy to nurture, support, and encourage all students to reach their potential and to participate in the life of the school.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment P1

Visiting Team's Assessment P1

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

From the perspective of a current STJ student:

"These two years have been, so far, the best two years of school I have experienced. I believe that, overall, STJ's provides students with a wonderful experience of learning, making friends, and getting to know the teachers. These two years' worth of information and skills I've learned have greatly prepared me for high school."

According to the student survey, 88% of the student body agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "STJ's provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, visual and physical activities that meet my needs." and 83% of the alumni agreed or strongly agreed that "STJ's provided a comprehensive program of intellectual, visual and physical activities that met my needs." When asked if STJ's was a great place to go to school, 82% of the alumni agreed or strongly agreed.

STJ makes an effort to recognize the diversity of its population. Students believe that the variety of experiences in and out of the classroom demonstrates a celebration of our differences. Activities such as classroom discussions, art projects, religion projects, field trips (Palace Theater, MFA, St. Anselm Dana Center, Washington D.C.) help students see the wonder of diversity. The surveys showed that the students (86%) and alumni(76%) agree or strongly agree.

Being a small school, teachers are often engaged in informal discussions about the students, who is successful, who might need help. The staff does not have scheduled time to discuss students, but discussions about the students are often the topic of conversation during faculty meetings. Inclusion of student needs as a regular faculty meeting agenda item will help us meet this goal.

Students are engaged in the Catholic life of the school. The start of the day, lunch and the end of the day consists of student-led prayers. Every student takes religion where prayer is central to each class. Students participate frequently in the sacraments. Every year begins with a special Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral Chapel and ends with a Graduation Mass at the Cathedral. Our chaplain, Monsignor Anthony Frontiero, the rector of the Cathedral, visits the school nearly every week and hears confessions twice a year, Advent and Lent, for students, faculty and staff. Monsignor also attends most prayer services as well as teaching special classes in religion curriculum, for example, the Mass.

Student Council has a Religious Activities Student Committee that is responsible for organizing prayer services, masses and service activities. Our students have an ongoing commitment at the New Horizons Soup Kitchen, serving meals to seniors in the community.

The students participate in a retreat at the beginning of each school year, led by the Trinity High School Theology Department.

Students are assessed academically throughout the year through a variety of methods. The students take annual Terra Nova tests. Each teacher studies the wealth of data from these tests individually and by the faculty as a whole. From the data, goals are set by each teacher and the school to improve the program and help each student. Teachers review their subjects each year to be sure it meets students' needs. We would note that Terra Nova results indicate the program has attained significantly higher results in the last several years and that our students now achieve at an average of 6% over expectations for their age.

The present population agreed or strongly agreed (84%) that "STJ's actively takes into consideration my individual needs, learning style and characteristics."

There is no certified special education teacher on the faculty. The administration assesses STJ's ability to meet the student's needs and works with the faculty to do so when possible. The faculty is made aware of all behavioral plans on file as well as any recommendations made by the sending school. Should a student's needs exceed STJ's ability to provide the student with an effective education, the family is informed of such.

All students are interviewed prior to being accepted. Each must bring her or his 5th grade and 6th grade report cards and a copy of the latest standardized test scores for review with the principal and assistant principal. If the principal feels STJ is not appropriate for the student, the concerns are discussed at that time. If, after some time spent in the school, STJ is found to be inappropriate for a student, the parents are asked to meet with the principal and assistant principal to discuss the issues. After a review of each student's academic and behavioral record and with the information derived from the meeting with the parents, the principal makes the final decision as to continued enrollment.

STJ has no guidance counselor or nurse. The faculty and the administrative assistant fill those roles. When asked, 80% of the alumni and 92% of the current students agreed or strongly agreed "There are teachers at STJ to whom I can turn for advice both in academic and personal issues." The students do consult the teachers about high school courses. Teachers make recommendations. In the case of the city's public high schools, the teachers must approve/disapprove a student's choice of high school courses. Course selections are made with a discussion between the student and the teacher and if necessary, with the parent. If the student is going to Trinity, the guidance department often contacts the STJ teachers for opinions/ideas to be sure the STJ student will be successful at the next level. When asked, 82% of the alumni believed that "I was well prepared for success in my next endeavor."

Using the standardized tests and classroom assessments, the faculty reviews results and examines their program. As part of the 8th grade study skills course, students are asked at the end of each marking period to evaluate progress toward their goals including methods that have been successful or not and what the teacher might better assist them with. These student experiences should be discussed at faculty meetings. At the end of the year, students in the 8th grade English class are asked to review their progress and make recommendations for improvement. 85% of the students felt "the faculty were great at helping me reach my goals." This is a practice that we now plan to expand upon.

As one student put it:

“ STJ's isn't perfect at all, but is any school? The school has so many strengths and assets that make it such a fun environment. Even though you only attend STJ's for two years, it'll go by so fast and you'll wish you were there longer. STJ's has made me a better student and a better person as a Catholic. The school has helped me grow spiritually and mentally. I will always look back on by time at STJ's not as a boring two years of school, but of two key years in my life that made memories that'll last forever. So, when you walk out the door of STJ's, you're ready to move on to high school.”

93% of the current students and 81% of alumni agree or strongly agree with the statement “STJ's was a great place to go to school.”

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The visiting committee noted that *STJ makes an effort to recognize the diversity of its population. Students believe that the variety of experiences in and out of the classroom demonstrates a celebration of our differences. Activities such as classroom discussions, art projects, religion projects, field trips (Palace Theater, MFA, St. Anselm Dana Center, Washington D.C.) help students see the wonder of diversity. The surveys showed that the students (86%) and alumni(76%) agree or strongly agree. The grade seven religion class is studying the chapter Jesus the Healer, and the teacher uses it as an opportunity to teach about Islam and it's peaceful values. Her goal is to show the parallels between Christianity and Islam. If they are comfortable, non Catholic students are encouraged by the teacher to share the tenets of their own faith.*

In the faculty room, it was noted the schedule of faculty meetings and school activities are posted for the entire school year. Teachers meet weekly to discuss student needs and formally use faculty meetings to discuss students, student data and instructional changes. *According to the student survey, 88% of the student body agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “STJ's provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, visual and physical activities that meet my needs.” and 83% of the alumni agreed or strongly agreed that “STJ's provided a comprehensive program of intellectual, visual and physical activities that met my needs.” When asked if STJ's was a great place to go to school, 82% of the alumni agreed or strongly agreed.*

Curriculum addresses the uniqueness of God's world through literature, social studies, art and religious instruction. Students are able to see their uniqueness as a gift of God and their differences are not bad but rather a blessing. *Students are engaged in the Catholic life of the school. The start of the day, lunch and the end of the day consists of student-led prayers. Every student takes religion where prayer is central to each class. Students participate frequently in the sacraments. Every year begins with a special Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral Chapel and ends with a Graduation Mass at the Cathedral. Our chaplain, Monsignor Anthony Frontiero, the rector of the Cathedral, visits the school nearly every week and hears confessions twice a year, Advent and Lent, for students, faculty and staff. Monsignor also attends most prayer services as well as teaching special classes in religion curriculum, for example, the Mass.*

Teachers and administration make assessing and review of each individual student a priority. *Students are assessed academically throughout the year through a variety of methods. The students take annual Terra Nova tests. Each teacher studies the wealth of data from these tests individually and by the faculty as a whole. From the data, goals are set by each teacher and the school to improve the program and help each student. Teachers review their subjects each year to be sure it meets students' needs. We would note that Terra Nova results indicate the program has attained significantly higher results in the last several years and that our students now achieve at an average of 6% over expectations for their age. Many noted that Mr. Mailloux made the review of test data a priority and scores have significantly improved. Teachers are seeing this benefit and now would like more time to review data to continue to grow. Teachers are committed to grow as instructors knowing that they can significantly impact student learning.*

The present population agreed or strongly agreed (84%) that “STJ’s actively takes into consideration my individual needs, learning style and characteristics.” Teachers make informal assessments and adapt their lessons to meet student needs immediately. Because the school is smaller, it allows for more individualized and more personalized instruction. Modifications such as extended time, seating arrangements, graphic organizers, and modifying an assignment are accepted, not ignored in the STJ’s classrooms.

There is not a special education teacher employed by the school, but students’ needs are addressed. The administration assesses STJ’s ability to meet the student’s needs and works with the faculty to do so when possible. The faculty is made aware of all behavioral plans on file as well as any recommendations made by the sending school. Should a student’s needs exceed STJ’s ability to provide the student with an effective education, the family is informed of such.

Surveys support the teachers’ and students’ claims that they feel loved and supported in all that they do. STJ has no guidance counselor or nurse. The faculty and the administrative assistant fill those roles. When asked, 80% of the alumni and 92% of the current students agreed or strongly agreed “There are teachers at STJ to whom I can turn for advice both in academic and personal issues.” If there is a need, every student believes that there is an adult they can turn to. Staff have noted that students may benefit from a guidance counselor and/or nurse.

Teachers are also significantly involved in the high school process for grade eight. The THS faculty work with the STJ’s faculty in alignment and course selection. The students do consult the teachers about high school courses. Teachers make recommendations. In the case of the city’s public high schools, the teachers must approve/disapprove a student’s choice of high school courses. Course selections are made with a discussion between the student and the teacher and if necessary, with the parent. If the student is going to Trinity, the guidance department often contacts the STJ teachers for opinions/ideas to be sure the STJ student will be successful at the next level. When asked, 82% of the alumni believed that “I was well prepared for success in my next endeavor.”

There is a process in place to identify students for whom the school is inappropriate and a supportive process for counseling those students exists. The Principal interviews every applicant and determines the potential academic and social success. If the principal feels STJ is not appropriate for the student, the concerns are discussed at that time. If, after some time spent in the school, STJ is found to be inappropriate for a student, the parents are asked to meet with the principal and assistant principal to discuss the issues. After a review of each student’s academic and behavioral record and with the information derived from the meeting with the parents, the principal makes the final decision as to continued enrollment. This process not only ensures a student’s success but also supports and maintain the strong loving school culture where every individual child is valued.

The school promotes an equitable, just, and inclusive community that inspires students to respect and value diversity and to be active and responsible citizens. This is achieved through service projects at a local soup kitchen, food drives, letters to veterans and monies for charities. Many services projects are student driven thus illustrating the students living out the mission and embracing respect for human life.

Students are given abundant options to participate in extra and co-curricular activities to share their gifts and talents, meet other students and value the uniqueness of each member of the student body. Nearly all faculty members, including some THS faculty members, moderate or supervise these activities allowing for full student participation. Their dedication allows students to grow into the persons that God wants them to be thus fulfilling the mission of the school and advancing the school community. Each child has a place in this school.

“These two years have been, so far, the best two years of school I have experienced. I believe that, overall, STJ’s provides students with a wonderful experience of learning, making friends, and getting to know the

teachers. These two years' worth of information and skills I've learned have greatly prepared me for high school."

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school for providing extra and co-curricular opportunities where nearly 100% of the student body participates.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the faculty and staff at STJ's and THS for their exceptional commitment to the students as evidence by their willingness to moderate and offer their talents to enhance the student experience.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the school for creating a school program that nurtures and challenges students to grow and develop spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally and physically so that they reach their full potential.
4. The Visiting Committee commends the Administration and faculty for creating a spirit of love, inclusivity, and a culture of excellence.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that STJ's continue to utilize their mission statement of C.A.R.E. to guide all that they do to provide an excellent Catholic education to their students.
2. The Visiting Committee recommends that many of the issues that are prohibitive of the experience of the student may be alleviated by a move to THS.

Standard 6 (Resources to Support the Program): Given the school’s mission, there are adequate resources (space, equipment, technology, materials, and community) to support the school’s program.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students’ experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students’ experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School’s Self-Assessment P2

Visiting Team’s Assessment P2

Brief narrative summary of the school’s position with regard to this standard

Responses relative to the indicators will provide much of the information on the school’s resources. The broader perspective on resources may be obtained in the introduction to the self-study. These perspectives include the effect of the school’s relocation to its current site.

When asked if STJ is a safe, clean, well-organized place, parents strongly agreed or agree (95%), students (87%) and alumni (84%). When asked if STJ has sufficient resources, parents strongly agreed or agreed (85%), students (80%), and alumni (75%). When responses relative to resources are compared to those focused on the quality of the experience and program at STJ, we are proud to be delivering the level of mission-bound Catholic education to our students despite limited means.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The students at STJ are a happy, articulate, talented and empathetic group who are proud of their school and not afraid to talk about it. They have been published in the Creative Communications A Celebration of Poets, they have won grant money for their school through art competitions and charity competitions, and they regularly work in the community to help change their little corner of the world. All of this comes from their amazing experience at STJ.

The space is well used by the faculty and staff. Every nook and cranny has been beautifully crammed with necessary materials for the students. *STJ occupies the top floor of St. Anthony School. STJ shares the gymnasium, cafeteria facilities and playground area with St. Anthony School but maintains separate instructional areas. STJ has eight classrooms as instructional rooms for English, mathematics, social studies, science, foreign language and religion. Classrooms are equipped with bookshelves and erasable surface area for instruction. The average class size is 15 – 17 students. Art is taught in a designated art area. Art classes are approximately 10 – 12 students. The library area houses a variety of reading materials. While there is no formal instructional library program, the area is utilized by students at various times as a reading area and for group work. There is a dedicated music instructional area. The music program has approximately 8-9 students at any*

one time. The area is paved and there is no playground equipment. The science classroom is one of the eight classrooms with no science stations. Students use the gymnasium for physical education and assembly events.

The school shares common space with St Anthony School and this requires coordination by both schools. Faculty and staff have expressed concern around communication with St Anthony, including , but not limited to, contracted cleaning services, heating and cleaning supplies. Heat is often uneven and some rooms are cold. The Visiting Committee experienced this first hand in the library. Teachers and students clean the classrooms and common spaces. There are limited custodial services which cause ongoing frustration.

There is an adequate number of textbooks for each student and older textbooks are typically updated with current information from Internet resources. The math program has recently updated their math books to a new version and students are currently working in consumable workbooks. The religion curriculum uses a combination of new and older texts. The texts in the geography program are approximately 6-7 years old and given the current changes, often do not reflect the most updated information. The Internet is used as a resource to update this information. The seventh and eighth grade English programs uses a combination of basic grammar books, teacher handouts, and novels either purchased in hard copy or on line. Students are required to present written work in the MLA format. The study of different genres is the focus of the seventh grade program and the eighth grade program encourages students to increase the amount they read. Students select novels of interest that are approved by the teacher. The reading program continues to foster the emphasis on creating good readers established in the seventh and eighth grade reading programs by using novels in class. Drama provides students with an opportunity to experience the creative arts. Although no specific text is used, there are teacher provided materials, YouTube videos, scripts, films, live performances and instruction that includes the following: using the body and voice expressively; developing character through movement and voice; sensory awareness; team cooperation; adopting the personality of the character comparing and contrasting art forms; studying the elements of drama; live theater performances. The program culminates in the selection of a play, research on the selection, producing, directing and performing the play. The use of technology in learning is woven into instruction across the curriculum. There are fifteen laptop computers available to all students equipped with a traditional word processing capacity and a CAD program. The school also utilizes fifteen iPads that are shared between the seventh and eighth grades when instruction will be enhanced by their use. All students take part in the physical education program to varying degrees and depending upon their schedule. With the exception of those taking drama and band, all students participate in the physical education program. Overall fitness is emphasized. Resources materials are Runner's World and other fitness magazines. Equipment includes, whiffle balls and bats, soccer balls and footballs. An exercise program focuses on core strengthening, the proper use of muscle groups, and posture. Seventy-four percent of the students surveyed felt the school has sufficient resources to meet their needs, and eighty-five percent of parents felt that the school has sufficient resources to meet the needs of their students.

Technology is a priority to STJ. This is evident in every classroom and valued by the students and staff. *The school does have an academic technology plan that includes the integration of Google Apps for Education (GAFE) into the everyday curriculum. Students and staff will be able to collaborate on work with apps provided by GAFE without worry about Microsoft licensing. IT support and training is available through IT personnel at Trinity High School and St. Joseph's Regional Junior High School. iPads continue to be used in the classroom, and IT personnel are available for support for hardware and software.*

The school has an acceptable use policy outlined in the “Parent/Student Handbook” – Section 6.1-6.5. Parents are required to sign and return the “Parent/Student Handbook Agreement” acknowledging they have received a copy of the handbook and agree to the rules and regulations contained therein. Teachers are encouraged to submit their requests for new and/or replacement hardware for classroom instruction on an annual basis

There is currently no strategic plan or library plan. The concerns of space (due to recent history) have ruled this lack of planning. Students bring in their own smart phones, tablets and lap tops to use within the classroom setting when deemed appropriate or necessary by the classroom teachers. There are a limited number of iPads that are available for student use.

Rent is paid to St Anthony for the use of the floor. This is a substantial amount that could be used to buy updated textbooks and/or improve technology. Teachers are committed to delivering the best instruction and dedicate time to research what is needed for the best classroom experience. It is not uncommon to see teachers creating classroom materials for classroom instruction. An example of this was observed by a visiting committee member. A music teacher did not own the music that the class wanted to learn so he spent the next few evenings putting the music on paper so each student would be able to learn the song. This effort is not an uncommon practice for teachers. The teachers are a significant and a valuable resource to this program.

The school’s curriculum and environment, through our emphasis on the school’s mission, strives to lead our students to think and act on the basis of their faith. Prayers services are held on holidays and Holy Days of Obligation. In addition, students attend weekly mass during Advent and Lent and take part in a religious retreat with Trinity High School students and religion teachers.

A reminder of faith begins with daily prayer. This is a time when students offer prayers for others beyond their immediate circle. (i.e. the Boston Marathon runners and spectators injured in the bombings and for all others who suffered emotional damage). Students have also raised an awareness of the earthquake in Nepal through their prayers for the victims. Students commit to local service to others by volunteering at the local soup kitchen. Students fund-raise for various charities through fees for admission to dances, creating an action plan to address the needs of the less fortunate. Students write Veterans’ Day letters to veterans, thanking them for their commitment to our safety and their efforts to improve the human condition of the oppressed. The letters and photos the students receive in return explain what these soldiers are experiencing and give the students an in-depth understanding of the social and ethical issues involved in war. Students are encouraged to view this experience through the tenets of their faith. Students see the needs of other children of their own age, particularly during the Christmas season, and donate pajamas and a book to a child who may not otherwise receive a Christmas present. Movies such as “Flipped” and “Simon Birch” promote discussion and essays on what is right, ethical. Thought-provoking plays at the Dana Center at St. Anselm College encourage students to discuss these plays within a Christian context. A standard component of the curriculum is a reading and discussion of stories and gospels contained in “Visions” magazine. Students discuss how the stories found there might affect their own lives and seek to identify how they can relate to the gospel on a personal basis.

The above examples reflect “a respect for self and others” and fosters an “environment of caring” that is a foundation of Catholic teachings and part of the school’s mission statement. The school strives to be a positive member of the community through service and school projects.

The financial resources are strained by rental costs and change in enrollment. Financial aid is determined through FACTS and available funds. The program would benefit from increased revenue.

The school shows evidence of searching for a more viable location so that the school can continue to grow and have space for their many and varied activities.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school administration, faculty and staff for their tremendous efforts in making an amazing experience for the students with very limited resources and even more limited space.
2. The Visiting Committee concurs with the school that *the school's greatest strengths are derived from the extremely mission-bound members of our school community, especially the faculty.*

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends the school continue to find a more viable location for the school to be able to grow in both size and program.

Standard 9 (Faculty): There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified faculty to carry out the mission of the school and the school follows a comprehensive and defined program of professional development that supports continued enhancement of teachers' skills.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment _____ P1

Visiting Team's Assessment _____ P1

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

STJ employs nine faculty members who have taught for an average of 20 years. Two of the faculty members have taught here for nearly all of the careers. The parent, student and alumni surveys truly reveal that our faculty is very qualified and that the mission of our school is carried out. Our students benefit significantly from the knowledge of our faculty. Faculty members are certified and qualified to teach in their subject areas and are required to maintain professional certification. Faculty are expected and always encouraged to seek professional development opportunities both outside of school and in-house when available. Expectations and responsibilities are clearly outlined in the faculty handbook, which all members must read and agree to by signing a contract form. The teachers and administration treat students and each other with respect, encouraging our students through example to do the same.

To parents and students, the faculty members at STJ make a huge difference in the child's education. The results of the surveys include how well prepared the students are for their next endeavor and to achieve their goals. Ninety-one percent of students agree or strongly agree that there are faculty to whom they can turn to for advice both in academic and personal issues. Faculty members are always available to our students before and after school as well as during the school day. Faculty is truly dedicated in making STJ a positive learning experience. They love teaching here at STJ.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The faculty is strong, dedicated and committed to making STJ the best it can be. The parents and students speak respectfully of the staff. The staff regard the students with pride. *The teachers and administration treat students and each other with respect, encouraging our students through example to do the same.*

In an interview with a former parent, she shared that her daughter had a vision disability that delayed her reading instruction in public school. After only four years at STJ, not only was she an avid reader, reading at grade level, but she also enrolled in 2 honors classes her Freshmen year at Trinity. The small classes, individual

attention and sustained dedication of the staff gave that student a love and joy of reading that she never had before.

Teachers have faith in the evaluation process and a friendly relationship with the administration, they simply wish there was more contact with the principal. *Mr. Mailloux (principal of Trinity High School) was appointed to the position of principal of STJ by Bishop McCormack in 2010 without input from the school's advisory board. This appointment was intended to assist STJ through closer affiliation with Trinity High School. The faculty is given opportunities to have opinions heard. They are always welcome to have a personal conversation independently with the principal when necessary.*

The school has process for recruiting, screening and interviewing candidates. *The principal interviews each candidate. During the interview, the candidate learns of our mission and expectations. The person who is the best fit and qualified is chosen for the job. He or she is then given a tour of the school. A background check is completed for each candidate including checking references and getting fingerprinted. Teachers and staff also need to complete an online training session of "Shield the Vulnerable."*

Academic personnel have to be certified by either the State of New Hampshire or hold a Certificate to Teach from the Diocese of Manchester. Also, opportunities are given for professional development.

The St. Joseph Regional Jr. High School faculty handbook outlines responsibilities, policies and expectations. Throughout the year, the administration visits classes. The purpose of the visits is for constructive supervision and/or evaluation. The teachers are regularly observed, and formal observation is discussed with the teacher.

The Full time staff have free periods during the day, according to the schedule, but due to finances, they end up covering for each other as subs, although they are rarely out. Salaries have been frozen for several years, but the staff is aware of the situation and still choose to be here. Many teachers are cleaning their own rooms even though that is a contracted service. There is no nurse or guidance counselor, but as the secretary says, "why bother paying for that when we can do that ourselves?" Students claim that there is no room for negative behavior and that they each have a trusted adult in the building to go to if they need help.

The school does provide opportunity for professional growth through seminars, workshops, etc. The faculty must pay for professional development opportunities that are not free. However, the school has begun to provide opportunities for professional development by having faculty meetings where teachers share their course work, methods, and ideas. THS invites the staff of STJ to their in service trainings and PD, yet few teachers utilize the opportunity. *All teachers receive more than adequate training and preparation. They attend Diocesan workshops, NCEA conferences, and are registered with the Sophia Institute. Faculty has taken courses through a six-week period on the Gospels. Students receive fundamental knowledge of the Catholic faith.*

The faculty take pride in being positive role models for their students, not just in the classroom, but before school, during lunch and after school as well. They embrace the fact that they are witnesses of the Gospel by word and example.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the entire faculty and staff STJ for their dedication and devotion. Their love of God, students and others radiates from their rooms.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the teachers for bringing in their personal interests and outside expertise.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the teachers for going above and beyond in their lessons because of their passion for the school and it's students.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee was impressed by the caliber of expertise among the staff and believe that each of them could offer some in-house learning opportunities.
2. The Visiting Committee agrees with the school's recommendation that if the lease with St Anthony's is renewed, the contract should include benchmarks for janitorial services, supplies and heating.

Standard 10 (Administration): The administration provides leadership and maintains a structure to facilitate the effective functioning of the school, including the participation of faculty in decision-making.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment _____ P2

Visiting Team's Assessment _____ P1

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

The administration of St. Joseph Regional Catholic School, under the leadership of principal, Denis Mailloux, is effective in carrying out the program of the school and the policies of the school as set up by the superintendent of schools and the school board. The mission of the school is always foremost in the minds of those responsible for the operation of the school. The principal, working with the assistant principal, Pauline Martineau, and the faculty, has had to adjust a number of school programs and practices due to declining enrollment, facility challenges and greater outside school choice competition.

According to 10 of the 11 faculty and staff surveyed, the administration involves the faculty in the decision-making process of the school. One hundred percent of the faculty and staff felt that they were treated with respect, given opportunities for professional development, policies were administered fairly and the school mission was reflected well in the school's policies and practices. The administration is quite visible in school and at school events. Faculty and students feel supported by their efforts.

The principal at the junior high is also principal of a 400-student local high school (Trinity High School, Manchester, NH). Some faculty and students did mention that they would like to see him in the building even more than they already do. The principal splits his days between the two buildings but usually spends at least two hours per day at STJ's. He is a frequent visitor to all classes when he is in the building. The assistant principal served as principal for two years at STJ's prior to the current administrative set-up. Faculty members feel that she is a capable leader when the principal is out of the building. Four of seven faculty members mentioned during interviews that the day-to-day communication could be better organized as sometimes last minute changes happened (i.e., different bell schedules) too frequently.

Over 90 percent of the students felt that they could turn to the faculty and administration for advice in academic and personal issues. Over three quarters of the students felt that discipline and other policies are applied fairly and reflect the core values at STJ's. Ninety-five percent of parents agreed with this statement while over 80 percent of alums interviewed agreed.

Students (89 percent), parents (95 percent) and alumni (84 percent) felt that STJ's is a clean, well-organized place that nurtures learning and mutual respect among members of the community.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The administration is very effective in carrying out the program of the school and the policies established by the Superintendent and school board. During many diocesan changes, the administration has maintained a calm and strong presence in the school. The faculty look to the principal and have complete faith and confidence in the leadership of the program. Mr. Mailloux's expertise in Catholic School leadership has gained him this prestige and admiration. Mr. Mailloux also has the respect and support of the diocese. The administration and support staff are qualified and continue to grow through professional development opportunities. The combined years of experience with Mrs. Martineau have lead, guided and cared for the school despite drops in enrollment, moving from one building to another and financial demands. Their love for Catholic education is evident in their caring treatment of students and staff and in the rituals and programs they create to enhance the mission of C.A.R.E.

The administration watches for weaknesses and strives to address them before they become a problem, such as hiring a math teacher when math scores were dwindling. Administration reviews testing scores and makes decisions around professional development and program changes for enhance the academic program.

All teachers and staff are annually evaluated by the administration. The Principal evaluates the Assistant principal and he is evaluated by the Diocese. *The principal evaluates the assistant principal and all other employees in the school. The principal is evaluated through a Diocesan review procedure initiated through the superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Manchester – currently Fr. John Fortin. There are a number of informal reviews done by the superintendent and the asst. superintendent at St. Joseph's as well as a more formal yearly meeting and review in the superintendent's office.*

Curriculum changes are made to continue student growth and improvement. The Principal is known for soliciting faculty input over concerns and decisions making. The diocese does not always solicit the input from the school. The school has had to live with decisions made by the diocese that has significantly impacted the student experience, morale and the faculty experience. The administration has certainly tried be a buffer for the faculty and students so that there is no disruption to the student experience. The administration has continued to provide leadership and maintain effective functioning through these changes while maintaining a vibrant, loving and Christ centered community where every person is valued.

The administration is tenacious and fully committed to finding solutions to problems so that the students at STJ continue to flourish and learn. Their faith in God and understanding of their role as Catholic educators guides and drives their work and leadership. Both administrators live the mission of the school in word, deed and action. They are very strong administrators. The Administration would benefit from diocesan support around physical space, financial support and an awareness of the uniqueness and needs for Saint Joseph Regional Junior High School.

The current administration of STJ could not adequately function if not for the true collaboration with the administration of THS. It is the dedication of THS and STJ which allows the principal to be able to move from building to building and be ever present to both schools. Imagine how much better STJ could be if the principal did not have to move from building to building.

STJ is a gem of a school and all stakeholders should take great care to take steps to ensure the continued success of STJ's culture .

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the Principal for his commitment and understanding of the ‘big picture’ of both schools. This vision, along with his love and commitment to Catholic education, allows both school communities to flourish especially STJ. STJ significantly benefits from this arrangement and the Principal has maintained and advanced the student centered culture.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the Assistant Principals at STJ and THS for carrying out the mission and managing the day to day needs to both schools thus allowing the Principal to guide and lead both schools.
3. The Visiting Committee agreed with the school about significant strengths of the school’s Administration in the area of administration and teaching experience, constant attention to curriculum development, financial responsibility, staff development, marketing, school vision and approachability.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that the constituents of STJ continue to support the Administration in its vision for STJ.
2. The Visiting Committee recommends that in the future, the strategic plan consider a full time principal if financially feasible and look at last minute changes to day to day operations.

Standard 11 (Evaluation and Assessment): The school engages in forms of programmatic assessment consistent with fulfilling its mission and core values. This data is used to inform decision-making and planning.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment _____ P2

Visiting Team's Assessment _____ P2

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

Prior to considering the effectiveness of evaluation and assessment at St. Joseph Regional Junior High School, it is necessary to be mindful of the school's stated mission, namely that: St. Joseph Regional Junior High School provides a Catholic education with C.A.R.E.—Catholic Identity, Academic Excellence, Respect for self and others in an Environment of caring. To that point, we feel it necessary to understand what it is exactly that we are, in fact, assessing when our committee approaches a standard related to evaluation and assessment, namely, that we are focusing on student assessment, faculty and staff (including our administrators) assessment, and the assessment of the success of the delivery of our program (including the school's stated mission).

To be clear, each of the four areas of purpose articulated in the school's mission statement (in other words, delivery of the school's stated program) as well as an additional area related more to the deliverers of the previously mentioned four areas, that is, evaluation of faculty, staff, and administration, was considered in our committee's discussion.

Additionally, considered by the committee were the important questions: 1) Does St. Joseph Regional Junior High School use appropriate tools to evaluate the impact of its program on its students? and 2) Once those tools are employed in the processes of assessment--and the results are in--what does our school do with those results that impacts and drives reflection and revision of the program and the delivery of that program?

It is the Evaluation and Assessment Committee's conclusion that St. Joseph Regional Junior High School does engage, systemically and successfully, in forms of programmatic assessment consistent with fulfilling its mission and core values. Moreover, this data is used to inform decision-making and planning. However, the committee believes that there are significant areas for reflection, most notably in the area of the institution of formal methods to use assessment results both to validate the current program and its delivery and to drive change.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The Visiting Committee visited all classrooms and was able to observe a wide range of teaching styles and a variety of assessments. Informal and low stake assessments, as well as projects and reports, were evidenced. Visiting Committee members witnessed the return and review of quizzes and projects. Teachers were observed using a variety of means to identify their students' comprehension of material. The Visiting Committee observed the diversity of evaluation and assessment modes in the many projects that were displayed throughout the school. Teachers use any means available to them to promote learning and to assess students progress. For example, the art teacher assigns students to "bring in" an art story each Monday. Most utilized their Smartphones to report their story, showing the teacher the visual to prompt the discussion.

Teachers noted that the results of the Terra Nova testing are thoroughly examined by the Principal and the faculty. The test results are then used to evaluate and identify student and curriculum strengths and weaknesses with an eye towards improving instruction. A teacher reported that the test results are formally discussed in a faculty meeting. However, they are more frequently discussed in an informal manner. Under the direction of the principal, if a weakness is identified, steps are taken to ameliorate the weakness. One teacher related that reading and interpreting graphs was identified as a weakness. As a result, additional skill development using graphs was begun, resulting in higher test scores in that area.

Faculty members reported that the Principal conducts a formal evaluation of each teacher during the year. Additionally, the Principal conducts informal evaluations throughout the year by frequent visits to each classroom. It was apparent to the Visiting Committee that the Principal is a strong presence in the school. The easy familiarity by which the students both greeted the principal and were greeted by him clearly demonstrates the breadth of his leadership and the respect that he engenders.

Students related to the Visiting Committee that a variety of assessments are used that consider individual differences. There was an abundance of evidence observed by the committee to support this assertion. The halls and classrooms were virtually teeming with students work in a wide array of modes. This demonstrated that teachers use creative and innovative methods to assess their students' progress. Further, students felt that this wide variety of assessments adequately prepared them for the next step in their education.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the faculty for its implementation of a variety of forms and means of students assessments that clearly address the four areas articulated in the mission statement i.e. CARE.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the administration and faculty for their use of assessment data in curriculum planning and revision.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the faculty for their commitment to provide for the individual differences of their students and to celebrate those differences.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee shares in the self-study recommendation that an exit survey be given to eighth graders and an additional survey be given to ninth grade alumni. These would be used as tools to guide program improvements and the level of preparedness of their graduates.

The Visiting Committee recommends that additional time be scheduled for opportunities for teachers to formally work together to discuss planning and improvements to the program and instruction.

2.

Standard 12 (Health and Safety): The school is a safe and healthy place for students and faculty.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment _____ P2

Visiting Team's Assessment _____ P2

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

STJ's does have a comprehensive written Crisis Response Plan, known as the "Emergency Manual." It specifies recommended procedures to response to:

- *Fire*
- *Chemical emergency*
- *Death at school*
- *Personal injury accident*
- *Hostage situation*
- *Bomb threat*
- *Lockdown or reverse evacuation*
- *Evacuation*

All teachers are given the Emergency Manual and the plan is reviewed by the Social Studies teachers in all their classes. All teachers have an emergency bag kept by the door in each classroom. In case of an emergency evacuation of the building, the teachers take their bag which contains emergency medical supplies and the Crisis Plan for teachers to reference after they have left the building. Because STJ's does not own the building, safety audits are conducted by the St. Anthony staff and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations is monitored by that staff. Assurance that the plan is clearly understood by faculty, staff, students and parents as well as communicated to appropriate local authorities is an ongoing effort, and there is a need for further drills on the part of school personnel and students, particularly for lockdown emergencies. The school does not employ its own school nurse. In case of non-emergency illness, the asst. principal or the school secretary will contact parents if necessary to send the student home. In case of emergency, EMT's can be on-site quickly. A fire station is located across the street from the school. Also, the school has an AED (automatic electronic defibrillator) located right outside the gym. The school also has no guidance counselor, but the teachers and staff are sensitive to the emotional state of the students and parents will be contacted if it is deemed to be necessary. 92% of the students felt that there are teachers/administrators to whom they can turn to for advice both in academics and personal issues. Although STJ's does not have its own food service, the students are welcome to participate in the St. Anthony lunch program which the students seem to enjoy. All foods are cooked on the premises and meet nutritional requirements. Students are also welcome to bring their own lunch and purchase milk from the lunch program. The kitchen facilities are very clean and are inspected annually and certified by the N.H. Health Department. All on-campus activities field trips and athletic events are brought to

the asst. principal for review. The asst. principal will check for any safety issues. Any injury at any school event must be documented by the teacher/coach on duty and the accident form must be given to the asst. principal as soon as possible. Parents will be contacted if necessary, and a follow-up call will be made. The accident report will be sent on to the diocesan office and the diocesan insurance company if necessary. After all field trips, all permission slips are turned in to the asst. principal and kept on file for three years.

Much thought and planning has been done in the area of health and safety. The faculty, staff and administration are oriented toward the health and safety of the students and take their responsibilities seriously. Also, surveys of students, parents and alumni agree overwhelmingly (89%-95%) that "STJ's is a safe, well-organized place that nurtures learning and mutual respect among students and faculty/staff."

Although the written emergency plan considers a wide range of contingencies, more training and additional drills, especially involving students, should be done, to assure that all members of the school community know exactly what to do in case of an emergency.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The quiet, well decorated halls of STJ school has classrooms that are equipped with fire exit signs and emergency bags that include all necessary items and an emergency manual. All certificates are up to date including, but not limited to, fire extinguishers, elevator certificate, and board of health certificate. Medications are kept in a locked cabinet in the main office with permission forms. If a medical situation takes place, the parents are called or 911 where the EMTs are located in the fire station across the street.

There is little to no communication between STJ and the school that they are renting from which occupies the bottom two floors of building. A lock down situation is disturbing to the secretary as the fact that if there were a situation on the bottom floor, STJ may not know to go into lock down. If they were able to communicate the need for a lock down, it would be done by phone which is necessary to get help to the location.

The secretary serves STJ community in many ways. In the absence of a full time nurse, the secretary fulfills many of these rolls. She keeps accurate records and logs of medication, comforts students and contacts parents when necessary. The secretary also maintains communication with St Anthony's and monitors the camera at the main door of STJ entrance. The secretary is an integral part of the school community. She nurtures students and staff to enhance the educational experience and school culture. She helps to create a safe school.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school for creating a healthy, safe environment.
2. The Visiting Committee concurs with the school that *much thought and planning has been done in the area of health and safety. The faculty, staff and administration are oriented toward the health and safety of the students and take their responsibilities seriously.*
3. The Visiting Committee concurs with the school that *STJ's is a safe, well-organized place that nurtures learning and mutual respect among students and faculty/staff."*
4. The Visiting Committee commends the secretary for her dedication to the STJ community.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee agrees with the school's recommendation that *attention should be given to making sure that all members of the school community, including faculty, staff, administrators, students, parents and city officials are aware of their responsibilities and procedures to be followed in case of emergencies. This will likely include practicing/drilling for various contingencies. Also, it may be advisable for staff to be trained and certified in CPR and AED training.*

2. The Visiting Committee agrees with the school's recommendation that *additional communication of the emergency plan to all members of the school community, as well as practice/drilling should be considered.*
3. The Visiting Committee recommends that the school work with St Anthony's to explore practical ways to ensure safety for the staff and students of the school in a lockdown situation.

Standard 13 (Communication): The school maintains effective systems of external and internal communication and record keeping that inform all constituents and facilitate participation where appropriate.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment P2

Visiting Team's Assessment P1

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

The school maintains an effective system of internal and external communication and record keeping. Through various electronic means, STJ's disseminates information relevant to the school community. Parents and students have multiple means to keep abreast of school activities and school/classroom news. 83% of the parents surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that STJ's has an effective system of communicating important information.

Observations

The Visiting Committee reviewed the Student/Parent Handbook and found it to be a comprehensive statement of school policies and procedures. The STJ's Handbook is also available on their website. The Faculty and Diocesan Handbooks outline guidelines for expectations of faculty members, as well as a listing of benefits available to them.

The Visiting Committee observed the many ways that parents, staff, and students are kept informed of school news, homework, events and liturgies. Hard copies of each teachers' Google bulletin boards were made available for the Visiting Committee to read and review. Every Wednesday, the principal sends home an electronic newsletter through Constant Contact. Parents have a variety of ways to stay in contact with teachers: phone calls, e-mail, appointments., and through student agendas. The communication within the school community is fantastic and consistent. However, although there are many wonderful things going on at STJ and the school needs to continue to communicate the wonderful things going on at STJ through printed and visual media. The excellence of STJ seems to be the best kept secret in Manchester.

The Visiting Committee observed that parents are informed consistently of their student's progress through both quarterly report cards and progress reports. Although there is only one formal Parent/Teacher Conference scheduled, all teachers welcome parents to call at any time to discuss behavioral or academic issues. The Visiting Committee also noted the Wall of Honor that recognizes the academic achievements of students in a public way.

In the Faculty Room, the Visiting Committee observed large monthly calendars detailing each month's activities, as well as scheduled faculty meetings. Student Council members report the minutes of the meetings to homerooms and faculty members. However, the Visiting Committee was made aware of the frustration of some faculty members regarding the lack of consistency in communicating athletic information to parents.

The administration maintains academic and health records for current students in a fireproof file cabinet in the main office. The budget is prepared by the Principal and the bookkeeper who uses QuickBooks. All financial information is mailed to parents and both the principal and bookkeeper are available to answer any questions and concerns. Tuition information is also available for review on the website.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the administration and faculty for the clear and comprehensive manner in which the progress of the students is reported numerous times to the parents.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the administration and the faculty for their utilization of a variety of digital and more traditional methods to inform parents, students, and faculty of school events.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the study skills program's daily use of student agendas and the policy whereby parents sign the agendas weekly.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that the staff continue to investigate ways to improve some areas of communication such as athletics.
2. The Visiting Committee recommends that the school investigate the feasibility of utilizing parental talent to initiate and promote publicity to highlight the exemplary education available at STJ's and to highlight the many activities and service projects.

Standard 14 (Infrastructure): There are adequate resources (personnel, finances, facilities, equipment, and materials) to provide for the overall institutional needs of the school.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment _____ P2

Visiting Team's Assessment _____ P2

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

The school currently has the resources needed to provide a rich high school preparatory experience for its students. The 2015-2016 budget has been adversely affected by this year's drop in enrollment from 105 to 71. Due to the hard work, adaptability, and resourcefulness of the faculty, the student experience is currently as strong as it has been since the STJ was moved to its current location. The upcoming year, however, will prove to be a challenge should another very small class enter the 7th grade.

The school follows prescribed diocesan policies and procedures for budget development, purchasing procedures, quarterly finance reports, and year-end reports.

The school's current facilities function well in most respects. Classrooms are large and adequate for instructional needs. In accordance with the conditions of the move from its former location, STJ leases space from St. Anthony School/Parish. This lease includes the cost of cleaning/repair services. Cleaning is often inadequate. Heating has been inadequate. At the time of the NEASC visit, we will report on the status of cleaning and heating services for 2015 – 2016.

STJ leases space from the St. Anthony School; therefore, little facilities planning is possible. The school has a technology plan which was revised in March of 2015. The plan presents improvements that have been implemented since the 2011 – 2012 school year and projects improvements through 2016 – 2017.

As of the writing of this report, STJ has the resources (especially human resources) needed to provide its students with an exemplary education. The effects of rumor and/or dissatisfaction with the school's current location have already had a profound impact on enrollment for the 2015 – 2016 school year. The budget for 2016 – 2017 (to be submitted to the diocese by March 1) will present to the CSO contingencies for funding of the school's complete program through the school's savings should rumor of the school's closing continue to affect the school.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

This is a unique situation, whereas this school rents a space from St. Anthony, a parish run school. The Visiting Team met with the Principal of St Anthony's to discuss plans for the building's future. The heating issues are related to the heat circulation and the radiators. It is being proposed this summer with the Parish paying 50%, St Anthony's paying 27% and STJ's paying 23%. The building is insured by the Diocese Office.

The Food Service is contracted by St Anthony's staff member. If students forget their lunch they are offered cold cereal, then are charged from the St Anthony's office.

As a tenant, there is no physical plant plan for repairs. *STJ leases space from the St. Anthony School; therefore, little facilities planning is possible.* They are "fixing as it breaks" due to their already strained budget. The janitorial services are included in the rental agreement. He is shared with the church 10 hours, then St Anthony's for 20 hours and offered to STJ for 10 hours. That does not allow much time for "incidentals", accidents or much more than garbage pick up and sweeping. STJ staff often sweeps their own floors and wash their own tables.

The Bookkeeper has adequate procedures in place for budget planning and accounting. She has exemplary skills and handled the transition to a new accounting system flawlessly. She comments that she "wishes she had more contact with the students".

The school has a technology plan which was revised in March of 2015. The plan presents improvements that have been implemented since the 2011 – 2012 school year and projects improvements through 2016 – 2017. The technology plan is adequate.

The rent of the current location (\$70,000.00) is prohibitive to the advancement of the program. If STJ did not have to pay a third of it's tuition receipts towards rent, those funds could be able to be put into the budget for programming needs, building restoration or remodeling or a reduction in tuition.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee recognizes that the teachers have given a great amount of time and energy to make their rooms as comfortable and clean as possible.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the students and staff for utilizing all corners of their space.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that STJ continue it works in recruiting and enrollment to financially support the infrastructure.
2. The Visiting Committee recommends an ongoing and open communication exploring the possibility of a permanent and a more viable location for the school to be able to grow in both size and program.

Standard 15 (The Accreditation Process): The school is fully committed to institutional improvement and to the process of accreditation. The school completed an inclusive self-study, conducted in a spirit of full disclosure and following Association guidelines; responds to Commission recommendations and the requirement to meet all standards; and participates fully in the peer review process, hosting a visiting committee and sending personnel to serve on visiting committees to other institutions.

Assessment of Standard	
Passing <i>(The students' experience is supported.)</i>	Failing <i>(The students' experience is compromised.)</i>
P1. Meets Standard: may have minor plans/recommendations or issues for reflection.	F1. Fails Standard: aware and plans remediation.
P2. Meets Standard: does have significant plans/recommendations and issues for reflection.	F2. Fails Standard: aware, but plan of remediation is uncertain.

School's Self-Assessment _____ P1

Visiting Team's Assessment _____ P1

Brief narrative summary of the school's position with regard to this standard

The principal assigned self-study co-chair positions to the assistant principal of STJ and to the THS campus minister who had co-chaired the THS self-study in 2010.

The self-study process began with the organization of committees in March of 2015. Committees included STJ faculty and staff, STJ board members, THS faculty and staff, and STJ parents and students. Student, parent, faculty, alumni surveys were completed through Survey Monkey from March 2 to March 6. All faculty and students participated in the survey. Parent participation was...

All committee chairs met for an introduction to the self-study process with the self-study chairs, STJ faculty, THS participants and the principal at the THS cafeteria on March 4. A schedule for completion of reports was distributed at that time. A copy of the committee schedule and of instructions to the committees is included in the supplemental materials. Committee oversight was entirely the purview of the self-study co-chairs. Two STJ board members were unable to complete their work as committee chairs; therefore, the co-chairs completed their reports.

In January and February, drafts were presented to the STJ faculty for review and final edit. The faculty agreed that the self-study process had been appropriate and represented the school appropriately. A final copy of the self-study was presented to the board in March.

Observations/Conclusions and Explanation of Rating

The self-study process was clearly undertaken with great thoroughness and commitment from the entire STJ community, in accordance with the NEASC requirements. *The faculty and co-chairs reviewed the process through which the school conducted the self-study. All seemed to concur that the process was appropriate and produced a report that accurately portrays the school.*

All STJ community members, including faculty, staff, administration, parents, students, and alumni, were invited to participate in the self-study process, either directly or through the completion of questionnaires. Many staff at THS also offered their help and support in this process. The STJ faculty and staff worked closely together to compile and edit the documents that eventually were integrated into their completed self-study report.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the entire STJ community for openly embracing and participating in the re-accreditation process.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the STJ community who *are, or course, committed to continued growth and look forward to the perspective of our colleagues on the visiting committee to assist us in that endeavor.*

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that a new committee, comprised of various STJ constituencies, be formed to address the major recommendations revealed in the committee's report. The work of this committee can be used as the foundation for a more in-depth round of strategic planning involving the entire STJ community.

Self-Study Part II: Reflection, Recommendations, and Issues for Further Discussion

Overview

Some of the factors that greatly influence the future of our school are beyond our control. Declining school enrollments throughout the state, even greater declining Catholic school enrollments throughout the state, and economic factors are among these. Despite those challenges, much still remains in our control, and the STJ faculty has demonstrated their ability and motivation to make sure STJ remains second to no other junior high or middle school Catholic experience. This faculty has done so during the tumultuous process of relocating STJ to its current site and have continued to be the backbone of our school.

This self-study has surfaced many strengths which are worth noting, among them are:

- 1. the strong sense of mission that emanates from this able and dedicated faculty who cause the school's mission to pervade all aspects of the STJ experience;*
- 2. the love which our families continually express for STJ continues to be the school's best means of connecting the school to prospective students;*
- 3. Bishop Libasci's support for our school;*
- 4. the curriculum which provides our students with an extraordinary opportunity for growth in a Catholic environment;*
- 5. continued association with Trinity High School which provides support both in substance and perception.*

The self-study has also indicated weaknesses to be addressed:

- 1. the school's location, including parent perception as an inner-city location, condition, and conflict with St. Anthony School;*
- 2. parent perception that STJ does not have a home of its own;*
- 3. parent association with St. Anthony School for those parents who did not choose to send their children to the St. Anthony K-6 program;*
- 4. the need to allocate 1/7 of each student's tuition toward rental fees to St. Anthony School;*
- 5. the lack of a full-time principal;*
- 6. a very heavily scheduled faculty.*

There are usually opportunities to be found even in the most dire of circumstances, and such is the case with STJ:

- 1. additional marketing and networking with prospective families and with feeder schools;*
- 2. ongoing curriculum development;*
- 3. increased association with Trinity High School;*
- 4. development – though resources are limited;*
- 5. greater advisory board involvement in networking/marketing;*
- 6. greater parent involvement in networking/marketing;*

The preeminent threats to STJ appear to be:

- 1. lingering parent resentment regarding the school's present location and Manchester "inner city" fears;*
- 2. parent rumor that STJ is closing;*
- 3. charter schools;*
- 4. economic trends;*
- 5. state/city enrollment trends;*
- 6. Catholic school enrollment trends*

STJ has endured a disruption in the form of its contentious relocation which has brought a level of negativity not shared by its neighbor Catholic schools in Manchester. As this story is amply represented in this self-study, it will not be repeated here. Worthy of note is the fact that the school has not only endured but has improved through the hard work and dedication of the faculty and staff. These people love this school and love the students they serve. The program has been improved, eliminating the weak aspects which affected the school independently of relocation issues.

Exploration of a possible move to the THS site has begun through the THS board. However, many challenges remain, and the possibility of such a move is highly unlikely in the near future. What remains is for the school to continue to capitalize on the mission-bound dedication of everyone involved in this school and to capitalize on our strengths, most notably human capital.

We are, of course, committed to continued growth and look forward to the perspective of our colleagues on the visiting committee to assist us in that endeavor. As we write this reflection, it appears that the greatest opportunity for our school's future lies with the community of students and parents who know and recognize the value of the STJ experience.

There are early signs that bode well for our school. Through the leadership and vision of our superintendent and with the support of the bishop, the CSO has grown in both staff and effectiveness. After several years without an associate superintendent, the CSO has added that position. For the first time in its history, the CSO now employs a director of enrollment to work with the schools on marketing. These new resources bring new hope to all our N. H. Catholic Schools and have already provided much-needed structure to assist our principals.

The support of Bishop Peter Libasci cannot be underestimated. Without that support, the future of STJ would be significantly limited. The regular presence of our chaplain, Monsignor Anthony Frontiero, does much to signify to our students, faculty, and staff that STJ is important to him.

The STJ board is in the process of being strengthened with the major goal of developing a parent network to provide prospective families with the truth as to the quality of the STJ experience. As false rumor of STJ's imminent closing was responsible for the school's recent decline in enrollment, it will be truth that will lead the school into a future with sound enrollment.

It is our goal to continue strengthening all aspect of the STJ experience including program, technology and facilities. Should the school remain in its current location, we will optimize every aspect of this

facility. Should a move to the THS site be approved by the bishop at some point in the future, we will need to plan for a capital campaign to support that course of action.

Whatever the challenge, we know one very important truth. Our school's mission beats strongly in the hearts of everyone here. Adversity has only proven that fact over and over again.

Action Plan:

<i>Strategic Planning – Developed with the CSO</i>	<i>September 2016 – June 2017</i>
<i>Enrollment/Marketing</i>	<i>Enrollment/Marketing</i>
<i>Facilities/Location</i>	<i>Facilities/Location</i>
<i>More Formal Process of Faculty and Student Evaluation</i>	<i>Spring 2016</i>
<i>Crisis Drills</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Communications</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Website</i>	<i>Spring 2016</i>
<i>Teacher Bulletin Boards</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Social Media</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>

Observations/Conclusions

The spirit of the STJ is vibrant and it radiates through every facet of the people, the actions and the core beliefs of the school. Every person who enters into the doors of STJ is welcomed as a friend by all. It is this charm that permeates every fiber of the school community. It sustains, drives and breathes life into all that they do. It has sustained them through many challenges but not diminished their commitment and love for each other and the school. *STJ has endured a disruption in the form of its contentious relocation which has brought a level of negativity not shared by its neighbor Catholic schools in Manchester. Worthy of note is the fact that the school has not only endured but has improved through the hard work and dedication of the faculty and staff. These people love this school and love the students they serve. The program has been improved, eliminating the weak aspects which affected the school independently of relocation issues.*

Administration has faced many challenges over the years in terms of facilities, finances and enrollment yet nothing has shaken the focus on giving students the very best Catholic education while maintaining the love and charm that is ever present in this community. Administration has tirelessly poured over many options of location in order to maintain and build the current program without decisions being made from other constituents. The Visiting Committee believes that without decisions being made soon that the future of St. Joseph's school would not possibly reach its full potential and live out the mission of Catholic education. As one committee member stated, "It is amazing what they are able to do with the little that they have, imagine what they would be able to accomplish with a little more."

The Principal notes that we need a thoughtful and purposeful move to ensure a solid K-12 Catholic education in Manchester, NH. STJ is the only grade 7 and 8 school in the city. To lose STJ would result in a loss of future Catholic middle school students and possibly future Catholic secondary school students. The next generation of Catholics could be in jeopardy.

The Visiting Committee observed and experienced C.A.R.E.

The Visiting Committee saw and felt a strong Catholic presence through student led prayers, compassion, and warm hospitality. The school community has a strong moral fiber. Students and staff held themselves accountable without punishment and hurt. Being kind and caring is an ideal that they live up to. Students are Christians in very sense of the word, they see the face of Christ in each other.

The Visiting Committee saw a strong Academic program with knowledgeable, experienced and committed teachers, curious students and administrators committed to academic excellence. Students know they can learn anything. They have been empowered by the faculty and staff to think, risk and attempt anything. This occurs throughout all aspects of the community whether that be academic, service, sports, or the arts. STJ students are joyful, curious, poised and mature. This combination of academic excellence and empowerment has brought them great achievements with high test scores, sports championships, fine arts awards and a prestigious sportsmanship award.

The Visiting Committee understood that the values of Respect for self and others in a caring Environment provide the vehicle for the faculty to create a safe and loving learning environment and it helped students relate to one another. In turn, this fueled and maintained a Christian environment that enhances the school experience. It cannot be underestimated the impact of the mission in maintaining a loving and safe school environment with high academic aspirations and expectations. STJ has created a school community that is rare and special. This school is a blessing to the Diocese and community Manchester! Catholic christian young men and woman are changing the world each day by their sheer presence in it. As Mr. Mailloux reminds his students “they can change their world by changing their little corner of it”.

Whatever the challenge, we know one very important truth. Our school’s mission beats strongly in the hearts of everyone here. Adversity has only proven that fact over and over again. What remains is for the school to continue to capitalize on the mission-bound dedication of everyone involved in this school and to capitalize on our strengths, most notably human capital.

This school must continue to exist! St. Joseph’s administration, faculty and staff have created a unique experience for the students lucky enough to be a part of this community. The Visiting Committee witnessed the amazing overall commitment and dedication of the administration, faculty, staff and students to the true Catholic identity of St. Joseph Regional Junior High school.

Commendations

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school for articulating and living out their Mission: C.A.R.E.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the school for their resiliency in the face of adversity with a spirit of hope, joy and faith in the future.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the administration for their spiritual leadership, guidance and love of Catholic education
4. The Visiting Committee commends the dedication of the faculty and staff of STJ
5. The Visiting Committee commends the student body for living the ideals of Catholic education; faith, service and love of God.
6. The Visiting Committee commends the Bishop Libasci, Superintendent Rev. John Fortin, and Associate Superintendent Donald Fussell for continuing to provide support and enthusiasm for STJ.
7. The Visiting Committee commends all constituents for maintaining and advancing a strong academic program.

Recommendations

1. The Visiting Committee recommends the school continue to follow through with their action plan

2. The Visiting Committee recommends the school continues to develop a parent network to support the school program and mission.
3. The Visiting Committee recommends the school develop a greater advisory board involvement in networking/marketing.
4. The Visiting Committee recommends the school continues to strengthen all aspect of the STJ experience including program, technology and facilities.
5. The Visiting Committee believes that without decisions being made soon, the future of St. Joseph's school would not possibly reach its full potential and live out the mission of Catholic education. As one committee member stated, "It is amazing what they are able to do with the little that they have, imagine what they would be able to accomplish with a little more."

MAJOR COMMENDATIONS

1. The Visiting Committee commends the faculty, staff, administration, students, and families of STJ for their dedication to creating a mission-centered school culture.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the principal and assistant principal for their instructional and spiritual leadership, their vision and expertise, and for their firm commitment to the growth and development of all facets of school life at STJ.
3. The visiting committee commends the faculty of STJ for developing curriculum maps in conjunction with standardized assessments to improve and maintain a strong academic program and for regularly collaborating with each other to review and analyze student data, to improve and drive instruction.
4. The Visiting Committee commends the exceptional student body of STJ for their witness of faith, love of learning and moral responsibility. The students at STJ truly embody the mission of C.A.R.E!
5. The Visiting Committee commends the Principal for his unconditional belief and regard for the faculty, staff and students. This high regard allows all members to be their best selves and remain focused on the vision of STJ..

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. St. Joseph Regional Junior High School has endured much disruption and negativity with the previous relocation. The Visiting Committee recommends that the school administration and advisory board work with diocesan officials to explore options and make a decision in a timely manner in regard to a permanent location of the school. It would be beneficial for this process to be one of transparency, care and respect for all those involved.
2. The Visiting Committee recommends that the various constituents in the Saint Joseph Regional Junior High School community work together to develop a comprehensive multi-year strategic plan to envision further growth in areas including Catholic identity, academics, development, technology, finance, enrollment management, facilities, and marketing.

Report on Standards for Accreditation for Saint Joseph Regional Junior High School

The visiting committee must rate the school by placing an X in the appropriate rating box for all applicable standards. For failed ratings (F1 or F2), please also note page references from your report in the *Failed Ratings* column. For any visiting committee's ratings that differ from the school's self-rating, please use the *Differing Ratings* column to note page references.

Standard	Rating				Failed Ratings (List page number)	Differing Ratings (List page number)
	P1	P2	F1	F2		
1 – Mission	X					
2 – Governance		X				
3 – Enrollment		X				
4 – Program	X					
5 – Experience of the Students	X					
6 – Resources to Support the Program		X				
7 – Early Childhood Program		N/A				
8 – Residential Program and/or Homestay Program		N/A				
9 – Faculty	X					
10 – Administration	X					Pg. 31
11 – Evaluation and Assessment		X				
12 – Health and Safety		X				
13 – Communication	X					Pg. 40
14 – Infrastructure		X				
15 – The Accreditation Process	X					

