

STAKEHOLDER 2020-2021



State of the School
STAKEHOLDER REPORT
2020-2021

June 1, 2021

Dear Stakeholders of Epiphany Catholic School,

The 2020-2021 school year was the **Year of Saint Joseph** in the Catholic Church, and in our school. Although to many it will forever be remembered as the year of face masks and quarantines, to us it will be remembered as the year Saint Joseph held our hands and led us through the unknown as God showered us with His unmistakable Grace. We began each school day with the Memorare to Saint Joseph and called on him as a school saying, "Ite ad Joseph!" (Go to Joseph!) and he never let us down. Despite all odds, and the recommendations of our public school districts, we promised our families that our school would be physically open to our students in September, and we met our commitment. Praise be to God, and an extremely dedicated staff, we have successfully run the race and have completed the pandemic school year of 2020-2021! Except for two short remote learning breaks centered around the holidays, our students were on-site learning and growing in our beautiful Catholic school for the full school year. For the lessons learned, the challenges conquered, and the virtues cultivated, we thank God and leave this year with our eyes on Him and our hearts on fire for the eternal reward that He has waiting for us.

In Christ,

Mrs. Coone, Principal



STATE OF THE SCHOOL STAKEHOLDER REPORT

This annual State of the School Report is written to provide information to our stakeholders, including parents, parishioners, and benefactors, about the wellness of Epiphany Catholic School. It is also written to meet accreditation requirements for the Minnesota Nonpublic Schools Accreditation Association (MNSAA).

“Accreditation provides a framework for the best possible educational program for learners. In addition to delivering recognized credibility of the quality of a school program in the eyes of stakeholders and the public, accreditation also offers outside objective validation that a school has met high standards and is actively seeking a quality educational program.”



EPIPHANY CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION

Epiphany Catholic School, an integral part of The Church of the Epiphany, is a Christ-centered faith community. Dedicated to formation of the whole person, we are committed to providing all students with the highest quality Catholic education.

We are forming Saints and Citizens.

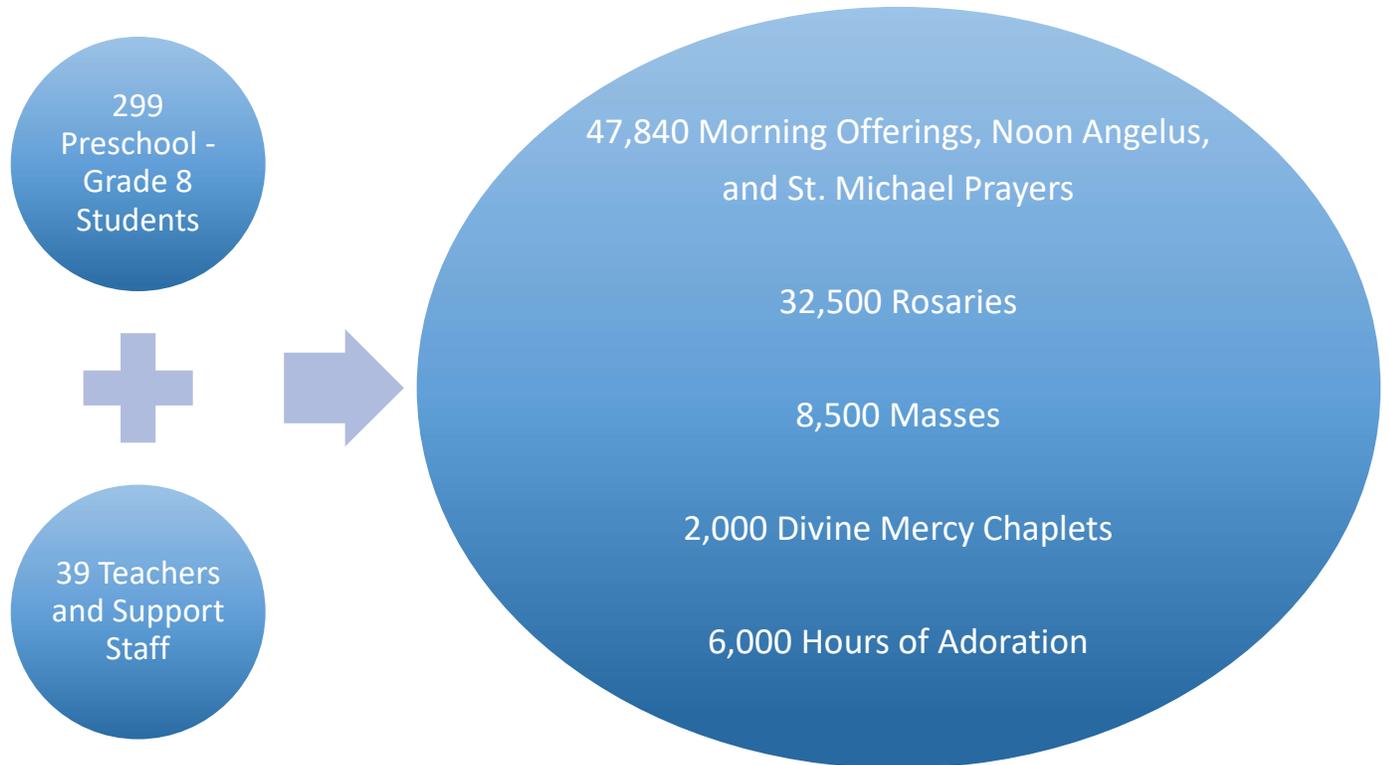
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Epiphany School Advisory Council’s primary purpose is the fostering of faith development and the advancement of the school community, in accordance with the bylaws and the school’s mission statement. Meetings were held monthly August through May to review goals and establish channels of success for the attainment of the mission of our Catholic school.

Father Dufner, Pastor Father Baker, Parochial Vicar	Ann Coone, Principal	Jay Tomaszewski, Parish Administrator
School Advisory Council Chair: Laura Peichel Members: Ami Bieurance, John Christianson, Ann Evans, Hilary Jeon, Stephanie Neuman, Rob Scalia, Kendra Turner, Nick Vasko		

STUDENT ENROLLMENT WITH A CATHOLIC WORLDVIEW

Our students play a critical spiritual role in the Communion of Saints, and their prayers, good works, and growth in virtue affect others profoundly. Here is a snapshot of our enrollment and the impact of our Catholic school.



CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Although we recall many events from this school year that mark our identity as a Catholic school working to form Saints and Citizens, there are three that were life-changing for both students and staff.

Live Ultrasounds of Unborn Children due Pro-Life Month

The month of January is Pro-Life Month, and we take full advantage of it to help us build a culture of life. Robbinsdale Women's Center brought their traveling ultrasound machine to our school and presented the miracle of life during three ultrasounds of children in the wombs of their mothers. The students were in awe as each unborn child of God, at various stages of development, moved safely and happily about while waiting for the day of their birth.



Vocations Week and Visiting Religious Sisters

Our school children were thrilled to be visited by Sisters from the Disciples of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Amarillo Texas, and the Religious Sisters of Mercy, Winona, for an entire week. These joyful, fully habited, Sisters spent priceless time with the students while visiting classrooms to share their Vocation story and participated in school activities. Father Dufner and Father Baker also shared their Vocation story and how they knew God was calling them to the Priesthood.

Treasures of the Church Sacred Relic Veneration and Showcase

Father Carlos Martins brought over 150 sacred relics to our school for veneration, including those of St. Maria Goretti, St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Faustina, a relic of the True Cross, and a piece of the Veil that is believed to have belonged to Our Lady. Prior to venerating the relics, Father Martin spoke with the students about relics and how the saints speak to us. Here are just a few of the comments our students shared about the experience and relic veneration:

- "It felt like my heart was coming out of my chest."
- "When I touched the relic of the True Cross, I felt like I was on fire."
- "When I touched it, it felt like holiness was going through me."

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Because the Pandemic of 2020-2021 caused students to be quarantined at home from time-to-time, we frequently had one or more students who attended school remotely while their classmates attended in-person. This meant that teachers needed to prepare double lesson plans: traditional lessons for students in the classroom, and electronic lessons for students learning from home on a computer. Our teachers became proficient at uploading assignments, downloading homework, teaching in front of cameras, and conferencing with students who were not present in their classroom. At the same time, our students adapted to doing “group work” with classmates who were only visual on a computer screen. It was far from ideal, but necessary. Although we plan to provide all in-person learning during 2021-2022, we are trained and ready to proceed should we be required to move to a model that incorporates some form of remote learning in the future.

Virtual Academic Showcase

Our teachers recorded some highlights of their students’ academic successes this year and presented them remotely through a beautiful showcase that our parents and internet visitors greatly appreciated. Highlights included memorized poetry, scientific experiments, song showcases, artwork, focuses of physical education, math achievements, historical monologues, Living Stations of the Cross and much more.

PRESCHOOL-GRADE 8 VIRTUAL ACADEMIC SHOWCASE 2021



Believe and Read Literacy Instruction, Grades K-2

Our school was selected to be a *Believe and Read* School in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Powered by the Catholic Schools Center of Excellence, and in partnership with Groves Academy, *Believe and Read* is a three-year initiative grounded in scientific research and decades of experience designed to help all learners, even those with attention issues and learning disabilities, learn critical literacy skills. In 2020-2021 K-2 students received *Believe and Read*; grade 3 will be added in 2021-2022.



Dave Ramsey Foundations in Personal Finance, Grades 6-8

Foundations in Personal Finance for Middle School is the premier curriculum for teaching financial literacy, and thanks to a very generous donor, our middle school students received this instruction for the first time this year. Topics included:

- Financial Decision Making
- Spending and Saving
- Credit and Debt
- Investing
- Risk Management
- Employment and Income

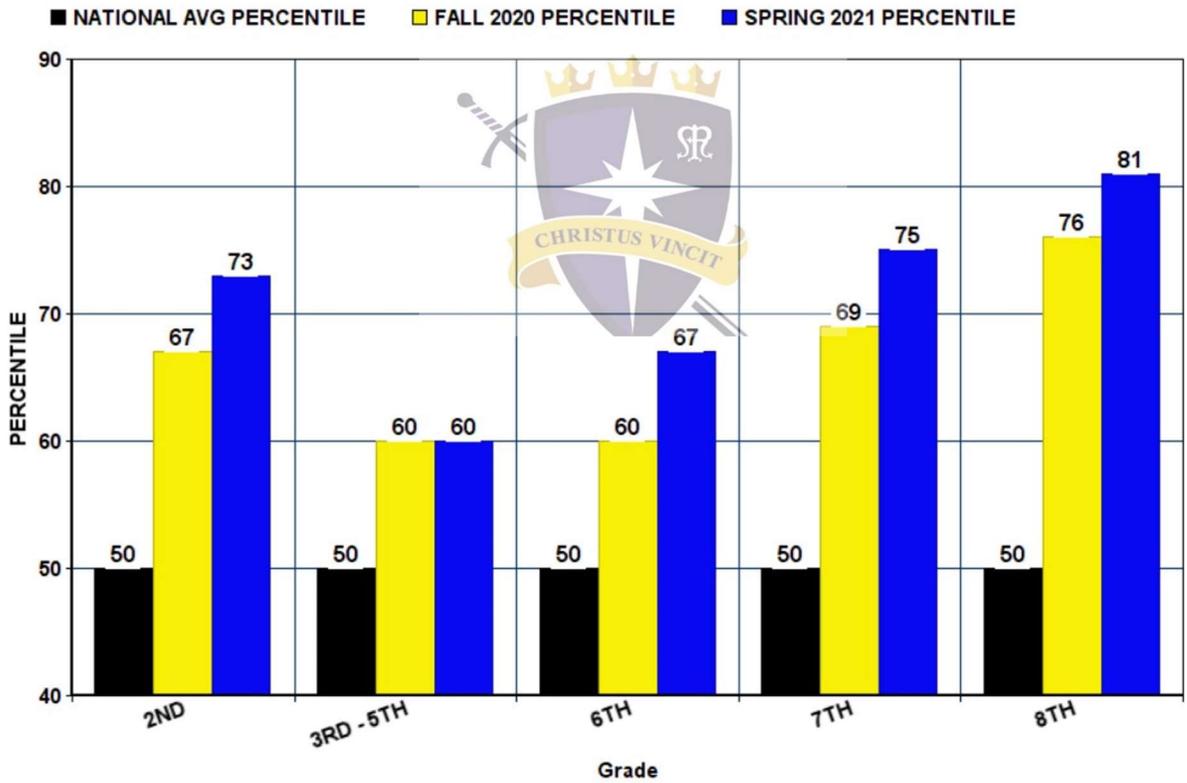


ASSESSMENT

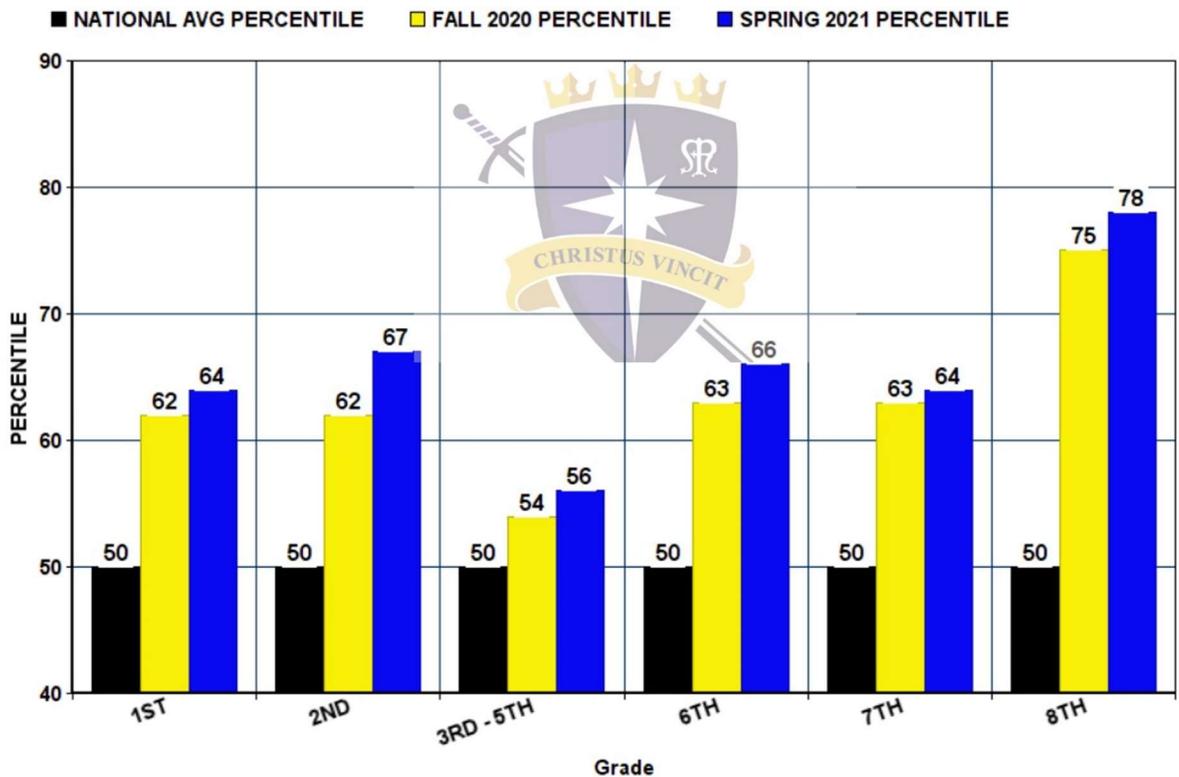
We use assessment to measure student knowledge *prior* to teaching, *progress during* teaching, and cumulative knowledge *after* teaching. Diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments are used by teachers and administrators to support educational progress in all subjects. This year, our students in grades 1-8 took the fall MAP assessment and students in grades K-8 took the winter and spring MAP assessment.

MAP, which stands for Measure of Academic Progress, is a powerful tool for measuring student growth over time. MAP tests are unique in that they are **adaptive tests** that dynamically adjust to a student's performance whether a student performs on, above, or below grade level. Our 2020-2021 results are summarized in the following charts, which compare the percentiles for each grade level from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. The black bar represents the national average (always 50th percentile), the yellow bar is the grade's Fall 2020 percentile, and the blue bar is the grade's Spring 2021 percentile. For reference, if the yellow and blue bars are the same height it means the students grew at the same rate as the national average. A higher blue bar means the students grew more than the national average.

FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021 COMPARISON: LANGUAGE USAGE



FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021 COMPARISON: MATH



SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT and PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS PLAN

During the first week of August, our families received the following letter, and subsequent attachments, that provided an introduction to the school year and guidance based upon the Covid-19 Pandemic and the requirements placed upon our schools:



Dear Epiphany School Families,

The new school year is shaping up, according to God's plan, and I am blessed to be part of it with you! So much is happening here with teachers returning, classrooms getting their final cleaning, schedules and class lists being finalized, and teaching supplies arriving by the caseload. As we have said for the past five months, "Only the students are missing!" But it won't be long before they begin filling our halls with conversations, laughter, and loads of activity. Grades K-8 begin on Tuesday, September 1 and Preschool begins on Tuesday, September 8; we'll be waiting and ready for you!

Our all-school spiritual theme this year is, "Ite Ad St. Joseph", which means "Go to St. Joseph". We're looking forward to teaching our students where this comes from in Scripture, and about the life of this mighty man who protected and cared for his family during the most difficult of times (both Joseph of the Old Testament's family, and Joseph of the New Testament's Holy Family). During the school year, our children will learn much about St. Joseph's virtues including courage, wisdom, prudence, obedience, and patience

while praying for his protection for those whom we love.

*Our annual **Back to School Open House** will be remote this year. I just hate to give you this news because our Open House is always so lively and fun, but pandemic restrictions require us to look at everything just a bit differently. Although this is far from ideal, we have plans to make it as welcoming, enjoyable, and valuable as possible for our students. Our teachers will prepare a short video introducing themselves and giving students a tour of their classroom along with important first day of school information and these will be emailed to our families. Links to these videos, teacher assignments, and a message from Father Dufner and I, will be available in one centralized location so students can check in with all of their favorite teachers before the first day of school. Hopefully, our joyful and lively Back to School Open House will return to normal with everyone on-site in 2021. Please plan to drop off school supplies (which can be bulky) during morning drop-off with students September 1, 2, 3; a little bit at a time.*

*Due to the unusual times upon us, I would like to invite **all families to pray a Novena to St. Joseph** asking for his protection for our children, staff, and families as we enter this school year. From August 24 – August 31, please pray the Memorare to St. Joseph printed below. On September 1, when we meet for the first day of school, we'll pray the ninth day of our Novena as a school family: "Remember, O most pure spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, my spiritual father, and beg your protection. O Foster Father of the Redeemer, despise not my petitions, but in your goodness hear and answer me. Amen."*

Accompanying attachments for parents included:

- *Our Pandemic Preparedness Response Plan (PPRP) for a Safe Re-Opening of School*
- *Safe Opening Commitment Document for School Staff and Parents*
- *Face Mask Policies and Procedures*
- *Home Screening Too for Covid-19 Symptoms*
- *Illness and Quarantine Guidelines*
- *CDC and MDH Health and Safety Guidance Documents and Decision Tree*

PARENT AND STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

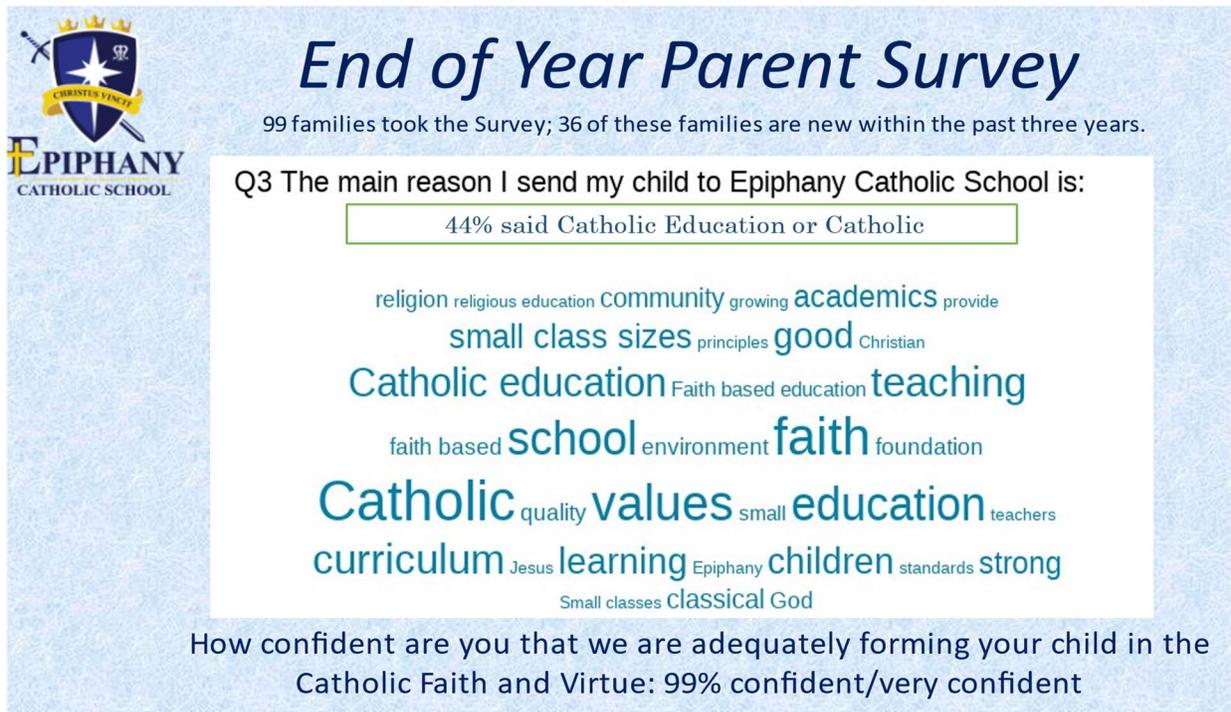
Epiphany School continues to communicate with parents and stakeholders regularly through weekly E-Happenings, parish bulletins, parent surveys, and State of the School Meetings.

2020-2021 Parent Surveys

This year's parent surveys asked questions about parent satisfaction with our Pandemic Preparedness Plan, school health and safety procedures, remote learning, the need for bussing, and academic rigor. The results were reviewed by teachers and shared with parents through E Happenings and our annual State of the School Meeting. Here are just a few comments from our survey:

- *Thank you for being open and teaching our children despite this past year's challenges.*
- *I am continually grateful for being a part of this school community.*
- *We love the school and the church.*
- *We are very blessed that our kids are at Epiphany.*

One question on our End of Year Survey asked parents for the main reason they send their child to our school. Here are the results:



State of the School Meeting

In May we hosted our annual Parent Social and State of the School Meeting, which was attended by over 150 guests. During the State of the School Meeting, we reported on:

- The success of our school's health in light of the current Covid-19 pandemic
- Our MNSAA accreditation objectives and progress
- Current Epiphany School programs, events, and enhancements
- Enrollment trends
- Our Financial Report and fundraising progress
- NWEA MAP assessment results
- Curriculum review, development, and planning
- Plans for the 2021-2022 school year

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Grab and Go Meal Program Serves 500,000 Free Meals

Our community service Grab and Go Meal Program served over 500,000 free meals from April 2020-May 2021 this year! Miss Rhonda and our Epiphany lunch crew served families in need with joy and compassion to a community still suffering from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Fundraising for Robbinsdale Women's Center and Feed My Starving Children



Our students adopted two community causes this year in which they raised funds and donated them back to non-profit organizations who serve the suffering:

- **\$2,386 for Robbinsdale Women's Center** by pledging every mile of a 500-mile trip that our 4th grade teacher, Mr. Shore, biked through Louisiana.
- **\$1,200 for Feed My Starving Children** by earning money and donating it to the organization prior to packaging food for the poor they serve.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The following images present a summary of this year's financial overview. The financial picture reminds us how blessed and grateful we are to have the parishioners of Epiphany Church to help support our school; without them, our tuition would be cost prohibitive for most of our families. The report also reminds all of us how important it is for us to use our resources wisely and continue to fundraise within the broader community.

 EPIPHANY CATHOLIC SCHOOL	<h1>Cost Per Student</h1>		
	18-19 Actual	19-20 Actual	20-21 Forecast
Total School Revenue (w/o lunch program)	1,791,813	1,639,123	1,365,650
Total School Expense (w/o lunch program)	2,235,551	1,854,968	1,854,934
Surplus / (Defecit)	(443,738)	(215,845)	(489,285)
Overhead Costs (facility, main., admin, utilities, etc.)	(375,000)	(375,000)	(375,000)
Total Parish Subsidy	(818,738)	(590,845)	(864,285)
Total Students	361	350	299
Total Cost per Student	7,231	6,371	7,458
Archdiocese Average Cost per Student			7,389

 EPIPHANY CATHOLIC SCHOOL	<h1>2020-2021 Fundraising</h1>	
Annual Gala <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest school fundraiser of the school year; family participation required • 2020 Net: \$82,000 		
Catholic United Financial Raffle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students sell raffle tickets; entire cost of raffle ticket given back to school • 2021 Net: \$35,000 		
Schulze Family Foundation "Covid Challenge" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be used for supplies and materials to re-open the school and family tuition relief • \$61,000 donated 		

ACCREDITATION REPORT



Epiphany Catholic School has been accredited by the Minnesota Nonpublic School Accrediting Association (MNSAA) since 1989. Our school files an annual progress report that delivers pointed information about our successes and challenges while providing the exemplary Catholic education we have promised to our families and stakeholders. An important component of the annual report is our School Strategic Plan (SSP), which documents our improvement

initiatives and progress. Every seven years, MNSAA does a comprehensive study of our school to ensure that we are working toward our objectives, reporting our progress to stakeholders, and succeeding. We have just completed our fourth year of the seven-year rotation. The following objectives were developed in 2016 and every year we work toward them and further enhance our school through the hard work of staff, parents, parishioners, and our community. The following is a summary of our Objectives and Outcomes for the 2020-2021 school year.



STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY OVERVIEW 2020-2021

Objective: Strengthen academic proficiency in math and reading.

Action Steps:

1. Teachers attended two days of professional development with a trainer from *Math Champions*. During the training, teachers learned best practices for developing math proficiency and number fluency.
2. A MAP professional trainer met with teachers to help review their student's MAP scores and develop strategies to help them reach their learning potentials.
3. Epiphany School adopted the *Groves Academy Believe and Read Program* for grades K-2 this year and will be adding grade 3 during the 2021-2022 school year. Believe and Read trains teachers how to teach literacy skills so that ALL learners obtain mastery of reading by the time they leave third grade.

Objective: Teachers will use effective learning strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Action Steps:

1. Teachers utilized the expertise of our Special Education and Title I teachers to obtain learning strategies and intervention plans for students who were struggling with understanding concepts due to special needs.
2. We adopted the Groves Academy Believe and Read Program for grades K-2 this year and will be adding grade 3 in 2021-2022. Believe and Read trains teachers how to teach literacy skills so that ALL learners obtain mastery of reading by the time they leave third grade. K-2 teachers had weekly coaching with a Groves Believe and Read Coach, PD through Groves Academy, and worked toward their certification as a Believe and Read Certified Teacher.

Objective: Ensure safety for all staff and students.

Action Steps:

1. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we wrote a Pandemic Preparedness Response Plan (PPRP) that would help our students and staff confidently return to school safely after the mandatory closing of all school buildings in March 2020. We spent much of the summer planning and writing this document.
2. Once complete, staff were trained on procedures and policies and the PPRP was mailed to parents and placed on our website. As the response to the pandemic changed throughout the school year, we updated it and provided parents the information via emails and our weekly E Happenings Newsletter.

