

THE STRATEGIC PLAN
OF
HOLY CROSS OF SAN ANTONIO
2014 - 2019

Introduction

Using the framework of the strategic plan authored by Brothers Donald Blauvelt and Stephen Walsh[†], C.S.C., the administration of Holy Cross of San Antonio took on the task of reviewing and updating the plan to fit the school's current needs in the spring of 2014.

The process used was one that involved much collaboration among all school building stakeholders. To begin, a steering committee was formed that consisted of both faculty and administration. The function of this committee was to oversee and organize the review of the document and crafting any changes or additions to the plan that would fit the school's current set of needs. From this committee, three committee chairmen were chosen to lead three different groups of faculty representatives for each goal defined by the steering committee. The goals proposed for this updated plan are listed below.

- *To strengthen the mission and identity of Holy Cross as a Catholic school in the tradition of the Congregation of Holy Cross*
- *To define academic programs and policies for improvement consistent with the mission.*
- *To allocate resources consistent with the mission*

In their deliberations, the steering committee did not see the need to veer away from three of the established goals already defined by the plan created in the spring of 2007. Therefore, information and input were gathered to address the above listed goals given the current state of the school. Input was gathered through formal interviews of faculty and staff by committee members, surveys disseminated to parents, and group discussions held at the administrative and faculty levels.

Throughout the process, all involved made a point to stay true to the mission of the school and the vision of Blessed Basile Moreau – which, in turn, ensured that the welfare and success of the students of Holy Cross of San Antonio were put at the forefront of all decisions. Using Blessed Moreau's own words, nothing can encapsulate the formulation of this plan better than the following:

Hurry then; take up this work of resurrection, never forgetting that the special end of your institute is, before all, to sanctify youth. It is by this that you will contribute to preparing the world for better times than ours; for these students who now attend your school are the parents of the future, the parents of future generations, each one of whom bears within them a family. Basile Moreau, Christian Education

It is in this spirit that Holy Cross of San Antonio is committed to helping form citizens for Earth and Heaven who will bring light to the rest of the world for the next five years and beyond.

I. CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND HOLY CROSS MISSION

GOAL I. To strengthen the mission and identity of Holy Cross of San Antonio as a Catholic School in the tradition of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

“The first duty of any teacher is to produce Christians: Society has a greater need for people of values than it has for scholars.” Blessed Basile Moreau, *Christian Education*

Knowing that all things that occur in the walls of Holy Cross of San Antonio flow from a strong sense of Catholic identity and commitment to the mission of the school, a special emphasis is always given to strengthening these two aspects of the daily school life. Therefore, to further strengthen this already strong commitment, Holy Cross proposes the following areas of continued growth.

Strategies:

1. All Holy Cross students will be educated in the history and charisms of the Congregation of Holy Cross.
2. Holy Cross faculty and administration will cultivate a lifelong commitment to service through a comprehensive program of Christian service.
3. A lifelong commitment to both individual and community prayer will be fostered for all students through prayer, school liturgies, prayer services and school campus retreats.
4. Holy Cross will continue to encourage all students to value and appreciate the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.
5. Students will be able to recognize and appreciate the Social Justice teachings of the Catholic Church.
6. Students will understand the connection with their local parish community by encouraging them to receive sacramental preparations, attend Mass at their parishes, and foster involvement in youth groups and parish events.

In order to achieve growth in the above identified areas, Holy Cross of San Antonio proposes the following action plan to be implemented over a five year period ending in May of 2020.

Action Steps

- 1Ai. The Theology department, in conjunction with administration, will develop a curriculum for middle school students in order to systematically expose them to the different aspects

of the Congregation of Holy Cross. This curriculum will help students understand important Holy Cross feast days and celebrations to include their participation in liturgies and prayer services.

- 1Aii. As a capstone type of experience, juniors will be encouraged to participate in our summer leadership program at St. Edwards University, our pilgrimage to St. Joseph's Oratory, the Holy Cross Immersion Experience, and the Notre Dame Vision Program. These programs will integrate all that the curriculum encompasses and will allow those juniors to come back after their experience and be student leaders/teachers in the charisms of Holy Cross.
- 2B. Holy Cross faculty and administration will continue to expect and encourage students to participate in Christian service. In order to understand the Theology of Christian service, Holy Cross will also encourage students to reflect on their experiences of service as part of their service requirement for Theology classes.
- 3C. Prayer will be modeled on a daily basis in the classrooms by continuing the practice of beginning each class with prayer.
- 4D. Holy Cross Theology classes will continue to expound on the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and promote its teachings especially in regard to social justice issues. Focus will be given on any special topics of the time that could be affected by said teachings.
- 5E. Holy Cross faculty and staff will cultivate a strong sense of respect and value of the dignity of every human person. An intellectual understanding of social justice teachings, taught in the third year Theology course, will continue to be expected of every Holy Cross graduate. Therefore, a special focus will be given to this third year Theology course when transfer senior students are accepted.
- 6F. Holy Cross will foster a sense of community for students in their parishes, Holy Cross faculty and staff will promote the diocesan youth programs such as Youth Spectacular and will inspire students to participate in community service events and activities at their local parishes.

These areas of continued growth and attendant action plan will strengthen the Catholic identity of Holy Cross students and steep its faculty in the practice of cultivating the mission of the school. The strengthening of these two components and the impression they will leave on the hearts and minds of our students and faculty will further foster Blessed Father Basile Moreau's vision of "sanctifying youth" at Holy Cross of San Antonio.

II. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

GOAL II: To define and strengthen academic policies and programs which are consistent with the mission

“We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart. While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for heaven.” Bl. Basile Moreau, *Christian Education*

Understanding that the academic component of Holy Cross of San Antonio is one of the most important factors of the school's operation, much care should be given in developing not only the students but also the faculty. To this end, the following areas of growth have been identified for the next five years.

Strategies:

1. Holy Cross students will improve their standardized test scores (ITBS, PSAT, SAT, and AP) to be above the state average on each respective test.
2. Holy Cross faculty will be offered various opportunities for professional development to address best practices in content areas as well as integration of standardized testing preparation in their established curriculum.
3. Holy Cross classes will increase the level of rigor at all levels (on-level, honors, and AP).
4. Holy Cross subject departments will engage in the ongoing evaluation of established *scopes and sequences* with the intention of achieving better horizontal and vertical alignment.
5. Holy Cross will promote more technology use in the classroom to help our teachers better reach the different learning styles of the students in their classroom.

In order to achieve the above areas of growth, Holy Cross proposes the following action plan:

Action Steps:

- 1Ai. Holy Cross math and English departments will integrate a program in the established math and English curriculum. This program will provide students with preparation in successful SAT and PSAT strategies (implemented in 2014-2015 school year).
- 1Aii. Holy Cross administration and department chairs will analyze the summaries of ITBS, PSAT, SAT, and AP scores in order to monitor the progress of students and the effectiveness of curricular programming. These evaluations will help craft changes in

curriculum and instructional practices to better address the needs of our student population.

- 1Aiii. Holy Cross administration will monitor the implementation of the PSAT/SAT preparation program in the classrooms through lesson plan inclusion, teacher feedback, and evaluation of PSAT and SAT score reports.
- 2Bi. Holy Cross administration will engage faculty in *professional development* sessions, by department, to address the weaknesses for each section of standardized testing. Teachers will receive training in best practices to bolster skills and increase rigor in the content area.
- 2Bii. Holy Cross faculty will engage in professional development on how to make classes more meaningful to students while increasing the rigor of the subject's content and the effective use of technology as a learning tool.
- 3D. In order to make sure that all avenues are taken in regards to reaching all students, Holy Cross teachers will meet by grade levels, departments, and AP/honors groups in order to collaborate about best practices, successful strategies for shared students and classes, and to strategize on how to increase rigor in the classroom.
- 4D. Holy Cross subject departments will meet with the Academic Dean at least once a month to discuss rigor in their classes. These meetings will be fueled by guided teacher dialogue stemming from some source (article, video, etc.). These meetings will also be a vehicle to take a comprehensive look at the *scopes and sequences* of each department in order to evaluate and adjust the level of rigor as it flows vertically.
- 5E. Holy Cross faculty, with the input of the administration, will develop faculty goals for integration of technology in the classroom with the focus of using it as a tool to help increase *rigor* and make learning more accessible to students who would benefit from technological integration.

Given the above list of strategies, Holy Cross of San Antonio feels very confident that the faculty and student body will make long strides of improvement. Making these strides will help the faculty, as Blessed Father Moreau stated, "contribute to preparing the world for better times than ours".

III. OPERATIONAL VITALITY

GOAL III: *To allocate resources consistent with the mission*

“We do not want our students to be ignorant of anything they should know. To this end, we shall shrink from no sacrifice.” Basile Moreau, Christian Education

In order to allocate resources consistent with the mission, Holy Cross of San Antonio understands that it must be attentive to the financial needs of both the immediate daily operational needs and long term financial goals of the school. To these ends, the following objectives have been identified for the financial side of Holy Cross of San Antonio.

Strategies

1. Holy Cross will systematically address, through the annual operating budget of the school, multiple and on-going “short-term” and “long-term” facility needs.
2. Holy Cross will establish financial priorities to continue providing affordable and accessible Catholic education.
3. Holy Cross will continue to strive for financial transparency in all of its fiscal operations.
4. Holy Cross will focus financial attention to the attainment (when possible) of technological equipment in order to remain competitive with the ever changing needs and methods of modern instruction.
5. Holy Cross will use aggressive marketing techniques to bring the Holy Cross of San Antonio mission and story to a broader audience of prospective donors and organizations for possible partnerships and financial support.

The above objectives, to be implemented to completion by May 2019, will be accomplished by the following strategies.

Action Steps

- 1A. Holy Cross will continue to seek every opportunity and commit to raise funds in order to improve the current state of school facilities such as: the completion of the athletic track renovation which will be used as a source of revenue for the school as well as for community events; and, improvements and renovation of the school library.
- 2Bi. Holy Cross will continue to make Catholic education affordable by seeking and applying for new grants while continuing to maintain grants that the school is annually awarded. In addition to grants, school events such as the President’s Blue and Gold Gala and the Holy Cross Annual Fund are fundraisers that help offer financial assistance for student tuition.
- 2Bii. Holy Cross will explore the possibility of creating an event separate from the President’s Blue & Gold gala to honor Vikki Carr for her contributions to Holy Cross. This will increase our visibility in the community as well as help raise funds for student financial assistance.

- 2Biii. Holy Cross will continue to work with the Hope for the Future scholarship fund, the Aramark program, and the Holy Cross Legacy of Light Program in order to offer as many financial opportunities as possible to make Catholic education accessible.
- 3C. Holy Cross will continue to publish the Holy Cross Annual Report in order to show the community a snapshot of highlights from the school academic year, its financial standing, and the various ways various benefactors support the Holy Cross mission. In turn, the annual publication provides financial transparency to ensure and foster confidence among stakeholders and benefactors alike.
- 4D. Holy Cross, in order to meet the technology needs across all curricular and administrative functions of the school, will develop a plan that addresses the issue of technology attainment and procurement.
- 5E. Holy Cross will create additional partnerships and solicit help from new resources in the community in the hopes of increasing the donor base of the school and the exposure to a wider audience in the community.

These strategies, when implemented, will allow and empower the faculty and staff to continue to “take up this work of resurrection”. Thereby, providing the world with members of society steeped in the mission and charism of Holy Cross and the traditions of Holy Cross of San Antonio.

IV. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

“With the eyes of faith consider the greatness of the mission and the wonderful amount of good that one can accomplish. And also consider the great reward promised to those who have taught the truth to others and have helped form them into justice: “They will shine eternally in the skies like the stars of the heavens.” With the hope of this glory, we must generously complete the Lord’s work.” – Basile Moreau, Christian Education

In order to sustain the mission, identity, academic success, and operational vitality of Holy Cross of San Antonio, the leadership structure (Board, President, and Administrative Staff) is charged with the task of continuous improvement and renewal of school programming, student and faculty formation, and self-awareness of mission integration. To this end, the following strategies have been identified for the continued growth of the Holy Cross Leadership Team.

Strategies

1. The leadership structure of the school will foster their own understanding of the Holy Cross mission and charisms in order to better inculcate the school and its staff in what it means to be Holy Cross Educator.
2. The school administrative staff will organize an annual faculty retreat to foster the integration of Holy Cross mission and charisms in the everyday interactions between faculty and other Holy Cross community members (students, parents, etc.).
3. The administrative staff will evaluate the effectiveness of all school programming to ensure effectiveness and student impact.
4. Being committed to the involvement of all Holy Cross constituencies being involved in the formation of students, the administrative staff will ensure that quality programming and information is offered to parents and other entities that operate outside of the school's walls (donors, alumni, etc.).

Action Steps

- 1A. All members of the leadership structure will attend a retreat that will focus on the mission, charism and family spirit of the Holy Cross Congregation as well as those specific to Holy Cross of San Antonio.
- 2A. The annual faculty retreat will occur before the school year starts and a follow-up session each will be held in each semester via mission moments, faculty discussions, and presentations dealing with retreat topics.
- 3A. In order to measure effectiveness the administrative staff will utilize different instruments such as surveys, teacher evaluations, student outcomes (grades, college acceptances, and test scores), as well as other anecdotal evidence to gauge effectiveness and impact of school programming and make changes according to that data.
- 4A. The administrative staff will work with parent organizations (PTC, Booster Club, etc.) to share relevant data, information, and accolades that will not only showcase the accomplishments of students but give insight in how to help students continue to be successful. Forums such as PTC, Booster Club, alumni, and other meetings organized by the advancement and marketing office will be used for this purpose.

These strategies for action, when implemented, will allow for Holy Cross of San Antonio to thrive under any leadership team. This commitment to continuous improvement and renewal of self, inside the mission of the school, are some of the greatest hallmarks of a Holy Cross educator – the best qualities to use when leading a school steeped in the Moreau Tradition of Education. Being the examples of this tradition will not only inspire faculty to be better educators, but will help students become better citizens and parents to be better versed in the traditions that make their children so successful.