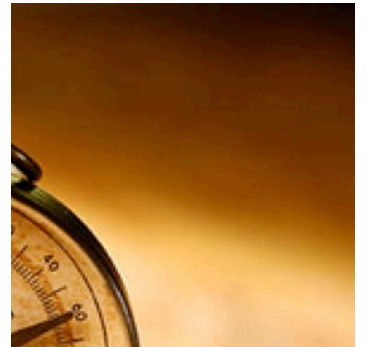

Sustainability and Growth Study



St. Mary's Catholic School
Cheyenne, WY

January 2022



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I. INTRODUCTION

St. Mary's Catholic School is a Pre-Kindergarten through 6th grade Catholic elementary school located in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The school is supported by and serves the Cathedral of St. Mary as well as St. Joseph Catholic Church and Church of the Holy Trinity.

Since 1884, St. Mary's Catholic School has been educating children in Laramie County and many surrounding counties. Their tradition is rich, and their fundamentals are solid. Their mission is to develop each student spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially so that each is prepared to live and serve in a changing society as a self-respecting and responsible citizen.

Changes in recent years have made an impact on enrollment, finances, and marketing. In light of these changes, it is important to study the sustainability and growth of the school and determine the circumstances that will allow it to continue to thrive and build enrollment.

The following objectives will be achieved as a result of this study:

- Prepare an objective assessment of the current experience and organization of St. Mary's Catholic School

- Evaluate the sustainability and vitality of St. Mary's Catholic School for the long term

This study will focus on the clarity of the school's mission, enrollment potential, perceived program quality, image, communications, and financial sustainability. The following are steps taken to achieve the objectives:

- Data Collection

- Constituent Involvement

- Virtual Visits

- Enrollment Potential

- Program Assessment

- Analysis of Key Demographic Data

- Recommendations for Sustainability and Growth

II. DEMOGRAPHICS

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OBSERVATIONS

Figure 1

Total Population

County City	Census 2010	Estimate 2021	Projection 2026	Change 2021 to 2026	
				Number	Percent
Laramie County	91,738	100,461	103,343	2,882	2.9%
Cheyenne	59,466	64,758	66,059	1,301	2.0%
Ranchettes*	5,798	6,690	7,058	368	5.5%
South Greeley*	4,217	4,500	4,788	288	6.4%

*Census Designated Places

Source: Environics Analytics by Claritas 2021

Figure 2

Population Projections

County City	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Change 2020 to 2040	
						Number	Percent
Laramie County	100,160	104,460	108,500	110,600	112,580	12,420	11.0%
Cheyenne	64,858	67,642	70,258	71,618	72,900	8,042	11.0%

Source: Wyoming Department of Administration & Information, Economic Analysis Division, August 2019

Figure 3

Population by Families

County City	Estimate 2021	Projection 2026	Change 2021 to 2026	
			Number	Percent
Laramie County	27,205	28,133	928	3.4%
Cheyenne	17,131	17,588	457	2.7%
Ranchettes*	2,063	2,184	121	5.9%
South Greeley*	1,157	1,236	79	6.8%

*Census Designated Places

Source: Environics Analytics by Claritas 2021

Figure 4a
Birth and Death Trends for Laramie County

Year	Births	Deaths
2005	1,305	724
2006	1,305	724
2007	1,362	736
2008	1,360	667
2009	1,272	703
2010	1,285	739
2011	1,246	756
2012	1,261	735
2013	1,245	713
2014	1,256	742
2015	1,301	842
2016	1,315	795
2017	1,261	782
2018	1,282	893
2019	1,190	928

Source: Wyoming Department of Health

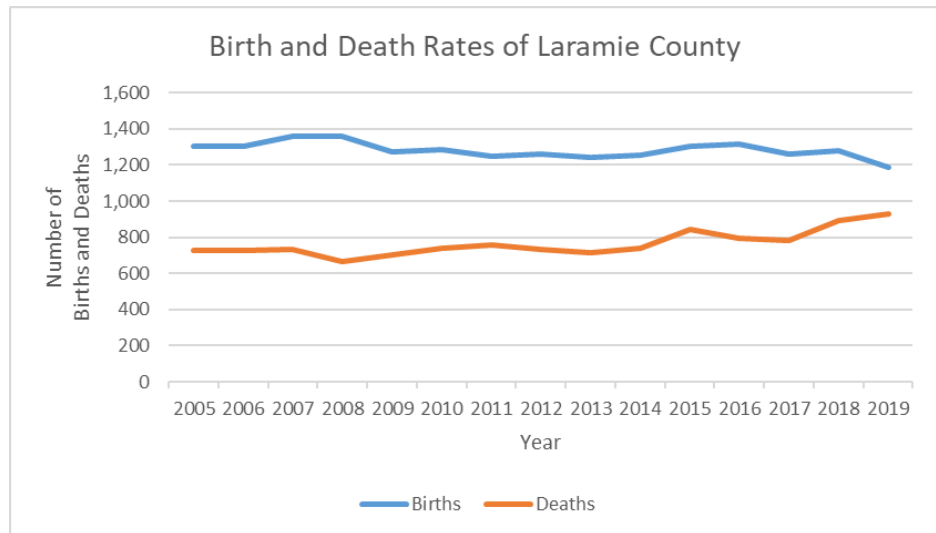


Figure 4b
Birth Death Trends and Natural Increase for Laramie County

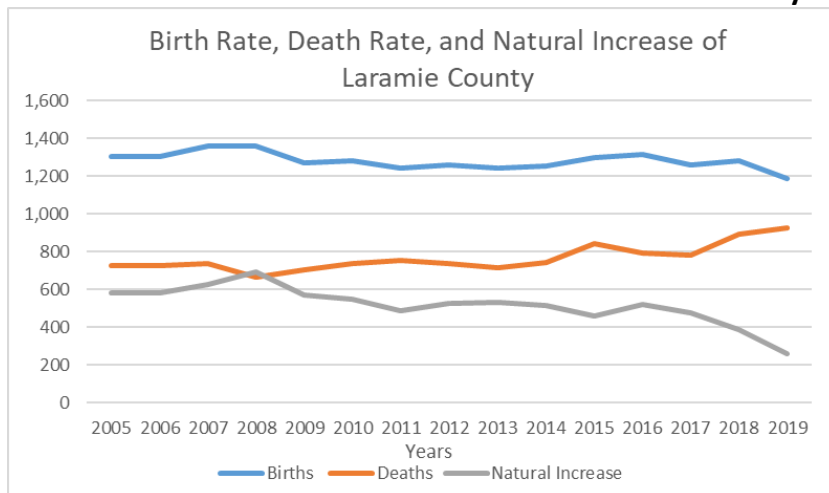


Figure 5
Population by Age Groups

Ages 0 to 4					
County City	Census 2010	Est. 2021	Proj. 2026	Change 2021 to 2026 Number	Percent
Laramie County	6,727	6,337	6,480	143	2.3%
Cheyenne	4,273	3,997	4,055	58	1.5%
Ranchettes*	299	307	324	17	5.5%
South Greeley*	384	346	361	15	4.3%
Total	11,683	10,987	11,220	233	2%

Ages 5 to 9					
County City	Census 2010	Est. 2021	Proj. 2026	Change 2021 to 2026 Number	Percent
Laramie County	6,234	6,379	6,391	12	0.2%
Cheyenne	3,922	4,157	4,137	-20	-0.5%
Ranchettes*	356	328	336	8	2.4%
South Greeley*	360	354	367	13	3.7%
Total	10,872	11,218	11,231	13	0%

*Census Designated Places

Source: Environics Analytics by Claritas 2021

Ages 10 to 14					
County City	Census 2010	Est. 2021	Proj. 2026	Change 2021 to 2026 Number	Percent
Laramie County	5,886	6,562	6,452	-110	-1.7%
Cheyenne	3,646	4,299	4,191	-108	-2.5%
Ranchettes*	447	357	352	-5	-1.4%
South Greeley*	270	350	359	9	2.6%
Total	10,249	11,568	11,354	-214	-2%

Ages 15 to 17					
County City	Census 2010	Est. 2021	Proj. 2026	Change 2021 to 2026 Number	Percent
Laramie County	3,554	3,846	4,160	314	8.2%
Cheyenne	2,216	2,438	2,693	255	10.5%
Ranchettes*	282	238	232	-6	-2.5%
South Greeley*	178	198	221	23	11.6%
Total	6,230	6,720	7,306	586	9%

*Census Designated Places

Source: Environics Analytics by Claritas 2021

County City	Total Population		White*		Black or African Amer.*		Asian*		All Other*		Hispanic or Latino	
	2021	2026	2021	2026	2021	2026	2021	2026	2021	2026	2021	2026
Laramie County	100,461	103,343	77.2%	75.6%	2.4%	2.5%	1.3%	1.4%	3.4%	3.6%	15.7%	16.9%
Cheyenne	64,758	66,059	75.8%	74.3%	2.8%	2.8%	1.4%	1.6%	3.5%	3.8%	16.5%	17.6%
Ranchettes*	6,690	7,058	86.7%	85.7%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	2.3%	2.4%	8.2%	9.0%
South Greeley*	4,500	4,788	68.5%	65.8%	2.4%	2.5%	0.5%	0.6%	3.0%	2.9%	25.6%	28.2%
Total County	100,461	103,343	77.2%	75.6%	2.4%	2.5%	1.3%	1.4%	3.4%	3.6%	15.7%	16.9%

* not Hispanic or Latino

*Census Designated Places

Source: Environics Analytics by Claritas 2021

Figure 7**Laramie County School District #1 K-6 Average Daily Enrollment**

School Name	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 15-16 to 19-20	
						Number	Percent
Alta Vista Elementary	305	272	272	255	238	-67	-22%
Arp Elementary	372	359	348	323	337	-35	-9%
Baggs Elementary	323	335	308	305	313	-10	-3%
Bain Elementary	336	315	303	272	256	-80	-24%
Buffalo Ridge Elementary	383	213	181	187	190	-193	-50%
Cole Elementary	209	215	190	158	144	-65	-31%
Davis Elementary	284	301	353	362	357	73	26%
Deming Elementary	116	115	110	105	119	3	3%
Dildine Elementary	488	417	325	313	299	-189	-39%
Fairview Elementary	134	141	130	130	117	-17	-13%
Gilchrist Elementary	109	104	100	97	105	-4	-4%
Goins Elementary	359	346	337	328	333	-26	-7%
Hebard Elementary	168	171	138	114	89	-79	-47%
Henderson Elementary	316	291	288	267	285	-31	-10%
Hobbs Elementary	446	410	381	372	365	-81	-18%
Clawson Elementary		10	10	11			
Jessup Elementary	261	251	276	293	298	37	14%
Lebhart Elementary	103	106	95	86	85	-18	-17%
Miller Elementary	93	84	86	88	92	-1	-1%
Pioneer Park Elementary	296	283	346	431	419	123	42%
Rossmann Elementary	337	349	359	326	309	-28	-8%
Willadsen Elementary					9		
Anderson Elementary	377	336	335	310	303	-74	-20%
Afflerbach Elementary	455	451	390	395	396	-59	-13%
Freedom Elementary	330	318	341	373	399	69	21%
Sunrise Elementary	367	366	361	365	378	11	3%
Saddle Ridge Elementary	461	474	366	359	362	-99	-21%
Prairie Wind Elementary	426	443	461	441	445	19	4%
Meadowlark Elementary		240	532	545	551		
PODER Academy	174	160	160	156	161	-13	-7%
Total District	8,028	7,876	7,882	7,767	7,754	-274	-3%

Source: Wyoming Department of Education

Figure 8**Laramie County School District #2 K-6 Average Daily Enrollment**

School Name	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 15-16 to 19-20	
						Number	Percent
Albin Elementary	61	54	49	43	43	-18	-30%
Carpenter Elementary	93	99	104	98	93	0	0%
Pine Bluffs Elementary	152	148	149	157	150	-2	-1%
Burns Elementary	247	261	264	245	283	36	15%
Total District	553	562	566	543	569	16	3%

Source: Wyoming Department of Education

- a. The total population of Laramie County is expected to remain stable with a projected 2.9% (2,882 people) growth from 2021-2026. The largest growth is projected in the CDP (census designated places) areas of Ranchettes (north of Cheyenne) at 5.5% and South Greeley (South Greeley Highway area south of Cheyenne) at 6.4% by 2026. The city of Cheyenne grew by 9% between 2010 and 2021 with slower growth projected at 2% (1,301 people) over the next five years. (Figure 1)
- b. Long-term population growth for Laramie County is estimated at 11% (12,420 people) between 2020 and 2040 with a more significant increase between 2020 and 2030 (8%) and a slower rate (2.3%) between 2030 and 2040. A total of 65% of the county's long-term growth will be in the city of Cheyenne. Cheyenne is projected to increase 11% by 2040. (Figure 2)
- c. Laramie County's population is growing due to the increase of net migration (more people moving in than moving out of the county) as opposed to a natural increase (more births than deaths). The recent declining birth rate will have some impact on school enrollment in the future unless more families with children relocate to the county and its areas. The birth rates of Laramie County have trended downward from 1,315 births in 2016 to 1,190 births in 2019. (Figures 4a, 4b)
- d. The ethnic-racial proportions of Laramie County are projected to become somewhat more diverse with some increase in the Hispanic or Latino community as a percentage of the total population. (Figure 6)
- e. In terms of child and school-age populations, ages 0-4 are expected to increase slightly in the county and areas. Cheyenne will experience a slight increase in 0-4 age group with some decline projected in both the 5-9 and 10-14 age groups. (Figure 5)
- f. The decrease in the 0-4 age group in Cheyenne and slower growth in the school-age group (5-14 years) between 2000 and 2010 are reflected in the enrollment experience of the Laramie #1 public school district (3% decline, 274 students since 2015-16). Laramie County School District #2 experienced a more stable enrollment trend during the same time period. (Figures 5, 7, 8)
- g. While there may have been some demographic impact at St. Mary's School, the pandemic, leadership turnover, and possibly the closure of the junior high school grades had an impact on enrollment the past two years.

III. PARISH DATA

DATA AND OBSERVATIONS

Figure 9
Registered Households

Parish	Years					Change 2017 to 2021	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Number	Percent
Cathedral of St. Mary	2895	2850	2770	2698	2660	-235	-8%
Church of the Holy Trinity	904	895	997	1,001	927	23	3%
St. Joseph Catholic Church	567	638	697	786	714	147	26%
Total	4,366	4,383	4,464	4,485	4,301	-65	-1%

Source: Parish Offices

Figure 10
Infant Baptisms

Parish	Years					Change 2017 to 2021	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Number	Percent
Cathedral of St. Mary	35	36	39	23	37	2	6%
Church of the Holy Trinity	16	24	7	11	9	-7	-44%
St. Joseph Catholic Church	49	38	37	31	27	-22	-45%
Total	100	98	83	65	73	-27	-27%

Source: Parish Offices

Figure 11
First Eucharists

Parish	Years					Change 2017 to 2021	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Number	Percent
Cathedral of St. Mary	77	60	56	53	39	-38	-49%
Church of the Holy Trinity	34	39	44	28	27	-7	-21%
St. Joseph Catholic Church	49	38	37	31	27	-22	-45%
Total	160	137	137	112	93	-67	-42%

Source: Parish Offices

Figure 12
K-6 Religious Education

Parish	Years					Change 2017 to 2021	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Number	Percent
Cathedral of St. Mary*	228	190	107	106	115	-113	-50%
Church of the Holy Trinity	146	165	169	137	16	-130	-89%
St. Joseph Catholic Church	114	124	113	110	102	-12	-11%
Total	488	479	389	353	233	-255	-52%

* Note: Cathedral of St. Mary's 2020 Religious Enrollment includes PK

Source: Parish Offices

Figure 13a
Market Share: First Eucharists

Parish Data	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
First Eucharists	160	137	137	112	93
Number of 2nd Grade Students in school	21	21	23	25	14
% of First Eucharist	13%	15%	17%	22%	15%

Source: Parish Offices and St. Mary's Catholic School Data Form

Figure 13b
Market Share: Religious Education

Grades K to 6	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
K-6 religious education enrollment	488	479	389	353	233
K-6 students at St. Mary's Catholic School	105	125	103	71	71
Total in Catholic education	593	604	492	424	304
Percent enrolled in St. Mary's Catholic School K-6	17.7%	20.7%	20.9%	16.7%	23.4%

Source: Parish Offices and St. Mary's Catholic School Data Form

- a. The number of registered parish households in Cheyenne declined by approximately 1% between 2017 and 2021. Given the experience of the pandemic in the past year and a half, the recent decreases can be attributed to the virtual experience and parishioners continuing to stay home. Prior to the initial COVID protocols Holy Trinity and St. Joseph parishes were showing some growth. (Figure 9)
- b. The pandemic quarantine and protocols that followed had an impact on sacramental and formation participation among child-age Catholics. Prior to the pandemic, infant baptisms were stable at the Cathedral of St. Mary with some decline at Holy Trinity and St. Joseph parishes. First Eucharist recipients increased at Holy Trinity and decreased at Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Joseph, while religious education enrollment grew at Holy Trinity, remained somewhat stable at St. Joseph, and declined at Cathedral of St. Mary. (Figures 10, 11, 12)
- c. Market share is an enrollment metric that serves as a different metric to assess growth in enrollment for Catholic children in a faith formation program (parish religious education or Catholic school). St. Mary's School's market share of all Catholic children receiving First Eucharist grew between 2017 and 2020 from 13% to 22%. This number reveals the market share that the school received from the parishes of Cathedral of St. Mary, Church of the Holy Trinity, and St. Joseph Catholic Church. (Figure 13a)
- d. In this case, it shows an opportunity to increase enrollment by focusing on parishioners who have school age children. Similarly, St. Mary Catholic School has enrolled 23.4% of the K-6 students enrolled in religious education. (Figure 13b)



IV.MISSION AND CATHOLIC IDENTITY

OBSERVATIONS

- a. St. Mary Catholic School fosters and enriches the faith life of its students through sacramental preparation, Mass attendance, daily prayer, and religious instruction.
- b. St. Mary School students are exposed to leadership and service opportunities grounded in the four pillars of faith: The Creed (Faith processed), The Sacraments (Faith celebrated), Christian Life (Faith lived), and Prayer (Faith expressed and deepened).
- c. The Catholic Identity Team creates common goals in order to strengthen the Catholic identity and faith formation of faculty and students. The Catholic Identity Team includes the PK teacher, 1st grade teacher, music teacher, principal, parent representative, and pastor.
- d. The parish's Director of Religious Education and the school's Faith Formation Coordinator collaborate in student faith formation and education. Parish and school are working to have similar/same resources and teaching materials.
- e. The Catholic identity of the school has been a more recent focus and is heading in the right direction according to faculty.
- f. The school is perceived by the parent community as a family within a caring environment with strong values. Parents perceive the teachers as caring, dedicated, and committed to the mission of the school.
- g. Several stakeholders are optimistic regarding clarity of direction under the leadership of Fr. Tom Cronkleton. Several positive comments regarding the visibility of Principal Jenni Bridges were noted by parents.
- h. Per the pastor, the Catholic identity of the school is evident visually and in practice. He is actively engaged at the school in leading prayer during the week and celebrating Mass weekly or, if unavailable, one of the associate pastors serves as celebrant.
- i. Through interviews, numerous comments were made regarding the disconnect between the parish and school. It appears that some school members are unaware of the support (staff, financial, planning, etc.) provided by parish leadership and others for the school.
- j. There is no school faculty retreat during the year. There is no Catholic identity/mission orientation for teachers new to St. Mary's School or updating for veteran faculty and staff. A key issue is how to orient teachers who are not Catholic into the culture and environment of a Catholic school.

V. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

OBSERVATIONS

- a. The principal is currently in her second year of leadership following a somewhat tumultuous year prior to her assuming this position. Last and this year are periods of transition to a new leadership style. The pastor is also new to the parish and school, even though he serves as chair of the St. Mary's Catholic School Foundation.
- b. St. Mary's has a School Advisory Board which is in transition through bylaws revision and changes in membership to a more skills-based focus.
- c. The Leadership Team is comprised of the principal, vice principal, marketing director, and administrative assistant who meet routinely via email or text and are focused on the logistical matters of the school.
- d. The Diocese of Cheyenne has little to no advisement on Catholic school direction, operations, budgets, principal mentorship, and effective practices to ensure the success of its Catholic schools and its leadership.
- e. Some parents interviewed indicate that a vision for the school needs to be defined and shared so they have a clear idea of a path forward for the future.
- f. The Parent Teacher Organization is active with seasonal activities, raising funds through smaller events to secure funding for classroom resources and equipment.
- g. There is mandatory involvement for families in the school at 50 hours per family and a \$300 fundraising expectation. The goal is for parent engagement and support as well as community building.
- h. The principal is a voting member of the Parish Pastoral Council. Pastoral Council leadership views the school as providing high quality character and spiritual development for students and is well thought of in the community. They are unsure of the academic strength of the school due to the lack of resources and quality/turnover of teachers. They see the current principal as a strength for the school.

VI.ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

OBSERVATIONS

- a. School leadership identifies the curriculum as holistic “classical” integrated with the Catholic faith and social/emotional learning. It is standards-based with St. Mary’s developing its own standards that are as rigorous as state standards. State standards are Common Core and therefore not used. Curricular standards of the Diocese of Arlington were used as the basis for St. Mary’s standards.
- b. St. Mary’s curriculum includes language arts, history, geography, visual arts, music, math science, Spanish (grades 4-6) technology, and physical education.
- c. St. Mary’s incorporates technology instruction through one-to-one Chromebooks, iPads, and interactive projection systems.
- d. Curriculum development is conducted in collaboration among the administration, faculty, and representatives of the School Advisory Board and parents. The school’s Catholic Identity Committee and parish’s Director of Faith Formation also collaborate to ensure the integration of the curriculum within the context of faith.
- e. A key question that needs to be addressed that could significantly impact the school’s public image, marketing, and recruitment success – is the academic program worth the cost of tuition (the “value proposition”) to families? This question should be expanded to address the value proposition not only in academics but also its Catholic mission, faculty and staff, leadership, student life, etc. Ultimately, is there a strong value proposition that embodies the strengths and benefits of St. Mary’s Catholic School?
- f. The school receives Title 1 funding and services and has a math intervention staff member. An academic intervention team is also being set up to assist students and teachers.
- g. Parents would like to see more enrichment opportunities for students before and after school in addition to the music, coding, and some new sports programs in place.

VII. OPERATIONAL VITALITY

A. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

DATA AND OBSERVATIONS

Figure 14
Enrollment Trends

By Grade	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Capacity by Grade	% of Cap. 21-22	Change 16-17 to 20-21 Number	Percent
PK	39	33	52	51	30	29	40	73%	-10	-26%
K	25	34	31	20	14	17	17	100%	-8	-32%
1	21	25	31	22	11	17	18	94%	-4	-19%
2	21	21	23	25	14	14	20	70%	-7	-33%
3	16	21	21	20	24	12	20	60%	-4	-25%
4	20	17	19	16	12	19	20	95%	-1	-5%
5	22	20	14	18	8	11	20	55%	-11	-50%
6	12	18	17	9	11	8	20	40%	-4	-33%
Total K-6	137	156	156	130	94	98	135	73%	-39	-28%
Total PK-6	176	189	208	181	124	127	175	73%	-49	-28%
7	4	7	11	4						
8	10	1	4	10						
Total K-8	151	164	171	144	94	98				
Total PK-6/PK-8	190	197	223	195	124	127				

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School and NCEA Data Forms

Figure 15a
Enrollment Projection: Status Quo

By Grade	Actual						Projection				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
PK	39	33	52	51	30	29	29	29	29	29	29
K	25	34	31	20	14	17	17	18	18	19	19
1	21	25	31	22	11	17	15	15	16	16	17
2	21	21	23	25	14	14	16	14	14	15	15
3	16	21	21	20	24	12	13	15	13	13	14
4	20	17	19	16	12	19	10	10	12	10	10
5	22	20	14	18	8	11	16	8	8	10	8
6	12	18	17	9	11	8	9	12	6	6	8
Subtotal K-6	137	156	156	130	94	98	96	92	87	89	91
Subtotal PK-6	176	189	208	181	124	127	125	121	116	118	120
Average Net Attrition							-3	-3	-3	-3	-3
Total Projected Enrollment K-6							93	89	84	86	88
Total Projected Enrollment PK-6							122	118	113	115	117

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School Data Forms

Figure 15b
Enrollment Projection: Strategic Growth

By Grade	Actual						Projection				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
PK	39	33	52	51	30	29	29	30	32	34	36
K	25	34	31	20	14	17	17	19	22	25	30
1	21	25	31	22	11	17	15	15	17	20	23
2	21	21	23	25	14	14	16	14	14	16	19
3	16	21	21	20	24	12	13	15	13	13	15
4	20	17	19	16	12	19	10	11	13	11	11
5	22	20	14	18	8	11	17	9	10	11	10
6	12	18	17	9	11	8	10	15	8	9	10
Total Projected Enrollment K-6	137	156	156	130	94	98	98	98	97	105	118
Total Projected Enrollment PK-6	176	189	208	181	124	127	127	128	129	139	154

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School Data Forms

Figure 16
Retention by Grade

Grade to Grade	From: 2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	5-Year Average
	To: 2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22*	
K to 1st	0	-3	-9	-9	3	
Net retention rate	100%	91%	71%	55%	121%	88%
1st to 2nd	0	-2	-6	-8	3	
Net retention rate	100%	92%	81%	64%	127%	93%
2nd to 3rd	0	0	-3	-1	-2	
Net retention rate	100%	100%	87%	96%	86%	94%
3rd to 4th	1	-2	-5	-8	-5	
Net retention rate	106%	90%	76%	60%	79%	82%
4th to 5th	0	-3	-1	-8	-1	
Net retention rate	100%	82%	95%	50%	92%	84%
5th to 6th	-4	-3	-5	-7	0	
Net retention rate	82%	85%	64%	61%	100%	78%
Total Gain/Loss	-3	-13	-29	-41	-2	

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School and NCEA Data Forms

Figure 17
Enrollment by Parish

Parish	City	# Enrolled in 2020-21	# Enrolled in 2021-22
St. Mary's Cathedral	Cheyenne	69	70
Holy Family	Cheyenne	1	1
Holy Trinity	Cheyenne	8	6
St. Joseph's	Cheyenne	10	8
St. Laurence	Laramie	1	1
St. Patrick's	Wheatland		1
St. Paul's	Pine Bluff	1	1
St. Paul's Newman Center	Laramie	1	
St. Peters	Carpenter	1	1
Total Catholic Parish Students		92	89
Number of Catholic Students			3
Number of Non-Catholic Students		34	35
Total Enrolled		126	127

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School Data Forms

Figure 18
Enrollment by Religion and Race/Ethnicity

By Religion*	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Average
Catholic	147	157	175	154	93	91	
% of enrollment	77%	80%	78%	79%	75%	72%	78%
Non-Catholic	43	40	48	41	31	36	
% of enrollment	23%	20%	22%	21%	25%	28%	22%
Total	190	197	223	195	124	127	

By Race*	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Average
Asian	8	9	6	9	3	5	
% of enrollment	4%	5%	3%	5%	2%	4%	4%
Black/African-American	11	11	11	7	4	7	
% of enrollment	6%	6%	5%	4%	3%	6%	5%
White	117	124	145	131	84	83	
% of enrollment	62%	63%	65%	67%	68%	65%	65%
Multi-Racial and All Others	54	53	61	48	33	32	
% of enrollment	28%	27%	27%	25%	27%	25%	27%
Total	190	197	223	195	124	127	
Hispanic (all races)	53	53	61	42	31	29	
% of enrollment	28%	27%	27%	22%	25%	23%	26%

*Note: Religion and Race numbers estimated for 2017-18, 2019-20 based on data trends

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School and NCEA Data Forms

- a. The majority of students enrolled are from St. Mary's Cathedral Parish 70, with 6 registered at Holy Trinity, and 8 registered at St. Joseph parishes. Total Catholic parish students total 89 in 2021-2022 from the Cheyenne, Laramie, Wheatland, Pine Bluff, and Carpenter area. The number of non-Catholic students total 36 or 28% of enrollment in 2021-22, with an average of 22% from 2016-2022. (Figures 17, 18)
- b. Enrollment has declined by 28% between 2016-17 and 2021-22 and is currently just under 100 students for kindergarten through sixth grade. The junior high program was discontinued at the end of the 2019-20 school year. (Figure 14)
- c. There are two enrollment projections: status quo (if St. Mary's School continues its current activities for marketing and recruitment and its enrollment trend, retention, and financial assistance level remains stable) and strategic growth (if St. Mary's School ramps up more intentional and effective marketing, recruitment, and financial assistance efforts). Community demographic trends and projections are also taken into account in developing the projections. (Figures 15a, 15b)
- d. Marketing and recruitment efforts up to the current administrative transition have been rudimentary at best. While some initiatives have been enacted (e.g., using parish baptismal records to contact Catholic families, online registration), an enrollment management plan needs to be developed to address the areas of marketing, recruitment, admissions, and retention. There is a need for a strong and consistent brand and message for St. Mary's School throughout the community.
- e. Parents and others interviewed remarked on the need for more visible and effective marketing and recruitment efforts to build enrollment.
- f. Interviewees indicate that word of mouth marketing about the benefits of St. Mary's used to be stronger in the past and needs to be revived.
- g. While there is a marketing director on staff who leads communications and public relations, this role appears to be focused more on fundraising than marketing for enrollment and recruitment.
- h. Key questions to address looking forward in planning are what makes St. Mary's Catholic School unique and distinctive among all educational opportunities in Cheyenne, and what will set the school apart from all other options.
- i. The primary reasons parents give for enrolling at St. Mary's School include good education that they are willing to pay more for, small and more personal school and classes, families have the same values, service of students in the community, and engagement of parents in their child's education.
- j. Reasons given why parents do not enroll their children include the "perception of non-affordability," lack of effective marketing, need for more academic rigor, high teacher turnover, lack of sports programs, and a concern among non-Catholics about belonging and inclusion.
- k. The St. Mary's School Foundation provides scholarship funding and operational support to the school. However, the availability of scholarship support is not widely known according to parents.

B. STAFFING

DATA AND OBSERVATIONS

Figure 19

Staff Data

Title/Position	FTE 2021-22
ADMINISTRATORS	
Principal	1.0
Vice Principal (and PE Teacher)	1.0
Marketing Director	1.0
OTHER SUPPORT STAFF	
Paraprofessional	1.0
Paraprofessional	0.5
Accounts Receivable/Records	1.0
Administrative Assistant	1.0
Receptionist/AM Care	1.0
Receptionist	1.0
Custodian	1.0
Kitchen/PK Aid/Aftercare	1.0
Kitchen	1.0
Extended Care	hourly
Extended Care	hourly
Total	11.5

Department	FTE 2019-20
Faculty	
Technology/Spanish	1.0
Music	1.0
Art	1.0
PK3	1.0
PK4	1.0
PK4	1.0
K	1.0
1st	1.0
2nd	1.0
3rd	1.0
4th	1.0
5th	1.0
6th	1.0
Faith Formation Coordinator	0.5
Total Elem Faculty (FTE)	13.5
Total PK Faculty (FTE)	4.5
Total Faculty (FTE)	25.0
PK - 6 Enrollment	127
K - 6 Student: Faculty ratio :1	9.3
PK Student: Faculty ratio :1	6.4

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School Data Forms

- The principal is relatively new to the position and has been facing a challenging transition in leadership. There is no provision for coaching or mentoring support at the present time as a new principal.
- The position of vice-principal is part-time (25% administration, 75% teaching) with limited administrative responsibilities (student discipline, safety coordination/risk management).
- At first glance, the school office appears to be overstaffed, however, a number of financial and administrative tasks (human resources, payroll, teacher substitution, etc.) oftentimes conducted by the principal have been delegated. (Figure 19)
- Teacher turnover is an issue with compensation being the primary challenge.
- There is a need for teacher mentoring and coaching opportunities to enhance retention and support teachers in the classroom.

C. ADVANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

DATA AND OBSERVATIONS

Figure 20

Fundraising and Development Income

Fundraising Activity*	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Winefest	\$46,849	\$47,298	\$570
Fanfare	179,062	81,710	112,351
Total Fundraising	\$225,912	\$129,008	\$112,921

Development Categories	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Wyoming Catholic Ministries	\$44,063	\$21,000	\$19,634
Annual Appeal			26,385
Total Development	\$44,063	\$21,000	\$46,019
Total	\$269,975	\$150,008	\$158,940

* Totals are based on gross amounts

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School Data Forms

- St. Mary's Catholic School has a Director of Marketing. The role and current responsibilities of this position currently include marketing, fundraising, and public relations/external communications. The Director also coordinates fundraising events for the St. Mary's School Foundation. These roles and responsibilities have evolved since there is no clear written job description for this position.
- The Director of Marketing also leads the fundraising efforts for the St. Mary's Catholic School Foundation.
- School-wide fundraising is contained in two events, Winefest, which provides \$46,000-\$47,000 and, Fanfare which provides \$81,000-179,000 annually. (Figure 20)

- d. School fundraising is currently focused on special events and sales. There are two major fundraising events (Winefest, Fanfare for Education) which raise approximately \$130,000 to \$135,000. There are few relational, long-term funding efforts (development) conducted with current and potential donors and supporters at the present time.
- e. Parents indicate that they are “overwhelmed” with fundraising activities and would like alternatives. Some fundraising activities have been in place for a longer time and parents think they have outlived their usefulness or profitability. More creative initiatives are preferred.
- f. An initial appeal letter was distributed in 2020-21 which netted approximately \$10,000 with plans for this appeal to continue.
- g. The vision and role of the St. Mary’s Catholic School Foundation is in some transition and has the potential to assume an enhanced role in more long-term development initiatives.
- h. Coordination of short and long-term funding initiatives at the school, parish, and diocesan levels is lacking and needs direction and clarity to avoid conflicts and maximize returns at each level.
- i. Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils are concerned with the school’s focus on the financial impact of school support and the limited sustainability of funding. The role of the school foundation needs to be reexamined in how its efforts could be expanded/strengthened to attract necessary funding moving forward.
- j. Greater relations among the three Cheyenne parishes are desired in support of St. Mary’s School in terms of encouraging families to enroll, support for school programs and activities, and ideally, continued financial support.

D. FACILITIES

DATA AND OBSERVATION

- a. The school facility, built in 2007, looks new, is well maintained, and has a high level of curb appeal. The classrooms are of appropriate size, well-appointed with natural lighting throughout. The gym and chapel are additions that many Catholic elementary schools do not have. There is no school facility debt.
- b. There is no master facility plan.
- c. Cost estimates for repair or upgrades to major facility systems (e.g., HVAC, security cameras, elevator, roof, etc.) are currently being considered.

E. FINANCES

DATA AND OBSERVATION

Figure 21
Tuition and Fees

Tuition Rates	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Tuition Rates PK-Catholic					
1 child	\$4,920	\$5,040	\$5,160	\$5,160	\$5,340
2 child family	4,670	4,790	4,910	4,910	5,090
3 child family	4,420	4,540	4,660	4,660	4,840
Tuition Rates K-6 - Catholic					
1 child	3,500	3,620	3,740	3,740	3,920
2 child family	3,250	3,370	3,490	3,490	3,670
3 child family	3,000	3,120	3,240	3,240	3,420
Tuition Rates PK-Non-Catholic					
1 child	5,460	5,580	5,700	5,700	5,830
2 child family	5,210	5,330	5,450	5,450	5,580
3 child family	4,960	5,080	5,200	5,200	5,330
Tuition Rates K-6 -Non- Catholic					
1 child	4,280	4,400	4,520	4,520	4,700
2 child family	4,030	4,150	4,270	4,270	4,450
3 child family	3,780	3,900	4,020	4,020	4,200
Fees	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Registration Fee	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150
Book/Seat Fee	250	250	250	250	250

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School Data Forms

Figure 22
Median Household Income
5-year Average for Households with Children 18 and under

County City	5 Year Avg 2015-2019	Percent of Median Income		
		4%	6%	8%
Laramie County	\$76,791	\$3,072	\$4,607	\$6,143
Ranchettes	118,795	4,752	7,128	9,504
Cheyenne	75,791	3,032	4,547	6,063
South Greeley	39,263	1,571	2,356	3,141

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 23**Tuition Assistance/Scholarship Data**

Source of Funds	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	# Students	Dollars	# Students	Dollars	# Students	Dollars	# Students	Dollars	# Students	Dollars
School Funded										
Teacher Discount	9	\$25,600	14	\$20,000	11	\$25,619	6	\$23,150	7	\$13,058
Tuition Assistance	61	67,095	66	44,110	42	29,549	18	19,860	24	22,140
Multi-Family Discount		14,250		16,000		21,750		17,250	32	9,500
Total School Funded	70	\$106,945	80	\$80,110	53	\$76,918	24	\$60,260	63	\$44,698
Externally Funded										
ACE Scholarships	15	\$30,000	21	\$42,000	14	\$25,500	8	\$16,000	5	\$10,000
Outside Scholarship/Donations		15,300		13,770		8,200		8,000		
Foundation Scholarship		12,238		16,279		17,930		20,288		
Total Externally Funded	15	\$57,538	21	\$72,049	14	\$51,630	8	\$44,288	5	\$10,000
Total	85	\$164,483	101	\$152,159	67	\$128,548	32	\$104,548	68	\$54,698

Source: St. Mary's Catholic School Data Forms

- a. Current issues impacting the finances of the school include:
 - Teacher and staff compensation is low compared to the local market
 - Tuition may be set too low
 - Enrollment is declining
- b. The school is reliant on St. Mary's Cathedral Parish for its financial sustainability at this time. The school operates on a deficit budget which the parish is anticipating a contribution of approximately \$578,000 to cover the current year projected shortfall. This has been an ongoing issue for the parish and school and impacts both. Approximately \$50,000 from designated funding is the parish contribution and the remainder to cover any deficit would come from investments and savings.
- c. The annual parish contribution at its current level is not sustainable as the parish is also operating at and projecting an operating deficit for the current fiscal year. The total projected operating deficit for the parish and school is approximately \$798,000 for 2021-22.
- d. St. Mary's Cathedral Parish is an aging community with approximately 85% of ordinary income deriving from parishioners 65 years of age and older.
- e. St. Joseph Parish and Church of the Holy Trinity in the city generously provide some limited financial support for the school by means of an envelope request of parishioners.
- f. The principal collaborates with the pastor, Parish Finance Officer, and Parish Finance Council chair with school finances. The Parish Finance Council review and recommend the annual school budget. There is no Finance Committee active at the school. School leadership assumes responsibility for receivables and the Parish Finance Office takes care of payables. There is little or no long-term financial planning or projection though some processes are in transition with new pastor leadership.
- g. The School Advisory Board does not have a Finance Committee at the present time. The budget is prepared collaboratively among parish and school leadership with approval given by the Parish Finance Council.

- h. The annual tuition rate is set by the School Advisory Board but there are no criteria for the rate increases. Tuition is determined and then the operating budget is developed. There has been an attempt to create a multi-year financial projection to assist in planning but has not been completed.
- i. The “perception of non-affordability” pertains to two aspects: (a) parents think the cost is too high but have little or no information regarding scholarships or other financial assistance that is available and how to access it, and (b) the cost is too high for the perceived quality of education (types of programs, rigor of academics, etc.) being provided. Addressing the perception along with the cost is essential in creating a message of “affordability.”
- j. A number of those interviewed, including parents, think that the tuition rate is too low and impacts compensation and programs. However, any increase in tuition would have to be justified and show growth in the quality of education.
- k. The St. Mary’s Catholic School Foundation is successful in increasing the corpus of its funding since its inception in 2004 and provides operational and scholarship support. Funding efforts on the part of the Foundation focus on some outreach to potential donors, return on investments, and, like the school, on events (golf tournament and a fundraising breakfast). Foundation leaders see opportunities for greater outreach at the broader county and state levels, estate planning, and bequests, as well as more individual and corporate supporters. There are no part or full-time staff leading the efforts of the Foundation other than limited time from the school’s Director of Marketing.
- l. The value proposition of the school is unclear at this time given the changes over the past year and a half and that parents indicate some do not see much difference between St. Mary’s School and other educational options. Clarity of the value proposition (quality of the school compared to cost) needs to be a central focus of any planning process and decisions moving forward. The key question is if the quality of St. Mary’s Catholic School is perceived to be worth the cost.
- m. A short and long-term funding plan is needed for the school with an eye toward a more balanced model of revenue sources:
 - Tuition and fees, parish contribution, fundraising, development.
 - More focus on relational or development revenue rather than a reliance solely on fundraising (events and sales)
 - A review of the tuition/fee model relative to the cost of education and overall revenue
 - An approach to decrease the parish contribution if/when the school transitions to independent status
- n. The potential transition of St. Mary Catholic School from a parish to independent school is being discussed at the parish and diocesan level which will significantly impact the financial planning and viability of the school. Projections at this time indicated a baseline goal of \$500,000 per year simply to meet the current status quo operating budget.

F. SURVEY RESPONSES

OBSERVATIONS

- a. The survey response rate of 49 respondents with a completion rate of 93% or 46 respondents was too low to draw any significant conclusions. Key question that arises out of the response rate: Why St. Mary's School parents did not respond in any significant numbers?
- b. Survey respondents' profile:
 - 64% of respondents are parishioners and have no children
 - 4 respondents have children enrolled at St. Mary's Catholic School
 - 92% of respondents are women; 100% are from St. Mary's Cathedral Parish
- c. Reasons given for Not Enrolling:
 - Cost
 - Teacher qualifications unknown
 - Parental time commitment
 - Transportation/location
 - "love to have more passionate staff serving in school capacity", "what curriculums are being followed"
- d. What survey respondents are looking for when considering a school for children:
 - Academic Excellence
 - Caring/qualified teachers
 - Moral/character development
 - Primary role of parents/strong parent involvement
 - Safe/secure environment
 - Strong Catholic Identity
 - Cost of tuition
 - Location/convenience
- e. Programs of interest survey respondents would like to see at St. Mary's School:
 - STEM
 - Fine Arts
 - Languages
 - Service
 - "I don't know about your educational programs" – this is a marketing issue that needs to be addressed.
- f. Overall, respondents indicate a high level of interest in and support for Catholic school education, particularly those who do not have school-age children. The majority see the value of Catholic school education and indicate they would provide some type of support.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

1. Population projections for Cheyenne indicate stable growth for the near future though at a slower rate than the previous ten years. The total population of Laramie County is also expected to remain stable from 2021-2026. Long-term population growth for Laramie County is estimated at 11% between 2020 and 2040 with a more significant increase between 2020 and 2030. Cheyenne is projected to increase 12.4% by 2040.
2. While the general population is projecting stability, the child and school-age populations indicate a different trend. Ages 0-4 years are expected to increase slightly in Laramie County as well as Cheyenne. However, with some decline projected in both the 5-9 and 10-14 age groups and the recent declining birth rate, this will have a continuing impact on school enrollments in the future. With no changes in the number of schools and a changing school-age population competition for enrollment may increase.
3. The pandemic and leadership turnover had a significant impact on school enrollment as well as on sacramental and formation participation among child-age Catholics in the parishes.
4. St. Mary's Catholic School's market share of all Catholic children receiving First Eucharist grew between 2017 and 2020 from 13% to 22%. There is an opportunity to increase enrollment by focusing on parishioners who have school-age children from the Cathedral of St. Mary, Church of the Holy Trinity, and St. Joseph Catholic Church with more intentional and segmented marketing, recruitment, and financial assistance opportunities.
5. The school's Catholic identity is perceived by the parent community as a family within a caring environment with strong values. Teachers are praised as caring, dedicated, and committed to the mission of the school. The school's Catholic Identity Team create common goals in order to strengthen the Catholic identity and faith formation of faculty and students.
6. The need for guidance from the diocese for the principal in terms of coaching or mentoring would improve leadership issues the school has experienced in recent years. The recent changes in pastor and principal leadership are proving to be a positive experience that will take time to have a more significant impact.
7. The School Advisory Board's role and responsibilities need to be reviewed and potential changes in its role considered even if or when the school becomes an independent entity. A change in the governance structure with some limited jurisdiction could provide a greater sense of ownership and participation within the school, parishes, and wider community.
8. The value proposition that embodies the strengths and benefits of St. Mary's Catholic School needs to be reviewed, strengthened, and communicated well or often to the parents, parishioners, and the greater community. The overall brand and image of the school require a more intentional plan to strengthen its value proposition for the long term.
9. In terms of growing enrollment, there is a need for more effective targeted marketing and recruitment efforts. Current efforts are limited and need to be more effective and far-reaching. While there is a marketing director on staff who leads communications and public relations, this role appears to be focused more on fundraising than marketing for enrollment and recruitment.
10. The facility is attractive and of adequate size and purpose. While there are anticipated major facility issues to consider, there is no facilities master plan to address any deferred maintenance or long-term needs.

11. Third source revenue (external funding apart from tuition/fees) is based on parish support and fundraising events. The only development activity is a recent annual appeal. There is a need to transition from a total events-based funding model which is less sustainable, to include a long-term relational model (development) where supporters and friends support the mission and vision of the school. St. Mary's School Parent Teacher Organization is also involved in fundraising activities that are more classroom/teacher focused on its support.
12. The school is reliant on St. Mary's Cathedral Parish for its financial sustainability. The annual parish contribution at its current level is not sustainable as the parish is also operating at and projecting an operating deficit for the current fiscal year. There is little or no long-term financial planning or projection conducted by the school though some processes are in transition with new pastor leadership.
13. The annual tuition rate is set by the School Advisory Board. There are no apparent criteria or metrics used for determining the rate increases. Tuition is determined and then the operating budget is developed.
14. There is a perception of "non-affordability" within the community. Some parents simply assume they cannot afford the tuition without knowing about or understanding the availability of financial assistance. A number of parents interviewed stated the tuition rate is "too low" which is impacting compensation and programming and, ultimately, the quality of the school program.
15. The St. Mary's Catholic School Foundation is successful in increasing the corpus of its funding since its inception in 2004 and provides operational and scholarship support. The vision and role of the St. Mary's Catholic School Foundation are in some transition and has the potential to assume an enhanced role in more long-term development initiatives.
16. There are no part or full-time staff leading the efforts of the Foundation other than limited time from the school's Director of Marketing and the pastor of St. Mary's Cathedral Parish serving as the chairperson. A more intentional approach to seeking and soliciting both short and long-term funding will be needed to ensure the fiscal viability of the school.
17. The potential transition of St. Mary's Catholic School from a parish to an independent school is being discussed at the parish and diocesan level which will significantly impact the financial planning and viability of the school. This transition, if or when it takes place will have to be well-planned, effectively scheduled, and carefully implemented to ensure the school's sustainability.
18. Survey respondents were positive of their views of St. Mary's Catholic School regarding Catholic education and view it as an essential part of the life and the ministry of its parishes.
19. The value of the St. Mary's is justified in the cost to the parish and parents according to survey results.
20. Survey respondents are aware of the Foundation and are willing to support the school, some in a leadership capacity, with time, talent, and treasure.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. St. Mary's Catholic School should develop a comprehensive, long-term (3-5 years), integrated strategic plan. This document should outline goals and action steps to achieve those goals over a three to five-year period in all major areas of the school. The plan will be used to shape a vision for the future, create action plans, develop the tools to implement action plans, assign leadership responsibilities, and engage all constituencies in making the plan a reality.

Develop the plan in line with *"The National Standards and Benchmarks of Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools"* (NCEA) and the four pillars of Catholic mission and identity, effective governance and leadership, academic excellence, and operational vitality:

Catholic Mission and Identity

- a. Continue to build on the efforts and initiatives of the Catholic Identity Team to widely and consistently communicate the mission and Catholicity of St. Mary's School among the parishes and wider community.

Effective Governance and Leadership

- a. Stability of school leadership at the administrative and advisory board levels is essential for sustainability. Continuing to develop a close, effective administrative leadership team is essential.
- b. Provide school administration with a coach/mentor to ensure strong visionary leadership that builds the confidence of parents, parishioners, and donors in the school's ability to provide quality Catholic education at a high level.
- c. The School Advisory Board should continue to clarify its role and responsibilities as it looks to future restructuring. Using a resource such as *"A Catholic School Governance Handbook for a New Era"* (NCEA), responsibilities to consider include:
 - Fiduciary: long term viability of the school (finances, programs)
 - Strategic: long term plan for the benefit of the school and the ways in which it relates to its constituents
 - Generative: identifying and sustaining long-term leadership for itself and its committees
- d. Continue transitioning the School Advisory Board to a more expertise-based board with a limited number of current parents and more parish/community members with expertise and experience in areas of law, non-profit philanthropy, marketing and communications, facility management, finance, among other key areas.
- e. Consider expanding its responsibilities following restructuring with more limited jurisdiction (e.g., long-range planning, budgeting and finances, development, marketing, and recruitment).
- f. As long as St. Mary's Catholic School remains a parish-based ministry, continue and enhance the relationship of collaboration and accountability among parish and school leaders in building up and growing the school program.

Academic Excellence

- a. Improve the overall image and perception of academic quality by addressing misperceptions and consistently highlighting the benefits (in addition to the strengths) of a St. Mary's School education. Develop a "St. Mary's School Student" profile when they graduate from 6th grade focusing on the benefits of their Catholic education.
- b. The academic program should undergo a review and improvements made in any identified areas of weakness to protect the quality and value proposition of the school. This includes regular and effective teacher assessments along with curriculum planning and mapping across all grade levels and subject areas.
- c. Identify and develop/enhance an academic feature or program that will distinguish St. Mary's Catholic School from all other options in Cheyenne and make it unique, highly attractive, and marketable.

Operational Vitality

Enrollment Management

- a. Develop an Enrollment Management Plan to include specific enrollment targets and strategies. The Enrollment Management Plan should address the following:
 - Identify families with children being baptized in the three parishes and build a relationship with them as they begin to consider preschool or kindergarten and have them consider St. Mary's Catholic School as an opportunity. Engage with religious education programs and create strategies to encourage those children and parents to consider St. Mary's Catholic School possibly with a "transfer scholarship" as an incentive (transfer scholarship is a 2-year scholarship provided for students in grades 1 to 3 who move from the public school to St. Mary's Catholic School; the scholarship would be for 2 years – e.g., \$1,000 provided in year 1 and \$500 or \$1,000 provided in the second year; following the second year the family would pay the regular tuition)
 - Strengthen the school's value proposition by means of a thorough assessment of academics, safe learning environment, qualified staff, etc., and highlight these along with other components less known as benefits of a St. Mary's Catholic School education
 - Create a school profile that highlights the benefits of a St. Mary's Catholic School education and a strong and recognizable brand.
 - Outline a communications plan (marketing, digital footprint, parent ambassadors, strong social media presence, media advertising, etc.) to ensure timely and relevant information for parents, parishioners, and the wider community.
 - Create a marketing plan which includes a vision statement, branding guidelines, and a concise summary of key messages (i.e., a common "elevator speech").
 - Personnel solely dedicated to the recruitment of new students should be identified and provided with appropriate funding

- b. A vital means of building enrollment is through sufficient financial assistance/scholarship funding and the strategic awarding of those funds. Promote the availability of a tuition assistance program. Increase the level of funding for scholarships and financial assistance to grow enrollment over the next 2-3 years. Increasing development revenue (see Financial Viability recommendation: annual fund, major gifts, campaign) should be an essential part of increasing scholarship and assistance monies along with the parish contribution.

Facilities

- a. Facilities Plan should be created that prioritizes and guides repairs and improvements and avoid as much deferred maintenance as possible for the future. Prioritize the identified capital needs in light of safety, health, sustainability, programming and the mission and vision of St. Mary's Catholic School.

Financial Viability:

- a. Leadership of St. Mary's Catholic School should further develop a multi-year (preferably 5 years) financial projection that includes projections for enrollment, tuition and other revenue sources, and staffing. This provides the essential tools for effective planning leading to sustainability.
- b. The current tuition model needs to be assessed in terms of the following:
 - Whether the current tuition rate is too low given the compensation level for faculty and staff and the ability to support new and desirable educational programs
 - How the annual tuition rate is established using data and measurable criteria
 - When the annual tuition rate is set in the budgeting process
 - Announcing and advertising any new tuition rate hand-in-hand with the availability of financial assistance/scholarship support.
- c. Refocusing funding efforts and initiatives on the development side of advancement efforts (annual appeal, major gifts, campaign(s), alumni relations) needs to be a priority so the majority of time and energy of the Foundation is spent cultivating long-term relationships that will provide the level of funding necessary for the present as well as the future of St. Mary's Catholic School.
- d. The St. Mary's Catholic School Foundation should engage in greater intentional solicitation and fundraising (annual appeal and major gifts program) as well as a campaign(s) to build the corpus of its investments. At some point in the very near future (one to two years), the Foundation and school leadership should consider a major campaign for St. Mary's Catholic School.
- e. The current Marketing Director position should focus on marketing and a separate Development Director position should be created as part of St. Mary's Catholic School Foundation.
- f. Continue diligent financial planning and oversight currently led through the collaborative efforts of school and parish leadership. Maintain the multi-year view of funding through the recommended financial projection.
- g. If/when the transition from a parochial to an independent school model is decided, plan to make the transition over a determined number of years to ensure a successful transition. Moving to a development funding model and increasing funding through long-term monies (versus traditional events and fundraisers) over a few years prior to becoming independent will be critical to provide a healthy financial foundation for growth of St. Mary's Catholic School.

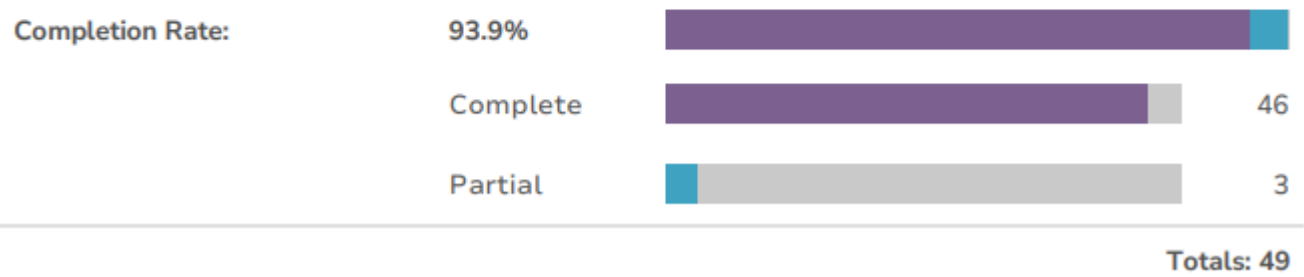
APPENDICES

St. Mary's Catholic School-Cheyenne ▶ 2021-22 Families by Residence

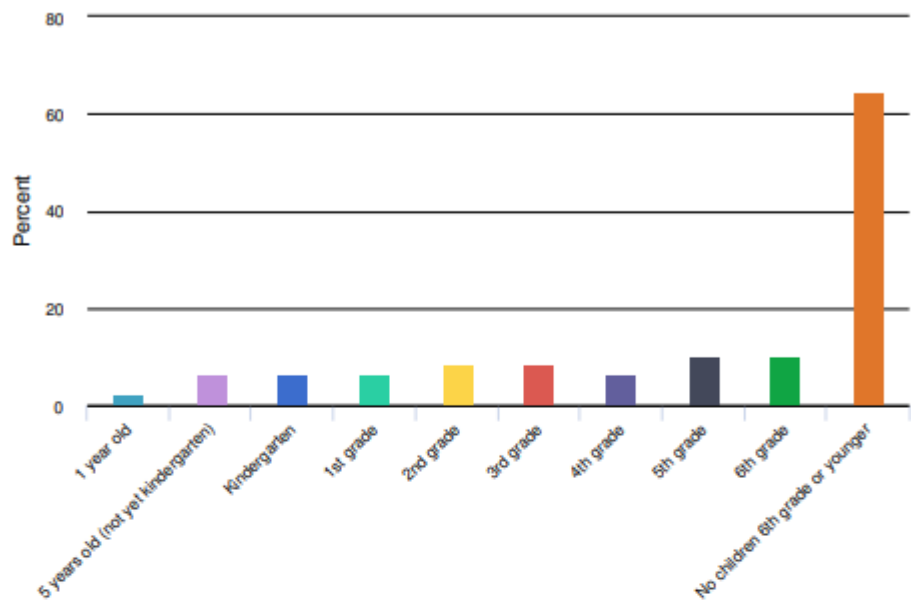
The map shows the school's location in Cheyenne, Wyoming, with a large purple dot indicating the school building. Numerous other purple dots are scattered across the surrounding area, representing the residences of the 2021-22 families. Key locations labeled on the map include Francis E. Warren AFB, The Home Depot, Safeway, Knife River Corporation, Fox Farm-College, South Greeley, Cheyenne, and the Event Center at Archer. Major highways shown are I-80, I-25, and US-85. The map is sourced from Google Maps.

Report for St. Mary's Catholic School Study - Market Research Survey 2021-22

Response Counts

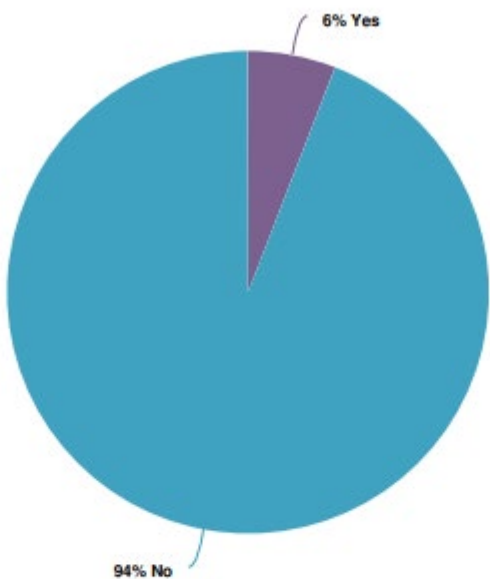


2. Please select the age/grade for each of your children 0-12 years old (in 6th grade). If you do not have children in the ages/grades listed, select 'No children 6th grade or younger'.



Value		Percent	Responses
1 year old	<div><div></div></div>	2.1%	1
5 years old (not yet kindergarten)	<div><div></div></div>	6.3%	3
Kindergarten	<div><div></div></div>	6.3%	3
1st grade	<div><div></div></div>	6.3%	3
2nd grade	<div><div></div></div>	8.3%	4
3rd grade	<div><div></div></div>	8.3%	4
4th grade	<div><div></div></div>	6.3%	3
5th grade	<div><div></div></div>	10.4%	5
6th grade	<div><div></div></div>	10.4%	5
No children 6th grade or younger	<div><div></div></div>	64.6%	31

3. Do you have any multiples (two or more) in any age group or grade?



Value		Percent	Responses
Yes	<div><div></div></div>	5.9%	1
No	<div><div></div></div>	94.1%	16

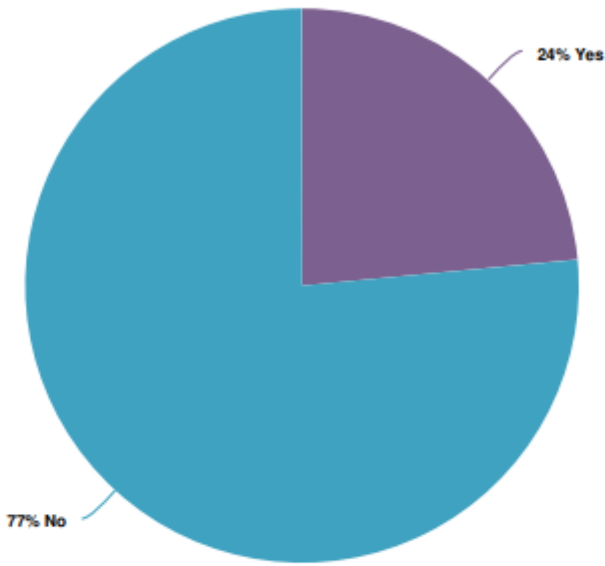
Totals: 17

4. Which age/grades are your multiples? (i.e., "two are 3 years old", or "twins- 3 years", or triplets in 5th grade)

0
twins

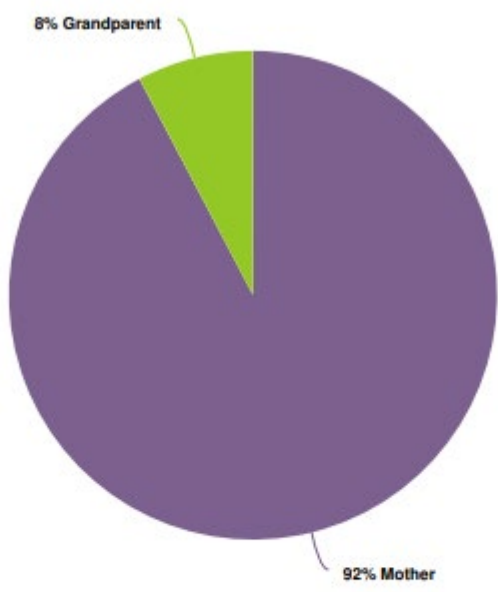
ResponseID	Response
45	7 twins

5. Are your children 6th grade or younger enrolled at St. Mary's Catholic School?



Value		Percent	Responses
Yes	<div><div></div></div>	23.5%	4
No	<div><div></div></div>	76.5%	13
Totals: 17			

6. I am a:

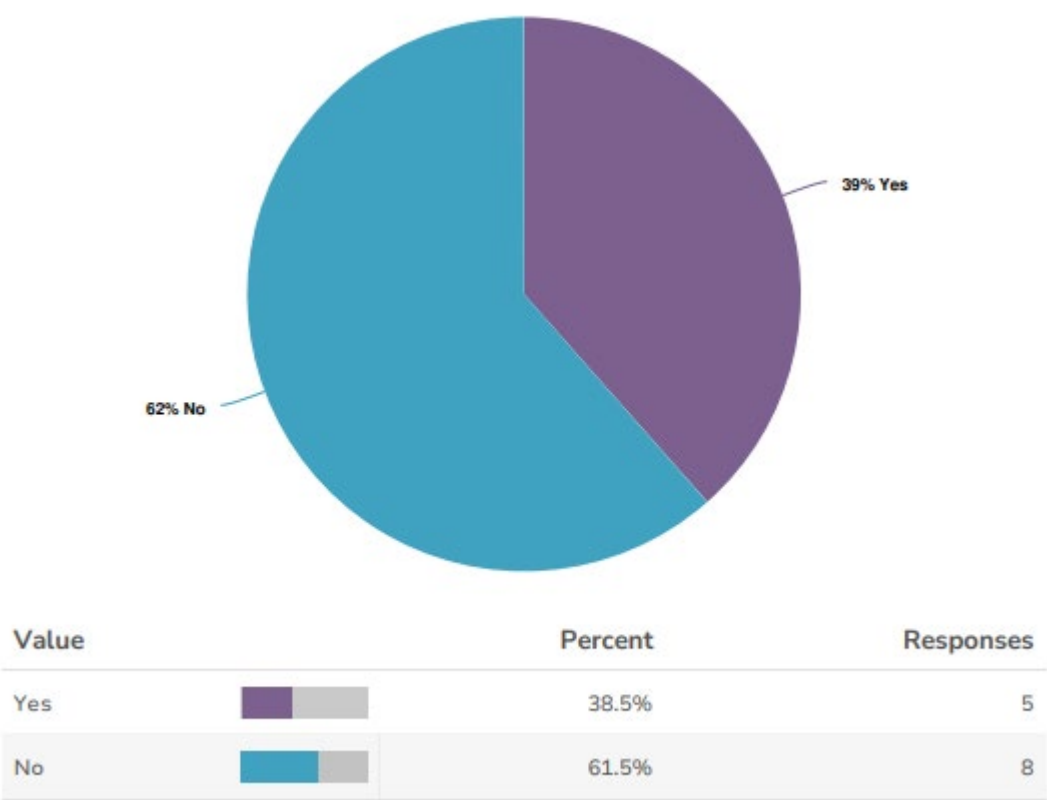


Value		Percent	Responses
Mother	<div><div></div></div>	92.3%	12
Grandparent	<div><div></div></div>	7.7%	1

Totals: 13

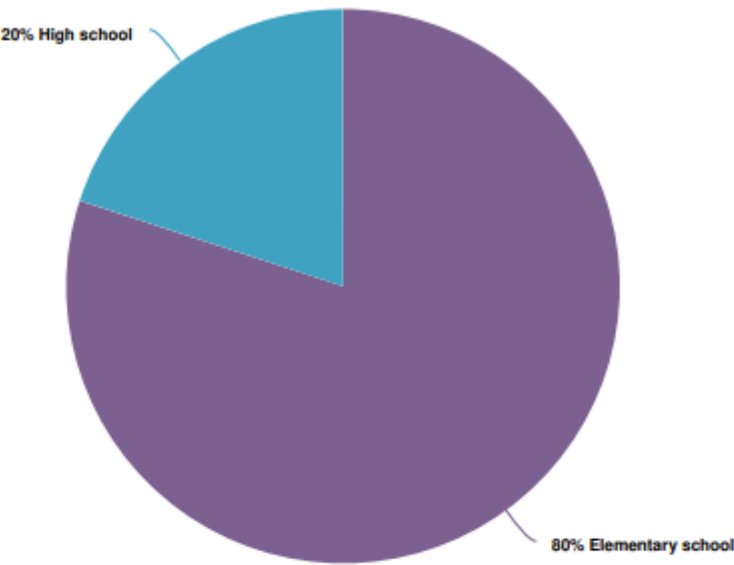


7. Did you or your spouse attend a Catholic school?



Totals: 13

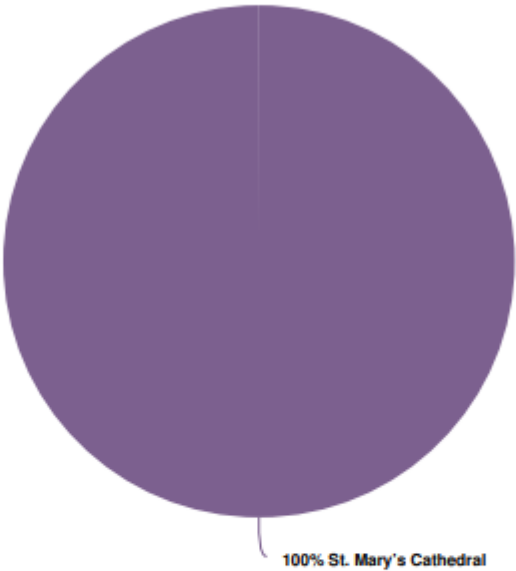
8. Which did you attend?



Value		Percent	Responses
Elementary school	<div><div></div></div>	80.0%	4
High school	<div><div></div></div>	20.0%	1

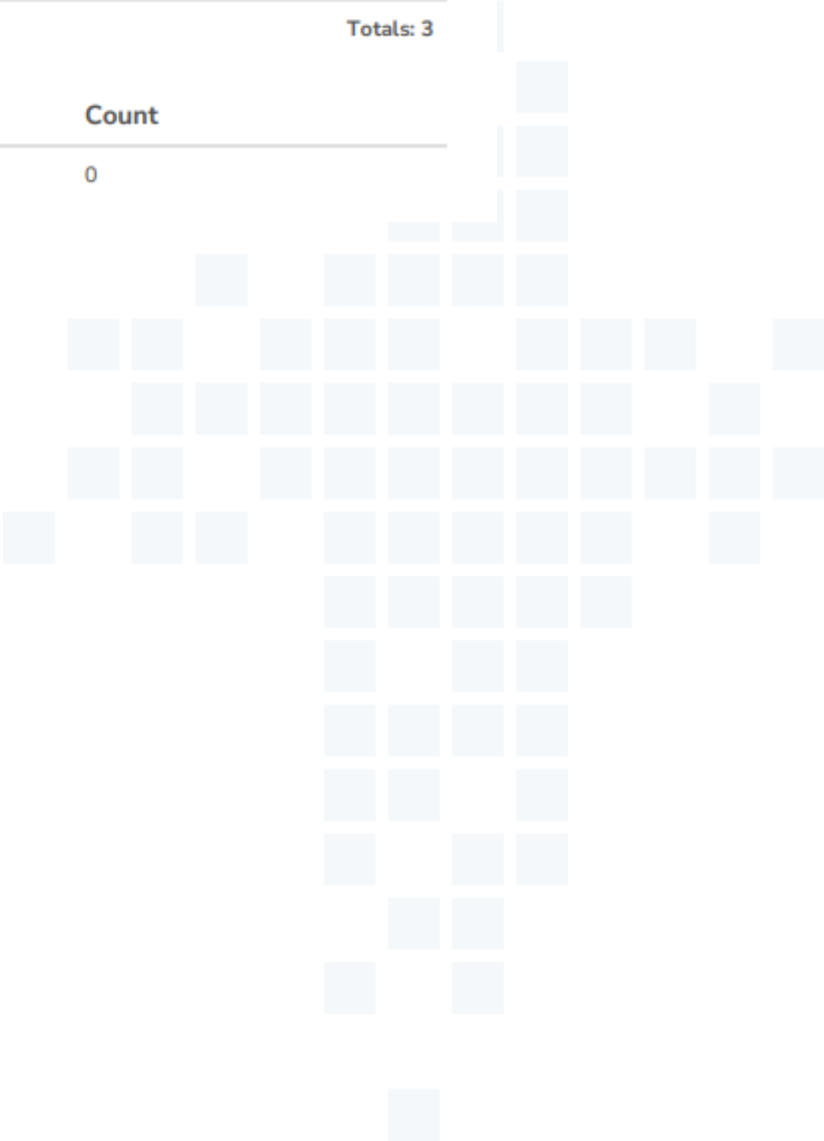
Totals: 5

9. I am a registered parishioner at:

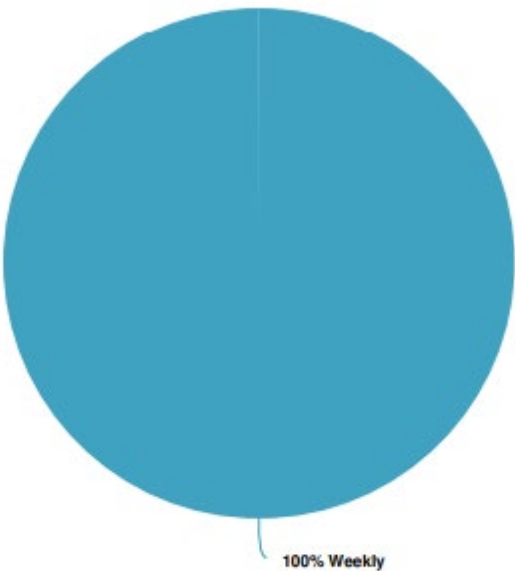


Value		Percent	Responses
St. Mary's Cathedral	<div></div>	100.0%	3
			Totals: 3

Other parish	Count
Totals	0



10. Our family attends Mass (at any parish):

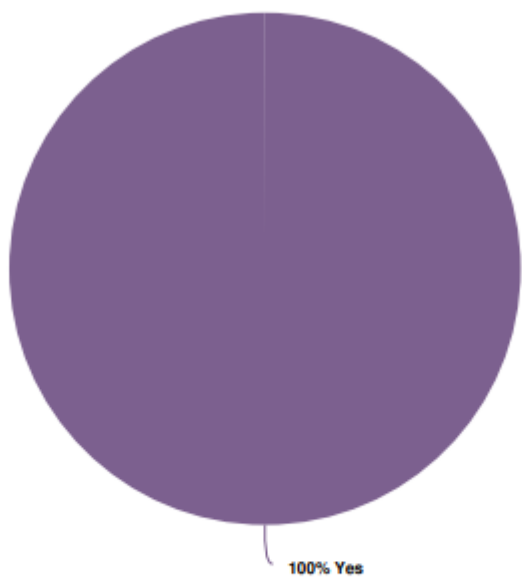


Value		Percent	Responses
Weekly	<div></div>	100.0%	3

Totals: 3



11. Is your child 3 to 5 years enrolled in a prekindergarten or preschool program?

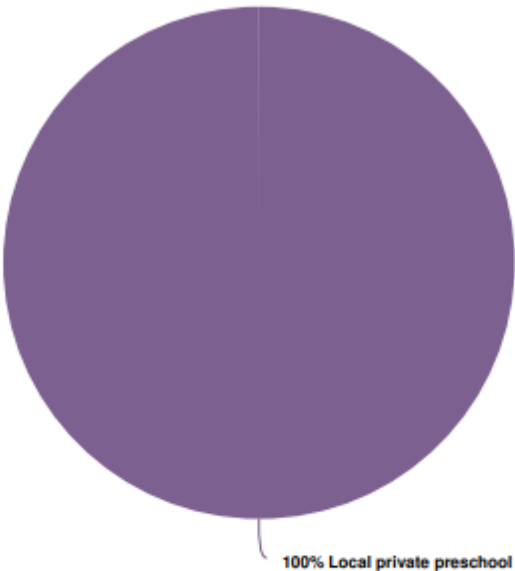


Value		Percent	Responses
Yes	<div></div>	100.0%	3

Totals: 3



12. For your children 0-4 years of age, where do you plan to enroll them for preschool?

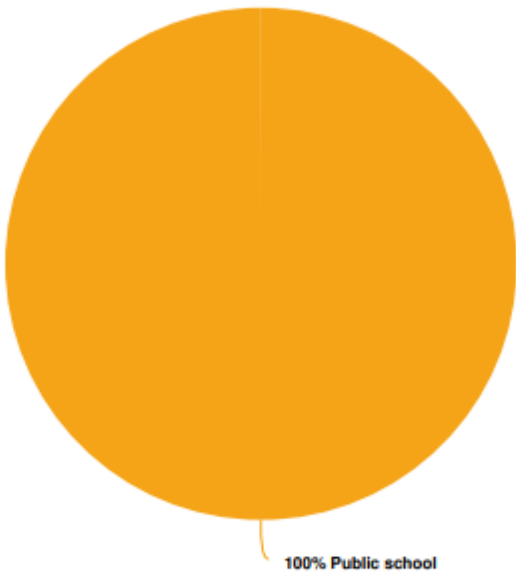


Value		Percent	Responses
Local private preschool	<div></div>	100.0%	1

Totals: 1



13. For your children 0-5 years of age, where do you plan to enroll them for kindergarten?



Value		Percent	Responses
Public school	<div></div>	100.0%	3

Totals: 3

14. If you selected St. Mary's Catholic School in the previous question, how certain are you that you would enroll your child at St. Mary's for kindergarten?

No data to display

15. What are the two primary reasons you would enroll your children at St. Mary's Catholic school?Select your first most important reason.

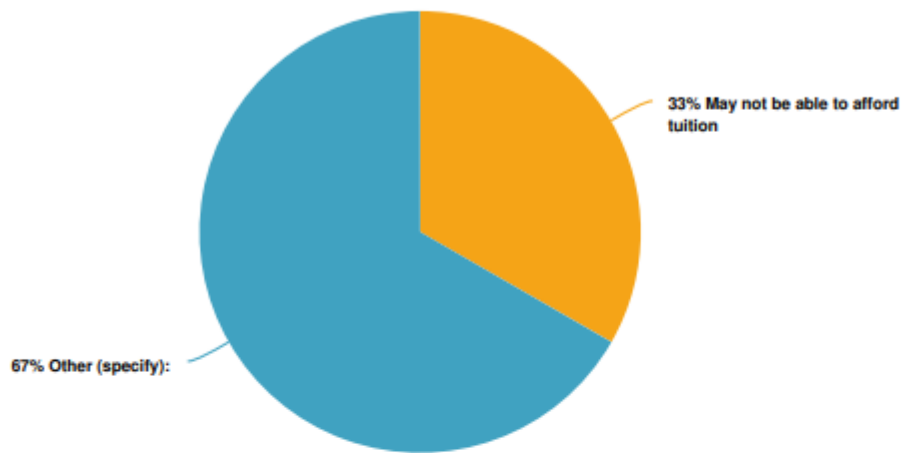
No data to display

Other - Write In:	Count
Totals	0

16. Select your second reason. [What are the two primary reasons you would enroll your children at St. Mary's Catholic school?]

No data to display

17. What are the two primary reasons you would not enroll your children at St. Mary's Catholic school? Select your first most important reason.

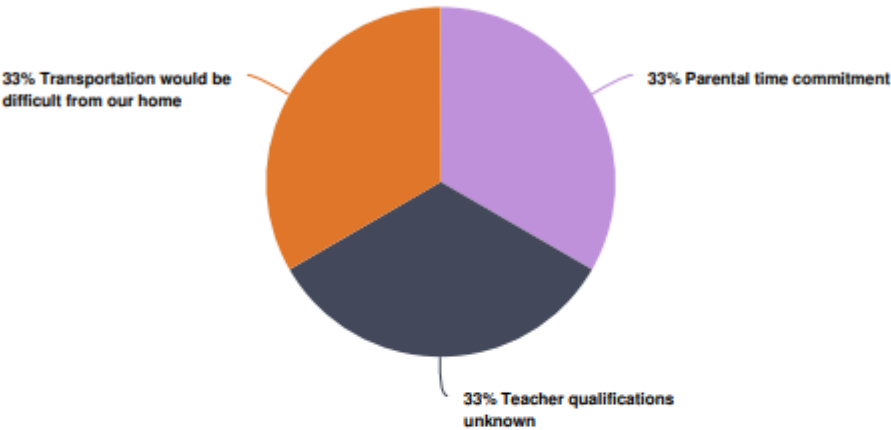


Value	Percent	Responses
May not be able to afford tuition	33.3%	1
Other (specify):	66.7%	2

Totals: 3

Other (specify):	Count
I'm not sure about hours and days you are closed.	1
The hours are not served to the working parents. For instance, preschool hours are from 8 to 3 pm while parents work from 8 to 5 pm. Other preschools serve convenient hours than St Mary school. It doesnt make sense to pay for after hours. St Mary should charge the whole time from 8 to 5:15 pm rather than 3pm with after school options. This is one of the biggest weakness that I experienced as well as other parents.	1
Totals	2

18. Select your second reason. [What are the two primary reasons you would not enroll your children at St. Mary's Catholic school?]



Value		Percent	Responses
Parental time commitment	<div><div></div></div>	33.3%	1
Teacher qualifications unknown	<div><div></div></div>	33.3%	1
Transportation would be difficult from our home	<div><div></div></div>	33.3%	1

Totals: 3

Other (specify):	Count
Totals	0

19. What is one key question you need answered before you would enroll your child at St. Mary’s Catholic School?

serving
curriculum school
capacity love staff
pm 10 follow
hours cheyenne
residents passionate

ResponseID	Response
49	what are the school hours? Is it from 8 to 5 pm? Also I would love to have more passionate staff serving in school capacity and new residents for Cheyenne.
52	What curriculums do you follow?



20. When choosing a school for your child, how important are these factors in your decision?

	Very Important	3	2	Not Important	Responses
Academic excellence Count Row %	3 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3
Having strong Catholic identity is crucial for our family Count Row %	0 0.0%	2 66.7%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	3
Caring and qualified teachers Count Row %	2 66.7%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3
Connection to a parish Count Row %	0 0.0%	1 33.3%	2 66.7%	0 0.0%	3
Cost of tuition Count Row %	0 0.0%	2 66.7%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	3
Disciplined environment Count Row %	1 33.3%	1 33.3%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	3
Enrollment/class size Count Row %	1 33.3%	2 66.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3
Extracurricular student activities Count Row %	1 33.3%	2 66.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3
Location/convenience Count Row %	0 0.0%	2 66.7%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	3
Moral and character development for my student Count Row %	3 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3

	Very Important	3	2	Not Important	Responses
Primary role of parents in child's education	1	2	0	0	3
Count	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	
Row %					
Safe/secure environment	3	0	0	0	3
Count	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Row %					
Strong parental involvement	1	2	0	0	3
Count	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	
Row %					
Sufficient financial assistance	1	1	0	1	3
Count	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	
Row %					
Teachers/staff dedicated to their faith	1	1	1	0	3
Count	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	
Row %					
Totals					
Total Responses					3



21. What educational programs would you like to see at St. Mary's Catholic School that would be important for you to consider enrolling?

expression programs
educational skills
world community
problem develop
exploration emphasis
solving

ResponseID	Response
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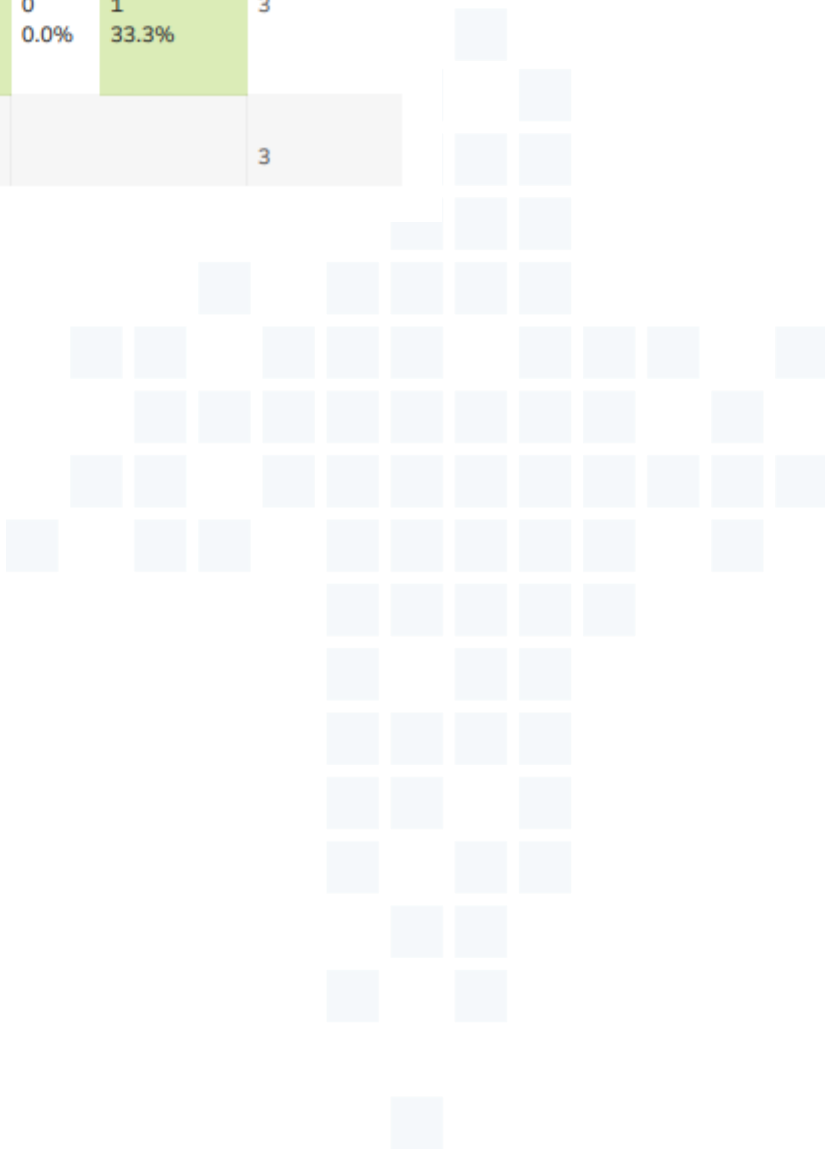
49	with an emphasis on exploration about the world, things around them/ community and self expression. Develop problem solving skills.
----	---

52	I don't know about your educational programs.
----	---

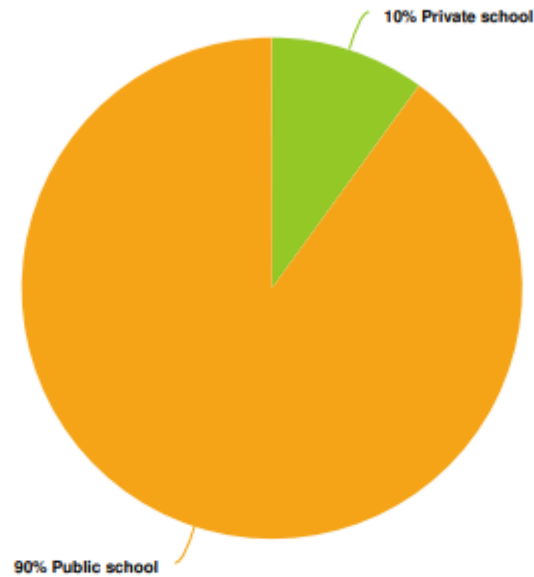


22. How interested are you in the following education programs for your children?

	Very Interested	3	2	Not Interested	Responses
Christian/community service programs Count Row %	2 66.7%	0 0.0%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	3
Fine Arts (choir, music, art) Count Row %	0 0.0%	2 66.7%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	3
Programs and support for special educational needs Count Row %	1 33.3%	1 33.3%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	3
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program Count Row %	1 33.3%	2 66.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3
World Languages (other than English) Count Row %	1 33.3%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	1 33.3%	3
Totals Total Responses					3



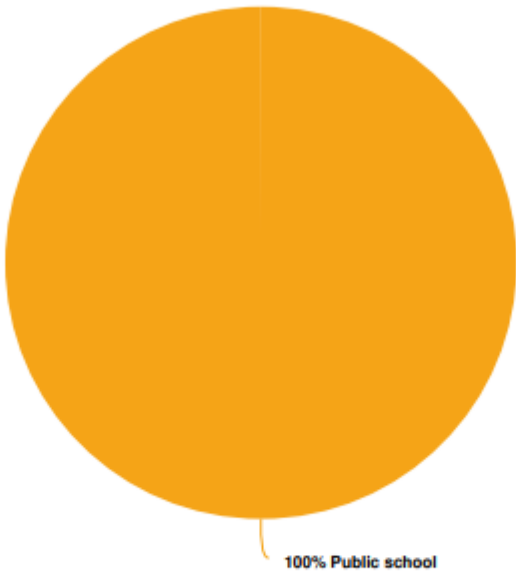
23. Your child(ren)'s current school:



Value		Percent	Responses
Private school	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	1
Public school	<div><div></div></div>	90.0%	9

Totals: 10

24. If your children are enrolled at more than one school, what is the additional school?



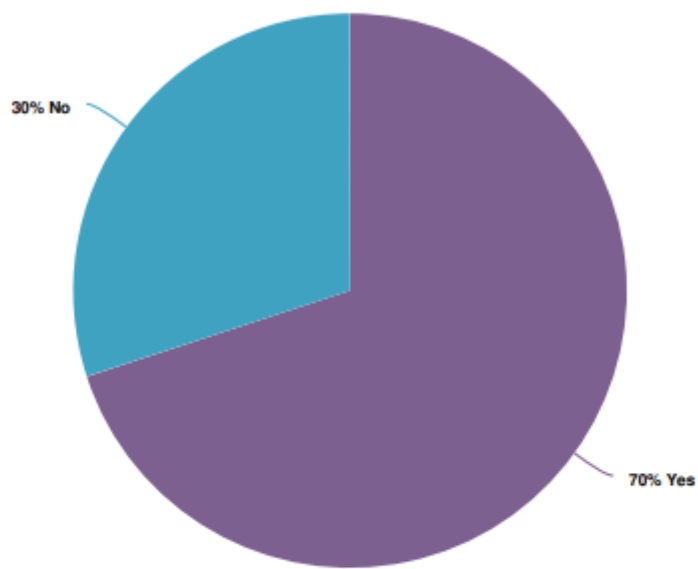
100% Public school

Value		Percent	Responses
Public school	<div></div>	100.0%	6

Totals: 6



25. Did you consider St. Mary's Catholic School for your child(ren) as an option for their education?

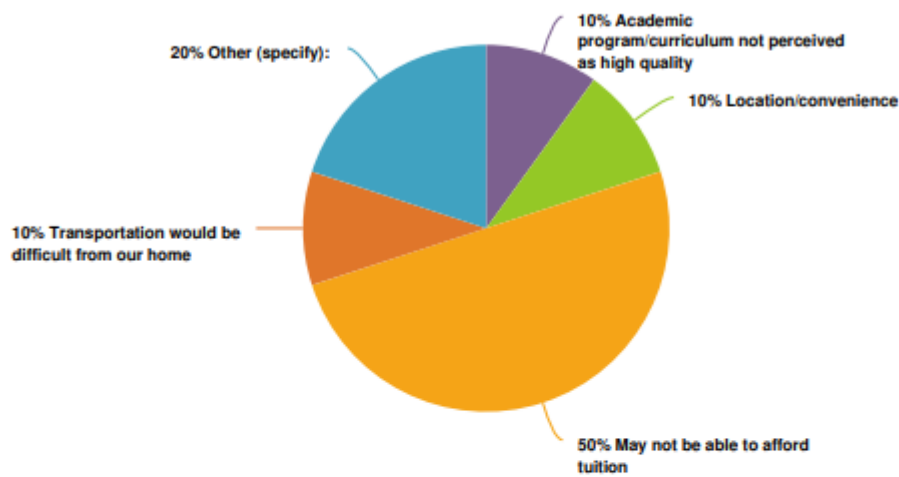


Value		Percent	Responses
Yes	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	70.0%	7
No	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	30.0%	3

Totals: 10



26. What were your two key reasons you did not enroll your child(ren) at the Catholic school in your area?Select your first key reason.

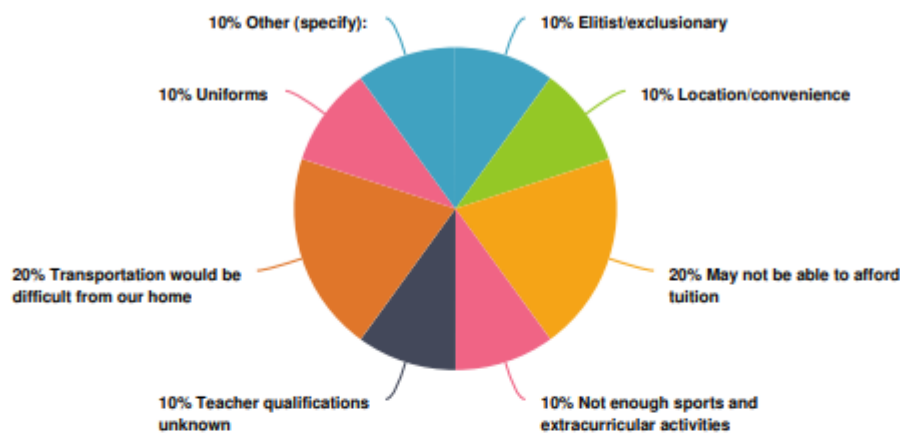


Value	Percent	Responses
Academic program/curriculum not perceived as high quality	10.0%	1
Location/convenience	10.0%	1
May not be able to afford tuition	50.0%	5
Transportation would be difficult from our home	10.0%	1
Other (specify):	20.0%	2

Totals: 10

Other (specify):	Count
One of my children did attend Pre K 4 and because we enjoy that we sent him back for Kindergarten. He teacher was emotionally abusive to him and he was punished because he was a slower learner than the rest. The principal did nothing to help.	1
Staff and principal were too tight up with admissions requirements such as baptise certification and immunization records. We moved from a different town to Cheyenne. In the midst of the moving documents were unpacked and couldn't get it in time. Staff gave me such a hard time about it while Montessori school welcomed me and followed up with me how we were doing and can submit paperwork later. Then the school hours for preschool didn't fit well for us as we both are working parents. .	1
Totals	2

27. Select your second key reason. [What were your two key reasons you did not enroll your child(ren) at the Catholic school in your area?]

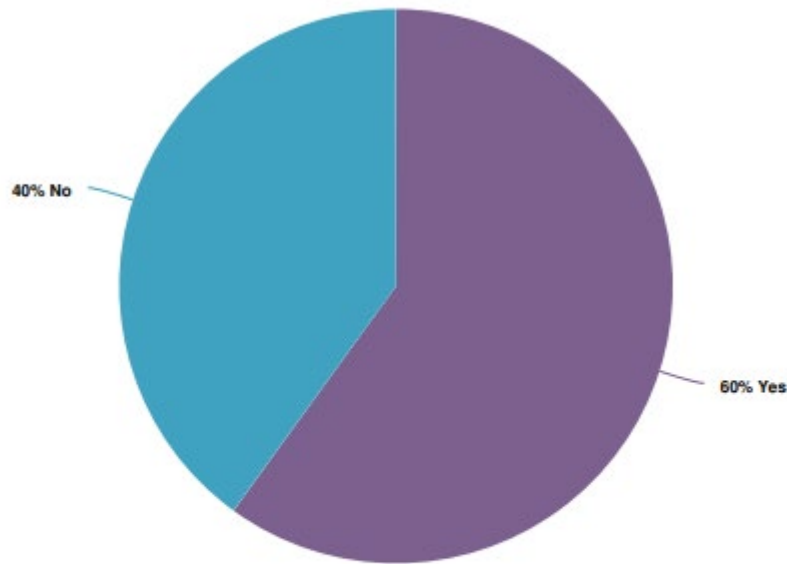


Value		Percent	Responses
Elitist/exclusionary	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	1
Location/convenience	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	1
May not be able to afford tuition	<div><div></div></div>	20.0%	2
Not enough sports and extracurricular activities	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	1
Teacher qualifications unknown	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	1
Transportation would be difficult from our home	<div><div></div></div>	20.0%	2
Uniforms	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	1
Other (specify):	<div><div></div></div>	10.0%	1

Totals: 10

Other (specify):	Count
Other parent refused	1
Totals	1

28. Have you attended a program or event at St. Mary's Catholic School?



Value		Percent	Responses
Yes	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	60.0%	6
No	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	40.0%	4

Totals: 10

29. When you were choosing a school, how important were the following factors in your decision-making process?

	Very Important	3	2	Not Important	Responses
Academic excellence Count Row %	6 60.0%	4 40.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	10
Catholic faith, values, and education Count Row %	4 40.0%	4 40.0%	0 0.0%	2 20.0%	10
High quality science and math program (STEM) Count Row %	3 30.0%	5 50.0%	2 20.0%	0 0.0%	10
Communication between school and parents Count Row %	7 70.0%	3 30.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	10
Caring and qualified faculty Count Row %	8 80.0%	2 20.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	10
Quality of facilities Count Row %	2 20.0%	6 60.0%	1 10.0%	1 10.0%	10
Location/convenience Count Row %	2 20.0%	7 70.0%	1 10.0%	0 0.0%	10
Quantity and quality of sports and extracurricular programs Count Row %	0 0.0%	6 60.0%	2 20.0%	2 20.0%	10
Safe and secure environment Count Row %	8 80.0%	2 20.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	10
Quality of technology Count Row %	2 20.0%	7 70.0%	0 0.0%	1 10.0%	10

	Very Important	3	2	Not Important	Responses
Transportation is provided					
Count	2	4	1	3	10
Row %	20.0%	40.0%	10.0%	30.0%	
Welcoming environment/sense of belonging					
Count	7	3	0	0	10
Row %	70.0%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Totals					
Total Responses					10



30. What are your thoughts regarding St. Mary's Catholic School?

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Responses
Catholic schools are an essential part of the life and ministry of the Church and its parishes. Count Row %	34 73.9%	9 19.6%	1 2.2%	2 4.3%	46
A Catholic school is an effective way to help parents educate their children in the Catholic faith. Count Row %	37 80.4%	6 13.0%	2 4.3%	1 2.2%	46
The value of traditional Catholic schools justifies the cost to the parents. Count Row %	28 60.9%	14 30.4%	3 6.5%	1 2.2%	46
The value of a traditional Catholic school justifies the cost to the parish. Count Row %	30 65.2%	13 28.3%	2 4.3%	1 2.2%	46
I would be willing to serve on the School Advisory Board or a committee of it to help St. Mary's Catholic School plan its future. Count Row %	14 30.4%	13 28.3%	4 8.7%	15 32.6%	46
I know about the St. Mary's Catholic School Foundation and what it is doing to promote Catholic education. Count Row %	21 45.7%	14 30.4%	6 13.0%	5 10.9%	46

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Responses
I would be interested in supporting St. Mary's Catholic School with time, talent, or financial support. Count Row %	19 41.3%	13 28.3%	8 17.4%	6 13.0%	46
Totals Total Responses					46

