

Renewing the Vision

The Report of an Evaluation of

Saint Joan of Arc Catholic School
35-27 82nd Street
Jackson Heights, NY 11372

By

A Visiting Team of Evaluators appointed by the
Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools

December 1-4, 2009

The contents of this report represent the judgments of the members of the visiting team as interpreted and written by the chairperson. They do not necessarily represent opinions of the Middle States Association or the Commission on Elementary Schools.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	4
CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL.....	7
PLANNING PROCESS.....	9
MISSION AND BELIEFS (Philosophy).....	10
RESULTS OF INTERNAL& EXTERNAL SCANS.....	12
MSA STANDARDS REVIEWS.....	13
Standard 1: Philosophy/Mission.....	13
Standard 2: Governance and Leadership.....	15
Standard 3: School Improvement Planning.....	17
Standard 4: Finances.....	19
Standard 5: Facilities.....	20
Standard 6: School Climate and Organization.....	22
Standard 7: Health and Safety.....	24
Standard 8: Educational Program.....	26
Standard 9: Assessment and Evidence of Student Learning.....	29
Standard 10: Student Services.....	31
Standard 11: Student Life and Student Activities.....	32
Standard 12: Information Resources and Technology.....	35
STRATEGIC GOALS & STRATEGIC ACTION PLANS.....	37
CONCLUSION.....	41
Team Schedule.....	42
Oral Report.....	43

Introduction

St. Joan of Arc School was established in 1924 to serve the families of the Jackson Heights area of the Borough of Queens in New York City and for a time was the only secular or religious school in the region. The Sisters of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart worked with the founding pastor to provide an environment that addressed the spiritual and educational needs of the young families in their care. Members of this congregation continue to serve in the school, with a break of only 9 years (2000-2009). It remains primarily as a parish school whose mission is supported by the pastor. Recently they have restructured the administration to a model that shares and distributes responsibilities. This model includes the principal, vice principal, and an administrative assistant to the principal. As participants in *Preserving the Vision* process of the Diocese of Brooklyn they are investigating the formation of a Board that will act in an advisory capacity.

The school community is proud of its diverse population that reflects the ever changing residents of the area. Beginning as an agricultural community they grew into a residential district where immigrants found a home. These families now include thirty nationalities from Eastern Europe, India, and Latin America speaking twelve different languages. They sacrifice to seek a quality education for their children so they can live the American Dream.

The members of the school community have for a long time recognized the value of strategic planning and the accreditation process. They received their first Middle States Accreditation in 1989 and Recognition as a Blue Ribbon School in 1996/1997.

At the end of the 2007-2008 school year members of the faculty met to form a new Strategic Planning Committee to begin the Middle States reaccreditation protocol. Working in committees, the faculty gathered information that was presented to the entire faculty. As consensus was reached it was then passed on to a single person to compose so the document had "a single narrative voice". The faculty then reviewed the report; it was sent to the Office of Catholic Schools for review and then shared with members of the Home and School Association.

The team was warmly welcomed by the members of the St. Joan School community. Students and parents expressed their pride of the school during a tour for the Visiting Team. The Home and School Association had transformed the gymnasium into a reception area that was festive and encouraged guests to mingle. Guests included parents, students, school and parish staff, priests, alumni, and a representative from the Office of Catholic Schools. The opening celebration included an Advent evening prayer where all members of the school and parish community were remembered through intercessory prayer and song accompanied by a bell choir. Fellowship continued during dinner enhanced by students sharing their musical talent on the piano and violin. The entertainment continued as provided by the school band

and Eighth Grade bell choir and rock band. All in all the team experienced the warmth and family environment shared by the school and parish community of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School.

Throughout the visit the Peer Review Team experienced a sense of collegiality among the faculty. The students were observed to feel comfortable and demonstrated a clear understanding of expectations. The overall impression was that of *family*. The faculty and staff were cognizant of the needs of the students and one another and worked together to address concerns as well as celebrated the accomplishments of members of the school community. Members of the Home and School worked with the faculty and staff in a supportive and mutually respectful manner. Parishioners, alumni and other community constituents were witness to the importance of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School to the parish and surrounding community as witnessed through their support in word and action. The mission statement is perceived as a lived document. All stakeholders recognize that they are an important component to meet the challenges presented and to identify ways to overcome them.

The students of St. Joan of Arc come from diverse backgrounds both culturally and financially. It is this diversity that adds richness to the community. Each contributes and yet draws from the others. The respect for the uniqueness of each person permeates the interactions between all members of the school community. The team experienced the importance of tradition and excellence that is passed on, especially as evidenced by the generations of families that continue to be active members of the school.

The visiting team commends:

- The administration and faculty's commitment to promoting the school's mission statement and its inclusion as part of the school's identity.
- The support of parents, students, faculty, staff, and administration in helping the community live the mission and philosophy of St. Joan of Arc School.
- The faculty, staff, and administration's relationship with one another for its influence in the creation of a positive culture of learning.
- The faculty, staff, and administration for their collegial spirit and for their appreciation of the importance of sharing best practices, supporting one another in their ministry to Catholic education, and developing positive relationships within the school community.
- The pastor, administration, and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School for their efforts to make re-accreditation a collaborative and collegial process.
- The pastor and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School for their perseverance in completing the self-study process as a reflection and introduction to the new administration.
- The Chairperson for his efforts to ensure equal input of all stakeholders in the writing of the self-study document, as well as his effort to revise the document into one cohesive text.

The visiting team recommends:

- The school community continues to review the philosophy and mission statement in light of the school's current needs.
- The development of a class schedule that will allow for grade level partner teachers to meet together to plan and share.
- Professional development opportunities be sought that help teachers continue to grow as educators in the areas of technology, curriculum development, and data analysis.
- The pastor, administration and faculty continue to meet with their committees periodically, to evaluate the status of short- and long-term improvements and goals outlined in the standards review of the self-study.

Context of the School

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has been a visible, active presence to the Jackson Heights community since the early 1900's. The school maintains its tradition of fostering students who live as Christians while promoting academic excellence. The foundation was laid by the dedicated Sisters of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart and continues through the efforts of the committed administration, faculty and staff today. The life of St. Joan of Arc serves as the model for expectations. This is reflected in the unity of mission and purpose as witnessed by the Visiting Team. They value the diversity of the members of the community and appreciate the sense of empowerment that comes with full participation in the decision making process.

The members of the school and parish express the importance of the school in the formation of students and the sense of community that is derived from their shared mission. They look forward to continuing the tradition of welcoming others and working as a unified family that addresses the needs of the students in our ever-changing global community. They

Catholic identity is the chief motivating factor at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School. They strive to model the message that is voiced in the school pledge: "I believe that Jesus is present in each of my classmates and in all my teachers, therefore, all my actions will show respect for Jesus". This is lived by studying the message of the Gospels, in daily interactions with others, and through their outreach to the community in service projects. They believe that they are members of the world community but should reflect the qualities of respect, dignity, and compassion as they pursue opportunities to be contributing responsible members of society. Religion is not a subject at St. Joan of Arc. It is the where their decision making process and actions are rooted.

The climate at St. Joan of Arc reflects the unity of purpose that maintains the richness of their diversity. The Parable of the Mustard Seed serves as a reminder of the potential that is hidden inside each person to grow from the smallest to a robust individual.

Administration and faculty strive to provide an environment that is conducive to learning. They believe that each student has potential that they seek to cultivate. Teachers utilize various modalities to assess student progress as projects, class participation, homework, quizzes and tests. Standardized tests (Terra Nova and Test of New York Standards) provide information on student performance as compared to national and state standards. The data made available affirms their endeavors and identifies areas of concern.

Msgr. Garcia, the pastor, of St. Joan of Arc Parish supports the mission of the school through his collaboration with administration and financial resources. The daily workings of the school are lead by the Principal, Mr. John Fruner who is assisted by the Vice Principal, Mr. Michael Donovan and an Assistant to the Principal, Mr. Aldalberto Maya Navarrette. Although they have distinct job descriptions, they often work collaboratively to provide leadership and address the needs of the school community. The Home and School Association takes an active role in the school. They are visible participants working with the administration and faculty. While there is not an established Advisory Board, the pastor and principal request thoughts from members of

the community in the decision making process. They have begun the search process to identify people who will be invited to join the Board.

Recognizing that they are members of a learning community, teachers continue to pursue opportunities for professional development. They participate in workshops provided by the Office of the Superintendent and Local Education Agencies. They are aware of the richness of talent that is among the faculty and draw peers to share their knowledge and skills.

The faculty and staff of St. Joan of Arc are comprised of over three hundred years of dedicated service to this community. Teachers are expected to prepare lesson plans and maintain accurate records. Activities and lessons are organized that reflect the expectations as set forth in the guidelines of the Diocese of Brooklyn and the New York State Standards. As a community the administration and faculty value the potential of each person and strive toward excellence. They draw on the thinking of various educational theorists to design instruction that utilizes different modalities which will encourage individual development. The administration and faculty continue to investigate and select materials that address the diversity of learners. They are enthusiastic to integrate technology into instruction and are working with administration to obtain equipment and the skills to effectively incorporate technology. Teachers use a variety of assessment techniques to measure student understanding and adjust instruction.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has been a landmark of the community since the early 1920's. The physical plant has grown and been reconfigured to serve the needs of the school and parish community. The pastor is supportive of the mission of the school and works with the administration to plan maintenance and capital improvements. They also collaborate to ensure the financial stability of the school by identifying sources who share and wish to contribute to the mission and vision of the school. All stakeholders accept their responsibility to be stewards of the school.

Planning Process

The planning committee consisted of three staff members of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School. The purpose of the planning committee was to outline a plan for completion of the self-study and re-accreditation process. Facilitated by the Chairperson, the self-study was a collaborative process. The administration, faculty and staff members received the standards questionnaires for Middle States Accreditation. All surveys were returned and scores averaged. The planning committee helped to coordinate teams for the philosophy committee, internal and external scans. The teams met regularly during the spring of 2009. For each standard, the strengths, needs, and plans for improvement were discussed and recorded. The Chairperson took all rough drafts for the self-study and went through the processes of editing and revision. The objective of this was to give the document one cohesive voice throughout. After each revision, the Chairperson would resubmit the document to the committees for further editing, suggestions, and revision. In this manner all members of the committees had equal input into the many steps of the self-study.

The self-study process was under way during a change in administration at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School. The preexisting staff and faculty felt that the process would serve both as a reflective practice for themselves, as well as a thorough orientation for the new administration. All school personnel and stakeholders were kept abreast of developments in the re-accreditation process.

The visiting team commends:

- The pastor, administration, and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School for their efforts to make the re-accreditation a collaborative and collegial process.
- The pastor and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School for their perseverance in completing the self-study process as a reflection and introduction to the new administration.
- The Chairperson for his efforts to ensure equal input of all stakeholders in the writing of the self-study document, as well as his effort to revise the document into one cohesive text.

The visiting team recommends:

- The pastor, administration and faculty continue to meet with their committees periodically, to evaluate the status of short- and long-term improvements and goals outlined in the standards review of the self-study.

Mission and Beliefs

The school community of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has worked in collaboration to develop their mission statement. The faculty reflected on the needs of the students, their experiences, and the school's philosophy to identify the key points of what they do at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School. These statements were reviewed by the faculty, discussed to narrow the focus of the mission and then voted for a consensus. The school community encourages everyone to better understand their mission by including it in publications and reciting it daily. It is also posted throughout the school.

The belief statements are viewed as their fundamental values and a code of ethics under which everyone refers and adheres to when making decisions and to guide behavior. The educators at St. Joan of Arc believe that they promote the celebration of diversity by encouraging students to find courage amidst difficult challenges and empower the individual to serve as a unique contributor of gifts and talents. They refer to the Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Beatitudes. They recognize the importance of the responsibility they share with parents and guardians to model and nurture Catholic values, traditions and attitudes.

The mission statement of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School:

DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE: LIVE THE VISION!

At St. Joan of Arc Catholic School we dare the impossible and work to promote a community based on the precepts of the Roman Catholic Church, Christian morality, unity, opportunity empowerment of the individual and hope. We live this vision through our commitment to spiritual, academic, and personal excellence. Through the cultivation of our God given gifts and talents each member of the St. Joan of Arc school community seeks to grow into "the mightiest of trees". By developing our individual potentials, we hope to model our patroness, the Maid of Orleans, and like her to fully live and convey the loves of others in our global community.

The visiting team commends:

- The pastor, Msgr. Otto Garcia, for his support of Catholic education and his role in furthering the mission of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School.
- The administration, faculty, and staff of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School for their modeling of the mission statement as evidenced by the way they interact with one another.
- The school community for recognizing the importance of each member and their role in nurturing students to develop their individual skills and talents to become responsible members of society.

The visiting team recommends:

- That the administration and faculty continue to review their mission statement and beliefs in order to maintain it as a lived document that meets the needs of the community.
- That the administration and faculty continue to work in partnership with all stakeholders, past and present, to ensure the ability to maintain the mission of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School.
- That the school community continues to investigate ways to share the mission of the school as it is lived with the parish and the surrounding community.

Results of Internal and External Scanning Processes

The internal scan was facilitated and organized by the steering committee Chairperson. The standards questionnaires were distributed to twenty four faculty members, one administrator and two office personnel. Each of the twelve standards for Middle States Accreditation was addressed in a survey. The standards review committee consisted of nine faculty members. The faculty members for each standard met to disseminate the data from the internal scan questionnaires. The committee group members then averaged the scores received and created a document for each standard area, including strengths, areas of need, and plans for improvement.

The faculty members reviewed the necessary standards and made the decision to re-craft each standard to a single encompassing statement. These twelve statements were then combined into a single document which served as the external scan. Communications were sent home to the parents from the principal and Chairperson along with this external scan document. The parents receiving the external scan questionnaire were chosen at random by the president of the Home School Association. The committee received a majority of these external scans back from the parents. The results were then averaged for the final report. The projections included in the external scan were calculated using the school's statistics of the last five years and the Middle States Association website.

The visiting team commends:

- The hard work and collaboration of the pastor, administration, faculty, staff, parents and Home School Association in this process.
- The Chairperson for his diligence and perseverance in the creation, composition, and organization of the internal and external scan documents.
- The persistence of the Home School Association members in encouraging and helping to organize parent engagement in the re-accreditation process.

The visiting team recommends:

- The faculty and staff continue to collect data and examine trends, as pertains to the information in the external scan.

Middle States Standards Review

STANDARD 1: PHILOSOPHY/MISSION

The school has a clearly written and actively implemented statement of philosophy/mission that conveys the general and specific purposes of its educational program, expresses expectations for quality, and serves as the basis for daily operational and instructional decision making as well as long-range planning. Stakeholders give input into the development of the school's philosophy/mission and understand and accept it. This document is aligned with the community served and is reviewed periodically by stakeholder representatives.

Comments:

The mission of St. Joan of Arc, clearly articulated as part of the school's culture, is: Dare the impossible; live the vision. This statement is present on all published materials distributed through the school and community. It is present, in printed form, and seen in action, throughout the school. In addition to the mission statement, and in support of it, the school has adapted the parable of the Mustard Seed as well as the Beatitudes. The Mission statement is used to close morning announcements each day.

The school's philosophy is founded upon the life of their patron, St. Joan of Arc, and her vision for of integrating Christ's message of peace, hope, and love. The school builds upon this vision by promoting the celebration of diversity, finding courage amidst difficult challenges, while empowering the individual to serve as a unique contributor of gifts and talents. The school's academic program is developed against the background of this philosophy.

As evidenced by the daily recitation of the school pledge, "I believe that Jesus is present in each of my classmates and in all my teachers; therefore, all my actions will show respect for Jesus." the children, staff, faculty, and administration are called as witnesses to the presence of Jesus in the life of the school community.

The visiting team commends:

- The administration and faculty's commitment to promoting the school's mission statement and its inclusion as part of the school's identity.
- The continued development and refinement of the school's philosophy as the foundation of all programmatic and curricular decisions.
- The support of parents, students, faculty, staff, and administration in helping the community live the mission and philosophy of St. Joan of Arc School.

The visiting team recommends:

- The school administration and staff seek input from a greater number of stakeholders from the school's community (parents, parishioners, alumni) in developing the school's philosophy.
- The school community continues to review the philosophy and mission statement in light of the school's current needs.

The visiting team has witnessed the philosophy and mission statement of the school to be lived and followed by the community as a living document and guiding principle.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The school is chartered, licensed, or authorized by a state, nation, or authority that operates in the public interest. The governance and leadership ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the school through the establishment of policy, provision of resources, and assurance of a quality educational program. The governance and leadership act ethically and consistently to assure an atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful effort on behalf of students and their learning. School leaders foster a productive environment for teaching and learning, timely and open communication with stakeholders, and the vision necessary for day-to-day operations and long-term planning.

Comments:

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School operates under the authorization of the Diocese of Brooklyn. Msgr. Garcia, the pastor, of St. Joan of Arc Parish supports the mission of the school through his collaboration with administration and financial resources. The school is led by the Principal, Mr. John Fruner who is assisted by the Vice Principal, Mr. Michael Donovan and an Assistant to the Principal, Mr. Aldalberto Maya Navarrette. Although they have distinct job descriptions, they work collaboratively to provide leadership and address the needs of the school community. The Home and School Association takes an active role in the school. They are visible participants working with the administration and faculty. While there is not an established Advisory Board, the pastor and principal request thoughts from members of the community in the decision making process. They have begun the search process to identify people who will be invited to join the Board.

The visiting team commends:

- The positive relationship that exists between the pastor and the school administration
- The pastor for his continued support for the mission of Catholic education.
- The Home and School Association and its leadership for their dedicated efforts in providing service and community building endeavors that promotes the mission of the school.

The visiting team recommends:

- The pastor and administration establish a school advisory board that will help to plan and facilitate the future growth of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School.
- The administration draw on the talents of the Home and School Association to provide outreach and evangelization that will promote St. Joan of Arc Catholic School.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has a system of governance that is collaborative among the stakeholders.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 3: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

The school uses a collaborative process to develop and implement a written strategic or long-range plan to improve its educational program and services. Plans are aligned with the school's philosophy/mission and its operational plans, and are focused on continuous improvement of student performance, staff, professional and organizational growth.

Comments:

The process of school improvement and strategic planning has been embraced by St. Joan of Arc School for many years. Some of the areas that these plans have focused upon include academic needs, improvement of building facilities and outreach to alumni for new sources of funding for school improvements. St. Joan of Arc School has participated in the Middle States Accreditation program since 1989 and the Blue Ribbon Schools program of the U.S. Department of Education. Internal and external reviews are utilized for long-range planning and school improvement.

The Visiting Team commends the school for:

- Utilizing the Middle States process as a tool for strategic planning.
- Creating an Advisory Board to work in collaboration with the Pastor and Principal.
- Sharing the Middle States Self-Study with the Home-School Association.
- Collaborative working relationship with other ministries of the parish.

The Visiting Team recommends that the school:

- Continue to study the feasibility of expanding programs in the areas of Early Childhood and Academic Intervention.
- Continue to develop relationships with Alumni as a source of additional funding.
- Disseminate information about the St. Joan of Arc's planning process to the community – parents, parish, alumni, diocese.

The Visiting Team recognizes that the Administration and Faculty understand the importance of strategic planning.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 4: FINANCES

Financial resources are sufficient to provide the educational opportunities defined in the school's philosophy/mission. The business practices of the school are ethical. These practices promote confidence in the school's ability to manage fiscal and material resources in a responsible manner and follow prescribed budgeting and accounting principles. The majority of resources raised for school purposes is dedicated to the school's operations.

Comments:

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School is able to meet the financial obligations required to support its philosophy and mission through income gained from tuition, fees and parish subsidies. School business is conducted in an ethical manner. The budget is set by the pastor in conjunction with the Administration and the Finance Committee of the Parish. Expenditures and revenue are tracked by the school's business manager. Annual audits are conducted through an accountant provided by the Diocese of Brooklyn.

The visiting team commends:

- The Visiting Team commends the pastor, Msgr. Otto Garcia, for recognizing the importance of and his support of the mission of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School as evidenced by his collaboration with administration in the budget planning process and encouraging the parishioners to be active stakeholders.
- The school community for being able to balance the budget from year to year and for wisely investing surplus for future capital expenditures.
- The administration for their forward thinking as demonstrated by their investigating and beginning the process of an endowment fund that invites alums to assist in the financial assistance of the school.

The visiting team recommends:

- The visiting team recommends that the school continue to identify all avenues of government subsidies it may qualify for under national, state and local educational services program.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School understands the importance of fiscal viability in order to maintain the mission of the school and is seeking ways to address this concern.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 5: FACILITIES

School facilities are safe, clean, and well maintained. The physical environment supports delivery of the educational program/services as well as optimal student development and achievement. Facilities are appropriate and adequate to implement the philosophy/mission of the school. They are regularly inspected for effective operation and meet all applicable laws including health and safety code requirements.

Comments:

The school building dates from 1924. Over the last 85 years, the school has grown and expanded consistently to meet the rising needs of the community and the parish, as well as to accommodate the rising demand for Catholic Education. The facility is maintained by two custodians that are shared with the St. Joan of Arc Parish. These custodians serve all minor repairs and building upkeep and improvements. The school is cleaned daily by a contracted cleaning service. Major repairs to the building are addressed to outside contractors. The school is currently in the process of updating its telephone system so that all classrooms and offices will have their own phones. Administration is also investigating the possibility of adding security cameras to the building stairwells.

Classrooms in St. Joan of Arc School are well-sized, clean and organized. Student work is posted throughout the building and classroom walls are vibrant with the evidence of current instruction. Student and teacher materials are properly stored with easy access. In addition to the classrooms, all areas of the school are clean and well maintained. The Early Childhood Program is housed in a separate building adjacent to the main school building, which also houses the cafeteria. The school also contains a gym, Learning Center, library, technology lab, nurse's office, guidance counselor's office, administrative offices, and science lab.

The visiting team commends:

- The pastor, administration and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School on their clean and well-maintained classrooms and school.
- The pastor, administration and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School on their consistent dedication to the growth and expansion of the school, in response to the rising needs of the community.
- The pastor, administration and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School on their efforts to continue making important updates to the school facility.
- The maintenance personnel on the excellent preservation of the school structure.

The visiting team recommends:

- That the administration develop a facilities plan to meet the current and future needs of the school.
- The pastor and administration continue to investigate ways of financing future capital improvements.

The school facility is well preserved, clean and organized, and the administration actively seeks out possible improvements to the building.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 6: SCHOOL CLIMATE AND ORGANIZATION

The school's organizational structure and climate facilitate achievement of its core values as expressed in the philosophy/mission. The school culture supports successful implementation of age- and developmentally appropriate educational programs and services. Roles, responsibilities, expectations, and reporting relationships are clearly defined. Administrative, instructional, and support staff are qualified, competent, and sufficient in number to effectively provide quality educational experiences. The school regularly conducts staff performance appraisals and offers professional development opportunities informed by its philosophy/mission. Relationships among the staff and leadership are collegial and collaborative.

Comments:

It is clear that the climate of St. Joan of Arc School is one of respect, encouragement, dignity, and pride. Children and faculty are reminded daily about their vital role in living the philosophy of the school and how this lifestyle helps maintain the positive climate. The administrators are unified, and exhibit a strong positive influence over the school community. They are supported by the faculty, students, and parents, and are professional in their relationships and dealings. This positive climate promotes a culture of learning, self respect, and dignity among the students and faculty.

The role and responsibility of each member of the faculty and staff is clearly articulated by the administration and supported through proper policies and guidelines. Accountability for performance is closely monitored and measured through both formal and informal means. Positive feedback and constructive recommendations lead to higher goals and more focused instruction for students and faculty alike. It is highly evident that the faculty members work hard to maintain a collegial relationship among themselves as a prerequisite for collaboration, professional development, and the sharing of best practices.

The visiting team commends:

- The faculty, staff, and administration's relationship with one another for its influence in the creation of a positive culture of learning.
- The faculty, staff, and administration's implementation of professional standards, behaviors, and protocols while successfully completing an administrative transition and creation of a new administrative structure.
- The faculty, staff, and administration for their collegial spirit and for their appreciation of the importance of sharing best practices, supporting one another in their ministry to Catholic education, and developing positive relationships within the school community.
- The establishment of coordinators and subject area heads as a means to maintain positive communication and define roles and responsibilities.

The visiting team recommends:

- The development of a class schedule that will allow for grade level partner teachers to meet together to plan and share.
- That every effort be made to ensure proper certification and credentials be maintained for all subject area teachers.
- Professional development opportunities be sought that help teachers continue to grow as educators in the areas of technology, curriculum development, and data analysis.

The school climate and organization allows for proper and age-appropriate instruction for children, makes use of available human resources, and is responsible for helping to maintain a culture of learning.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 7: HEALTH AND SAFETY

A safe, orderly, and healthy environment for teaching and learning is provided. The school adheres to local, state, and federal government health and safety requirements. Health, safety, preventive/emergency procedures, and crisis management policies are clearly written, well documented, implemented, and updated regularly.

Comments:

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School offers a balanced variety of health services. The school employs a full-time licensed nurse. Funding for the school nurse is provided by the City of New York. The nurse serves the students who have medical needs as well as providing health information sessions to the faculty and administration. She also organizes and provides seasonal vaccinations to the student body. The nurse screens the students on a yearly basis for vision and hearing. She treats students for a variety of medical complaints, keeps a daily log of office visits, and communicates frequently with parents and teachers.

The physical education teacher also instructs a health class for grades six, seven and eight. The classes are given on a weekly basis and the physical education teacher collaborates with homeroom teachers on possible pertinent topics for instruction. The topics range from physical science to drug and alcohol prevention. The school also employs a part-time guidance counselor. Funding for the school guidance counselor is provided by the Program for the Development of Human Potential. The guidance counselor works closely with the staff on student referrals, and provides individual counseling to students on a weekly basis. The counselor also works closely with the parents. She facilitates several student support groups based on need, such as divorce. She also teaches a drug and alcohol prevention program in seventh grade.

All school personnel are enrolled in the VIRTUS Protecting God's Children Program. They receive and complete monthly bulletins and questions. All personnel and volunteers to the school are fingerprinted and receive a background check in accordance with diocesan policy. These records are checked and maintained by the school principal.

The school has a thorough emergency plan which is updated and reviewed yearly with all staff. Copies of the emergency and crisis plans are kept in each classroom. The building of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School is kept secure by locked doors and a security camera at the front door. Community volunteers staff the entrance stairwell to screen all potential visitors to the school. The school is investigating the possibility of installing additional security cameras in the stairwells. The school holds regular scheduled and unscheduled fire drills in accordance with New York State law.

The school also utilizes a traffic safety officer five day per week to ensure the security of students walking to and from school, as well as at midday.

The visiting team commends:

- The pastor, administration and faculty for their support of a balanced and comprehensive program of health services.
- The health services staff for their close collaboration and flexibility in adapting to the needs of the students and the community.
- The parish and community volunteers who dedicate time to ensuring the security of the students.

The visiting team recommends:

- That the pastor, administration and faculty pursue state funding opportunities for health and guidance services.
- The pastor, administration and faculty continue to investigate the possibility of increased security measures in the building.

The health services at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School are wide-ranging and serve the emotional, intellectual, and physical wellness of the students.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 8: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educational program consists of a carefully planned and well-executed curriculum that includes appropriate academic standards, solid pedagogy, and assessment, all based on research and best practices. The educational program is aligned with the school's mission, approved by the governance, sufficiently financed, and periodically reviewed by stakeholders. It is developed to address the needs of all students and is designed to foster and challenge student learners at all levels. Effective policies and procedures are in place, along with instructional materials, technology, and equipment that are appropriate, functional, and well maintained. Written curriculum guides are current, functional, available, and in use. They define scope and sequence of the educational program as well as program objectives and reflect sound approaches to teaching and learning.

Comments:

The educational program of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School reflects the mission of the school, as well as the vision of their patroness, St. Joan of Arc, that students integrate Christ's message into their daily lives. Catholic identity is emphasized in all subject areas and activities. The curriculum is developmental and sequential and influenced by pedagogical theories. Grounded in the belief that all children can learn, the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all students.

The Religion program includes instruction in the basic tenets of the Catholic faith and is enriched by experiences in prayer, liturgy, sacraments and service. Saints are used as role models. Students are encouraged to use the life of Jesus and his teachings as the basis for everyday living and appropriate decision-making. The curriculum in the subject areas of English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies is based on the standards of New York State and the Diocese of Brooklyn. The English Language Arts program is one of balanced literacy and focuses on reading, writing, listening and speaking. Recognizing that reading is the basis for all learning, the English Language Arts program in the primary grades focuses on skill development in reading. Phonics and individualized reading activities are utilized. The thrust the curriculum of the middle grades is the writing process with an emphasis on mechanics. Portfolios of student work are maintained. The Mathematics program is based on national and state standards and emphasizes concept development and problem solving strategies as well as computation skills. The Science program includes a study of factual knowledge, theories, the scientific method and lab and hands-on activities. Grades five through eight participate in the school's annual science fair. The scope and sequence of the curriculum of the Social Studies program is developmental. Areas of study begin with local communities, New York State History and progress to U.S. and world history and include national, world and current issues. The goal is to develop a

spirit of global citizenry and responsibility. In both the Science and Social Studies programs, skill development includes critical and higher order thinking and problem solving strategies.

The curriculum is enriched by instruction in the specialty areas. The Fine Arts program, which includes Art and Music, helps the school to achieve its mission of developing the aesthetic spirit of its students. The clubs and activities that involve the fine arts enhance this area. The Foreign Language program develops an awareness of the Romance languages and cultures of France, Italy and the Spanish speaking peoples. Cultural awareness and verbal proficiency are the focus of the program. This program, along with the Social Studies program, helps to foster the school's vision of unity amid diversity. The Physical Education program encourages personal fitness, physical activity and sportsmanlike behavior. Participation in the parish's sports program is encouraged and many students partake of the varied opportunities available to them. The Health and Guidance programs focus on personal health, self-esteem, drug prevention and appropriate decision-making skills. The Computer Technology program instructs students in the use of the computer to reinforce reading, writing and research skills. Art activities and keyboarding skills are part of the program for the primary grades. Included in this program is instruction in word processing, excel and power point applications. The Library Program provides an opportunity for students to increase their proficiency in literacy skills and research. The Learning Center program is designed to assist students who are experiencing academic difficulties in a small group setting. Emphasis is placed on developing competency in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School provides students with the opportunity to live the school's vision, dare the impossible, believe in God and believe in each other.

The visiting team commends for:

- The administration for recognizing the need to create a Learning Center for students who are experiencing academic difficulties.
- The administration and faculty for adhering to New York State and Diocesan standards in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.
- The administration and faculty for integrating Catholic identity, religious values, the school mission and vision into all areas of the curriculum.
- The faculty for encouraging student participation in clubs and activities which encourage the Fine arts and Physical education.
- The administration for promoting the goal of global awareness through the Social Studies and Foreign Language Programs.
- The faculty for developing research skills through the Library and Computer Technology programs.

The visiting team recommends:

- The administration continues to investigate opportunities for professional development that will assist the faculty in the areas of flexible grouping and differentiated instruction.
- The administration and faculty continue to expand the activities of the Learning Center.
- The administration Investigate the special education services which are available to the school and its students from the public school district.
- The administration explore areas of funding which will provide the resources to acquire the necessary equipment to integrate technology into daily classroom lessons and activities.

The Educational Program of St. Joan of Arc reflects the mission and vision of the school.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 9: ASSESSMENT AND EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

The school systematically collects and rigorously analyzes quantifiable and observable evidence of individual learning and growth from multiple valid and reliable sources. Evidence of student learning is used to evaluate and improve curriculum effectiveness, instructional practices, professional development, and support services. Progress in student learning and performance is expected and is accurately, clearly, and systematically reported to the school community.

Comments:

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School views excellence in education as both an individual and collective goal in which the measure of success is the nurturing and cultivating of each student's gifts and talents. Assessment is varied and includes frequent formal evaluation through quizzes and tests. Class work, homework and projects are included in the appraisal of each student. Displays of student work are found in the classrooms and hallways of the school. St. Joan of Arc participates in the diocesan Terra Nova testing program and the New York State Testing Program in grades 4,5, 6 and 8. The data obtained from these testing programs assists faculty in adjusting curriculum and tailoring instruction to meet the needs of students.

The Visiting Team commends:

- The administration and faculty for using the testing data to understand the needs of individual students.
- The faculty for adjusting instructional strategies, curriculum and skill areas based on the data obtained from assessments.
- The administration and faculty for recognizing the need to raise student performance levels for those falling below competency level.
- The administration and faculty for recognizing the need to challenge a greater percentage of students to perform at the mastery level.

The Visiting Team recommends:

- The faculty to use testing data to assist in creating classroom opportunities for flexible grouping and differentiated instruction.
- The administration and faculty to develop assessment instruments to evaluate incoming students.
- The administration to explore the special education opportunities available from the public school district for students who qualify for services.

The Administration and Faculty of St. Joan of Arc School recognize the importance of assessment to drive instruction.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 10: STUDENT SERVICES

The school implements written policies and procedures, in partnership with families and the community, that provide all students with, or refer them to, services that are age- and developmentally appropriate to optimize opportunities for life-long success. Student services are systematic and integral to the educational program. They are provided by qualified personnel, sufficiently financed, periodically evaluated, and philosophy/mission appropriate.

Comments:

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School provides student services through a Learning Center, guidance counselor, and health service provided by an on-site nurse. These varied services meet the needs of the students by recognizing the diverse needs of the student body. The administration and faculty works together to provide a safe and nurturing environment for the students and families. In addition, the school works collaboratively with local agencies including hospitals, libraries, and public school resource rooms. These services augment what is offered at the school.

The school provides a program for students who are in need of care after school hours. This program is well staffed and designed to engage students in productive activities that enhance their learning and spiritual development. In addition, the parish of St. Joan of Arc offers opportunities for students to participate in social, spiritual, and service experiences.

The visiting team commends:

- The faculty and administration for enhancing the services and opportunities afforded by the Learning Center.
- The guidance councilor, classroom teachers, and administration for identifying children who are in need of differentiated instructional styles and counseling services.
- The continued development and refinement of the after-school program through new programs and opportunities.

The visiting team recommends:

- The school administration and parish explore ways in which the school building can be made accessible for students with special needs, including physical and cognitive.
- The administration, Learning Center staff, and teachers work to identify students who may qualify for services through the local Committee on Special Education.
- A comprehensive response to Intervention plan be developed by the resource staff and faculty.
- The use of data analysis as a means of identifying academic needs of students and to help inform curriculum development.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School strives to partner with families and the community to provide serviced for children that enable each to reach his or her potential. Current services are age-appropriate and pedagogically sound.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 11: STUDENT LIFE AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The school provides access to non-discriminatory student activities that are age- and developmentally appropriate to supplement the educational program. A balance of academic, social, co- or extra-curricular, and service activities is maintained. Student activities are selected to foster intellectual, cultural, and social growth as well as physical health and wellness. Student activities provide opportunities for student leadership and social interaction and encourage development of student interests. These activities are adequately financed, periodically reviewed by stakeholders, managed by school governance and leadership, and appropriate to the school's philosophy/mission.

Comments:

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has a large catalogue of student activities and enrichment opportunities. Enrichment clubs meet weekly, which students can join according to area of interest. The emphasis in these activities is on building interpersonal and high-order thinking skills. The clubs include Scrabble, needlework and chess, among others. Teachers facilitate the enrichment clubs.

In addition to teacher-run activities, there are many other opportunities for the students to interact as a community. The eighth grade students facilitate such an event yearly on Spirit Day. This is an activity that is planned and implemented entirely by students with two faculty moderators. All grades participate in a Fun Day where there are non-academic activities and games. The school also facilitates the Junior Lector Program and Altar Server Program which provide the students the opportunity to explore their interests in the arena of Catholic faith. In the majority of school fundraisers, a significant portion of all proceeds are donated back to charity. The school maintains extremely strong ties to the parish and several parish-based activities are available to the students including choir, Teen Club, Scouts, and community outreach.

Beyond the in-school activities and groups, there are also many opportunities for the St. Joan of Arc community to interact. The Home School Association hosts social events and fundraisers outside of school hours, such as the Autumn Harvest Dance. There are several school bands/musical groups that have the opportunity to perform at these events. There is also a Youth Council Program that provides students the opportunity to participate in both sports and holiday activities.

The visiting team commends:

- The pastor, administration and faculty for providing a rich variety of student activities and opportunities.
- The Home School Association for their dedication in planning and providing fundraising and community-building events to the school.
- The students of St. Joan of Arc for their enthusiasm and participation in school clubs and organizations.

The visiting team recommends:

- That the staff continues to pursue the development and implementation of additional student clubs and enrichment activities.

The administration, faculty and parish offer a wide variety of activities to students that support the philosophy and mission of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

STANDARD 12: INFORMATION RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Information resources, materials, and technology are accessible and of adequate scope, quantity, and quality to facilitate the school's pursuit of its total educational program. These resources encourage all students and staff to broaden and extend their knowledge and skills. Access to appropriate information resources and technology is provided for students and staff. Appropriate instruction is offered to develop student and staff inquiry, research, and information literacy skills. Information technology equipment is functional and well maintained.

Comments:

The school enjoys a library of 3,000 volumes comprised of age appropriate fiction, non-fiction, and resource titles. The library is staffed by one librarian. Students receive instruction on the selection of appropriate books, research skills, and are monitored in their literacy development. The library is accessed by all children in Grades K-8 on a weekly basis.

The technology lab and computers in the classrooms provide students with the opportunity to engage in computer literacy exercises which are purposeful and creative in nature. The lab is staffed by a technology coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for the creation of the technology plan, E-rate applications and purchases, and NYS software and hardware grants. The school community seems genuinely determined to upgrade the available technology both in the classroom and in the technology lab.

The visiting team commends:

- The coordination between classroom teachers and the librarian regarding student literacy development.
- The efficient use of the limited library space.
- The comprehensive nature of the current St. Joan of Arc Catholic School Technology Plan as a resource and guide for technology integration in the classrooms and computer lab.
- The accessibility of media and technology resources for students and faculty.

The visiting team recommends:

- The implementation of the 2010-2013 Technology Plan based upon separate one-year and three-year need projections for students, faculty, staff, and administration including professional development and the exploration of funding opportunities.
- The faculty and administration engage as a community in learning more about the benefits and realistic expectations associated with the integration of technology in the classroom and its impact on student achievement.
- The administration budget for annual technological purchases, maintenance, and upgrades for the technology lab and classrooms.
- The school upgrade their media catalog to digital format as part of their technology plan.
- The administration financially support the library in purchasing new books, periodicals, and subscriptions.

Information resources and technology are accessible and age-appropriate for the students at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has met this standard.

Strategic Goals

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has identified the goal of updating and expanding the alumni data base by 20% by 2012. The action plan contains a general outline and committee to guide the staff and faculty in the achievement of this goal.

The Visiting Team commends:

- The administration and faculty for recognizing the importance of preserving the culture of the school through strong alumni connections.
- Pastor, administration and faculty for outlining a goal which can potentially increase the collaboration of resources through time, talent and treasure.
- The faculty for taking an active role by contributing to the alumni newsletter, thus improving alumni relations.

The Visiting Team recommends:

- The steering committee and faculty develop more clearly defined and measureable objectives to achieve this goal.
- The steering committee more thoroughly reviews the components of the critical and collateral events.
- The steering committee clearly identifies the facilitators who will be responsible for the activities defined in the plan.

St. Joan of Arc School has identified the goal of increasing student literacy with three supplemental, structured reading programs: Read to Succeed, Parents as Partners, and Book Adventure. The action plan includes a reasonable timeline for the formation of a committee, development of each program, collaboration among teachers, and reporting of results. The action plan also details a timeline for parent communication and participation.

The Visiting team commends:

- The faculty of the school for recognizing the importance of literacy and its impact in each of the content areas.
- The faculty for identifying a goal which involves the parents in the process of building child literacy.
- The faculty for creating a reasonable timeline for the achievement of this goal.

The Visiting Team recommends:

- That the faculty clearly establish objectives and indicators of success for this goal.
- That the administration and faculty work together to identify grade-level appropriate texts that are available to students, to assist in the achievement of this goal.

The proposed goal is to increase the percentage of students achieving at a level 4 (mastery level) on the NYS Grade 8 Mathematics exam to statistically meet or exceed the state's average. The goal is achievable, and can be met through careful data analysis, effective academic treatment, and formative assessment.

Historically, the achievement of the St. Joan of Arc Grade 8 students on the NYS exam has been acceptable, with performances that exceed the state average when comparing Level 3 or higher achievement. The school has recognized their expectation to be higher achievement for a greater number of students. The faculty has designed a plan that includes a large number of stakeholders, assigned to committees, each with a specific task and goal. The committee's responsibilities include data collection, analysis, monitoring, and reporting. The time line for this goal concludes in June of 2012.

The Visiting Team commends:

- Recognition on the part of the faculty and administration regarding the importance of mastery of mathematics as measured by the NYS Grade 8 exam.
- The faculty's commitment to use a "best practices" approach as a means of identifying the most effective academic treatment to remediate deficiencies and gaps in the students' understanding.
- The engagement of the whole faculty community in the implementation of the action plan.

The Visiting Team recommends:

- That a greater depth of understanding and analysis of data be conducted as a means to recognize patterns, consistencies, and strands that can help inform curriculum development. Data used should be inclusive of achievement on past NYS examinations and nationally norm referenced tests.
- Formative assessment strategies be utilized between treatments and standardized evaluations as a way to measure student progress and the effectiveness of teaching strategies. The results of the formative assessments should be used to inform curricular decisions.

Strategic Action Plan

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has worked in collaboration to develop an action plan that will assist them to improve program and resources over the next three years. For each goal they have identified a tentative outline of critical and collateral events. The activities are a general outline including the formation of committees, collecting data and reporting progress. The action plan committee has identified basic responsibilities for persons implementing activities for each goal. The timelines appear to be reasonable in accordance to achieve goal. Resources have been identified for each goal; however, more specificity could strengthen the achievement of the outcome. Benchmarks and indicators of success to attain their goal are not indicated. Dates for each action to be completed are suggested in their timeline.

The Visiting Team commends:

- The administration and faculty for working in collaboration to design school wide improvement through their action plan.
- The steering committee for their organization of necessary subgroups to execute the critical and collateral events outlined in the action plans.
- The administration and faculty for the inclusion of all stakeholders in the implementation of these goals.

The Visiting Team recommends:

- The steering and action committees more clearly delineate the critical and collateral events necessary to achieve each goal.
- The steering and action committees develop measurable outcomes or indicators of success.
- The steering and action committees review on an annual basis the progress achieved on each goal.

CONCLUSION

The school community of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School is commended for their welcome and hospitality to the visiting team. They displayed a sincere representation of “the unity that comes from their diversity”. This was expressed through the words of parents, students, alumni, faculty and staff as well as exhibited in the sharing of the variety of talents and cultures that contribute to the mission of the school.

From the moment of first contact they worked with the team chair to prepare for a visit that would be worthwhile and successful. Correspondence through email and telephone “ironed out” the possible wrinkles so the time spent on site could go more smoothly.

The visiting team would like to recognize all the time, effort and energy that each teacher put into the self-study. Each person involved deserves a great deal of credit for this undertaking. Our hope is that you have found it to be a truly worthwhile experience and benefited from this study. The visiting team has benefited from the time spent with the St. Joan of Arc Catholic School community. Their enthusiasm and vision are contagious.

The visiting team would like to share some things that sum up the fact that you are who you say you are. The team witnessed that the school community lives the mission and beliefs statements in your interactions with one another. It is evident that you implement and enhance instruction to engage the students and encourage them to develop the potential that is hidden within.

The team is appreciative of the viewpoints shared by the various members of the school community, especially those communicated by the students. From the youngest to the oldest they related stories of the faith filled, caring environment that they look forward to being a part of each day. The students know they are in a place where they come first and every person is valued.

St. Joan of Arc is not just a Catholic school. They are a community with a long, strong heritage and tradition of respect for the person of Jesus who lives in each person. All stakeholders provide an environment where everyone feels safe, is cared for and feels part of a large family while encouraging academic excellence.

The members of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School **DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE: AND LIVE THE VISION.**

VISITING TEAM'S SCHEDULE

SCHEDULE

Tuesday, 12/1	4 PM	Team Organization Meeting	Hotel
	5:30 PM	School Tour	
	6:30 PM	Opening/ Dinner Team Meeting	Hotel
Wednesday, 12/2	7:15-7:30	Leave for School	
	8:00-3:00	Observations/Interviews	
	10AM	Mr. Fruner (Principal)	Principal's Office
	TBD	Msg. Otto Garcia (Pastor)	Principal's Office or Rectory
	12 N	<i>Students dismissed</i> (Religious Education Program)	
	12:30PM	Junior High Staff	Art Room
	1:15 PM	Early Childhood/ Primary Staff	Art Room
	2 PM	Intermediate Staff Dinner with staff Team Meeting	Art Room local restaurant Hotel
Thursday, 12/3	7:15-7:30	Leave for School	
	8:00-3:00	Observations/Interviews	
	9 AM	Office Staff	PA Room
	10 AM	Student Group	Laboratory
	11 AM	Nurse	Nurse's Office
	11:30 AM	Counselor	AP Office
	2 PM	Parent Group Dinner Team Meeting	Msgr. Boylan Hall Hotel
Friday, 12/4	7:15-7:30	Leave for School Fire Drill	
	9:00	Liturgy	
	10:00-2:30	Observations/Work on Team Reports	
	3:15	Oral Report	

Oral Report

Good afternoon, Mr. Fruner, Mr. Donovan, Msgr. Garcia, Faculty and Staff:

It seems like only yesterday, this visit began. I can say this today but last night we felt as if we had worked for weeks on this report. We tirelessly worked on the report for the last three nights. So that is the reason why you may happen to see our dark circles under our eyes.

On behalf of the entire team I would like to express our appreciation for the wonderful hospitality and gracious accommodations that were afforded to us. From the opening presentation and reception on Tuesday through all the classroom visits and interviews, we have felt your very warm welcome.

A special thanks to Mr. Donovan, Mr. Mazza, Msgr. Garcia, and the Steering Committee for their leadership and direction during the Self Study. We also want to recognize Mr. Fruner for continuing the tradition of quality leadership that helped lead you to this point today.

Finally, I would like to recognize all the time, effort and energy that each teacher and staff member put into the self-study. Each of you deserves a great deal of credit for this undertaking. My hope is that you have found it to be a truly worthwhile experience and benefited from this study. It is the hardest thing to find our shortcomings but so easy to see our good points. This study did both and will give you the opportunity for growth.

At this time, I would like to express my personal thanks to the members of the team. Jeanne, Jodi and Tom. I feel privileged to have worked with such talented educators who are truly dedicated to our profession. Our work began as soon as we received the self-study. We had to read and analyze your self-study and also as most of you know, when you leave your classroom for a day or more, you need to prepare all the work needed for your absence. My team worked diligently and they were always ready with a smile and laughter to move the process along. Their generous sharing of expertise and unflagging energy during the long hours of the team visit were outstanding.

The mission of the visiting team is to assist the school as it strives to achieve a coherent plan and excellence. But please remember why we are here. We are not consultants. We did not come here to tell you how to operate your school. We came to look objectively at your school: to affirm all the good that you are doing and to give you suggestions or recommendations of ways to make your school better.

When I first read your self-study I was excited about all that your school has to offer. I was anxious to come and see it in operation. As a team, we came with expectations derived from your self-study. And I assure you we were not disappointed.

For the last three days and nights, we have met as a team to discuss all that we have observed and learned about your school. The results of our visit will be the written report that your school will receive soon.

Today I will present the oral report that is a capsulated version of what is to come. I will read some commendations and some recommendations for each area of the report. The oral report and written report reflect the opinions and beliefs of the entire team about the entire school.

Without further delay, I would like to present this report.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has been a visible, active presence to the Jackson Heights community since the early 1900's. The school maintains its tradition of fostering students who live as Christians while promoting academic excellence. The foundation was laid by the dedicated Sisters of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart and continues through the efforts of the committed administration, faculty and staff today. The life of St. Joan of Arc serves as the model for expectations. This is reflected in the unity of mission and purpose as witnessed by the Visiting Team.

The members of the school and parish express the importance of the school in the formation of students and the sense of community that is derived from their shared mission. They look forward to continuing the tradition of welcoming others and working as a unified family that addresses the needs of the students in our ever-changing global community.

It is clear that the climate of St. Joan of Arc School is one of respect, encouragement, dignity, and pride. Children and faculty are reminded daily about their vital role in living the philosophy of the school and how this lifestyle helps maintain the positive climate. The administrators are unified, and exhibit a strong positive influence over the school community. They are supported by the faculty, students, and parents, and are professional in their relationships and dealings. This positive climate promotes a culture of learning, self respect, and dignity among the students and faculty.

The visiting team commends:

- The administration and faculty's commitment to promoting the school's mission statement and its inclusion as part of the school's identity.
- The support of parents, students, faculty, staff, and administration in helping the community live the mission and philosophy of St. Joan of Arc School.
- The faculty, staff, and administration's relationship with one another for its influence in the creation of a positive culture of learning.
- The faculty, staff, and administration for their collegial spirit and for their appreciation of the importance of sharing best practices, supporting one another

in their ministry to Catholic education, and developing positive relationships within the school community.

- The pastor, administration, and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School for their efforts to make re-accreditation a collaborative and collegial process.
- The pastor and faculty of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School for their perseverance in completing the self-study process as a reflection and introduction to the new administration.
- The Chairperson for his efforts to ensure equal input of all stakeholders in the writing of the self-study document, as well as his effort to revise the document into one cohesive text.

The visiting team recommends:

- The school community continues to review the philosophy and mission statement in light of the school's current needs.
 - The development of a class schedule that will allow for grade level partner teachers to meet together to plan and share.
 - Professional development opportunities be sought that help teachers continue to grow as educators in the areas of technology, curriculum development, and data analysis.
 - The pastor, administration and faculty continue to meet with their committees periodically, to evaluate the status of short- and long-term improvements and goals outlined in the standards review of the self-study.

The team is appreciative of the viewpoints shared by the various members of the school community, especially those communicated by the students. From the youngest to the oldest they related stories of the faith filled, caring environment that they look forward to being a part of each day. The students know they are in a place where they come first and every person is valued.

In conclusion, I would like to share something that sums up the fact that you are who you say you are:

You are not just a Catholic school you are a community with a long, strong heritage and tradition of respect for the person of Jesus who lives in each person. You provide an environment where everyone feels safe, is cared for and feels part of a large family while encouraging academic excellence.

You do: DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE: AND LIVE THE VISION.

May God be with you and bless you as you continue on this journey.